Ethics as Practice

An Ethnographic Study of Business Ethics in a Multinational Biopharmaceutical Company

Gosovic, Anna Kirkebæk Johansson

ETHICS AS PRACTICE: AN ETHNOGRAPHIC STUDY OF BUSINESS ETHICS IN A MULTI-NATIONAL BIOPHARMACEUTICAL COMPANY

PhD Series 07.2020

Anna Kirkebæk Johansson Gosovic

ETHICS AS PRACTICE

AN ETHNOGRAPHIC STUDY OF BUSINESS ETHICS IN A MULTI-NATIONAL BIOPHARMACEUTICAL COMPANY

Doctoral School of Organisation and Management Studies | **PhD Series 07.2020**

CBS COPENHAGEN BUSINESS SCHOOL
HANDELSHØJSKOLEN

Ethics as Practice

An ethnographic study of business ethics in a multi-national biopharmaceutical company

Anna Kirkebæk Johansson Gosovic

Supervisors:

Professor Anne-Marie Søderberg

Professor Andreas Rasche

Doctoral School of Organisation and Management Studies

Copenhagen Business School

Ethics as Practice:
An ethnographic study of business ethics in a
multi-national biopharmaceutical company

The Doctoral School of Organisation and Management Studies is an active national
and international research environment at CBS for research degree students who
deal with economics and management at business, industry
and country level in a theoretical and empirical manner.

Foreword

This project started back spring 2016, where I contacted Ferring Pharmaceuticals with a proposal to do a research collaboration. I had read about their Global Ethics Office and found the existence of this corporate function intriguing, and I wondered how they went about working with such a slippery concept as *ethics* in a multi-national company. Back during my education in anthropology, I had studied efforts to 'implement' a new performance management system in the United Nations secretary in Geneva, and I had found that the meanings attached to this system varied greatly, depending on the nationality of different staff groups. I wondered what would happen if the 'thing' sought implemented was as intangible as the concept of ethics, and luckily, Ferring Pharmaceuticals shared this curiosity.

I have many people to thank, but I would like to begin by emphasizing two remarkable women from whom I have great respect and admiration but not least to whom I am grateful for making this project happen and for accompanying and supporting me throughout. First, I would like to thank Susanne Korsgaard from Ferring Pharmaceuticals, who was as intrigued as I was and who facilitated not only Ferring Pharmaceuticals' co-sponsorship of the research and the development of the research design, but also my very open access to conduct fieldwork in the company. As my company supervisor, throughout the research, Susanne Korsgaard has followed the project closely, asked difficult questions and generously helped me with contacts, access and background information.

Second, I would like to thank Professor Anne-Marie Søderberg from the Department of Management, Society and Communication at Copenhagen Business School, who has been my primary academic supervisor. Not only has she helped and guided me through this research; she has also done so in a manner very respectful and curious about what I as an anthropologist might bring to the table, and she has helped me to be confident about my own approach in an academic environment characterized by firm conventions about theorizing and methodology into which the anthropological approach does not always fit. Moreover, she has been immensely generous – not only with her intellectual capacity and thorough feedback, but also with sharing her network and contacts with me in an academic eco-system that was quite new to me.

My secondary academic supervisor, Professor Andreas Rasche, from the Department of Management, Society and Communication at Copenhagen Business School has likewise helped me in the transition from anthropology into a business school environment. He has helped me navigate the large curriculum of business ethics research, pointed me to which debates would be beneficial for me to dive into, as well as how I might be challenged within these debates. My secondary company supervisor from Ferring Pharmaceuticals, Jade L. Shields, has overseen the project throughout, and I am grateful that he has ensured that the insights will be applied in Ferring's business ethics efforts in the future. Together, Susanne Korsgaard, Anne-Marie Søderberg, Andreas Rasche and Jade L. Shields' supervision has been invaluable to this project.

I would also like to thank the departments within Ferring Pharmaceuticals where I have conducted the fieldwork that lays the basis for this dissertation and the many employees and managers who have willingly participated, offered me their time and reflections and allowed me to enter their working lives to an extent far beyond my hopes and expectations. I owe a special thanks to the Global Ethics Office for allowing me to conduct my research alongside of them for three years and for helping me gain access to their materials, thoughts and networks worldwide. It has not only been an intellectually stimulating journey but also an incredibly pleasant one because of the welcoming environment that I have experienced here.

My colleagues at the Department of Management, Society and Communication also deserve mentioning, and especially my colleagues in the PhD office and down the hall who have truly made this process enjoyable. Further, I would like to thank Steven Sampson for his engaged proof reading of the dissertation.

Lastly, I would like to thank my friends and family, and especially my husband Mašan for being immensely supportive and encouraging throughout.

Abstract

Today's business world is increasingly globalized and increasingly complex and therefore requires companies to operate across multiple countries, cultures and modes of work. Companies are met with demands from shareholders and civil society to manage their business in a responsible and ethical way, and social media channels will ensure broadcasting of companies who fail to comply with these requests no matter where they operate. Companies are therefore keen to live up to corporate ethical standards and communicate to their environments about their ethical business conduct. Sometimes, such efforts materialize into 'ethics offices', which are corporate functions with the responsibility for 'ethics programs' that are put in place to ensure ethical conduct within companies.

With empirical point of departure in one such ethics program in one company and theoretical point of departure in the concept of 'Recontextualization' and 'Ordinary Ethics', this study investigates what happens when an ethics program travels to business units abroad and how it is recontextualized within these new national contexts. The study explores business ethics as a practical endeavor within different 'vocational communities of practice' in the company and further investigates how the ethics program is interpreted and enacted within these communities.

The aim is to contribute to academic communities with a theoretically and empirically founded understanding of ethics as practice and of local interpretations of a business ethics program. The aim is also to contribute with insights for companies who seek to ensure adherence to such ethics programs across complex organizations.

This PhD dissertation is based on a multi-sited longitudinal ethnographic fieldwork within one multi-national, multi-vocational biopharmaceutical company, in order to achieve an in-depth, qualitative understanding of business ethics as practice and insights into local interpretations and enactments of an ethics program. More specifically, the fieldwork has been conducted in Ferring Pharmaceuticals among ethics officers, human resources officers, marketing and sales officers and clinical trials officers within business units in Denmark, Switzerland and China.

Ethnographic insights from this fieldwork are developed through an analysis of ethics as 'ordinary' and inherent in daily practice; an analysis that challenges the widespread scholarly understanding of 'ethics' as something confined to specific moments. Through this analysis, the study finds that notions of right and wrong and definitions of their proper pursuit are closely tied to the practices within the different

vocational communities under study. Moreover, it finds that such convictions of right and wrong, tied to each community, transcend national borders, and that Ferring's ethics program is interpreted and enacted in vastly similar ways within these vocational communities *across* the countries under study. The salience of vocational communities of practice for how an ethics program is interpreted and enacted challenges the equally widespread scholarly understanding, that national culture differences is the most central consideration for companies who seek to ensure adherence to ethics programs across complex organizations.

The insights presented in this dissertation contribute primarily to two streams of research. Firstly, to organizational ethnography by offering a longitudinal, in depth ethnographic research from a complex and rarely studied industry context. Second, it contributes to business ethics studies by introducing theoretical perspectives from anthropology into the field and by taking a non-normative approach to exploring business ethics as practice. It also contributes to studies of corporate ethics programs by offering an ethnographic perspective that highlights experiences and perceptions of such programs at the micro-level.

Dansk resumé

Nutidens forretningsverden er både kompleks og globaliseret og kræver i stigende grad, at virksomheder formår at operere på tværs af mange forskellige lande, kulturer og måder at arbejde på. Virksomheder bliver mødt med krav fra aktionærer og civilsamfund om at lede deres forretninger på ansvarlige og etiske måder og nutidens medielandskab sikrer, at de virksomheder, som ikke formår at leve op til disse krav, vil blive udstillet på sociale medier, uanset hvor i verden de befinder sig. Virksomheder i dag bestræber sig derfor på at leve op til forretningsetiske standarder og de sørger for at kommunikere bredt til interessenter om deres etiske måder at drive virksomhed på. Nogle gange materialiserer disse bestræbelser på ansvarlig virksomhedsdrift sig i 'Ethics Offices', hvilket er virksomhedsenheder med ansvar for 'etikprogrammer' og som har til formål at sikre etisk adfærd i disse virksomheder.

Med empirisk udgangspunkt i et sådant etikprogram i en enkelt virksomhed og teoretisk udgangspunkt i begreberne 'Rekontekstualisering' og 'Ordinary Ethics', vil dette studie undersøge, hvad der sker, når et etikprogram bliver introduceret til forretningsenheder i udlandet og hvordan dette etikprogram bliver rekontekstualiseret i disse nye nationale kontekster. Studiet vil endvidere udforske forretningsetik, 'business ethics', som en praktisk bestræbelse, der finder sted i en række 'faglige fællesskaber' i virksomheden og derudover undersøge, hvordan etikprogrammet bliver fortolket og praktiseret indenfor disse fællesskaber.

Formålet er at bidrage til videnskabelige kredse med en teoretisk og empirisk funderet forståelse af lokale fortolkninger af etikprogrammer, samt at bidrage med viden til virksomheder, som søger at sikre, at sådanne programmer bliver overholdt på tværs af komplekse organisationer.

Denne afhandling bygger på et længerevarende etnografisk feltarbejde, foretaget i flere afdelinger af en multinational, multi-faglig biofarmaceutisk virksomhed, Ferring Pharmaceuticals, med det formål at opnå en dybdegående, kvalitativ forståelse af forretningsetik i praksis samt indsigt i lokale fortolkninger og praktiseringer af et etikprogram. Jeg har således lavet feltarbejde blandt 'Ethics Officers' samt medarbejdere indenfor hhv. human resources, marketing og salg og kliniske studier i forretningsenheder i Danmark, Schweiz og Kina.

De etnografiske indsigter fra feltarbejdet bliver udviklet og uddybet gennem en analyse af etik som noget 'almindeligt' og iboende i daglig praksis. Denne analyse udfordrer den udbredte videnskabelige forståelse, at etik er noget, der er afgrænset til bestemte øjeblikke eller situationer. Gennem denne

analyse finder jeg således, at overbevisninger om rigtigt og forkert og definitioner af, hvordan man bedst forfølger 'det rigtige', er tæt forbundet med dagligdagspraksisser i de faglige fællesskaber, som studiet undersøger. Derudover finder jeg, at sådanne overbevisninger om rigtigt og forkert knytter sig til de faglige fællesskaber, der går *på tværs* af nationale skel, samt at Ferrings etikprogram bliver fortolket og praktiseret på ganske ensartede måder indenfor disse faglige fællesskaber på tværs af landegrænser. Denne indsigt udfordrer en tilsvarende udbredt videnskabelig forståelse af, at nationalkulturforskelle er den mest betydningsfulde overvejelse, som virksomheder, der ønsker at sikre, at deres etikprogram bliver overholdt på tværs af komplekse organisationer, bør gøre sig.

De indsigter, som præsenteres i denne afhandling, bidrager primært til to områder af den videnskabelige litteratur. For det første bidrager afhandlingen il organisationsetnografi ved at tilbyde et længerevarende og dybdegående etnografisk studie i en kompleks og sjældent undersøgt industrikontekst. For det andet bidrager den til business ethics-studier ved at introducere teoretiske perspektiver fra antropologi og ved at have en ikke-normativ tilgang til at udforske business ethics som praksis. Ligeledes bidrager den til studier af virksomheders etikprogrammer ved at give et etnografisk perspektiv, som fremhæver oplevelser og forståelser af sådanne programmer på mikroniveau.

Abbreviations

AAA	American Anthropological Association
ASA	Association of Social Anthropologists
CRO	Contract Research Organization
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
EMA	European Medicines Agency
EU	European Union
FDA	Food and Drug Administration
GCP	Good Clinical Practice
GDPR	General Data Protection Regulation
GLOBE	Global Leadership and Organizational Behavior Effectiveness
HCN	Host Country Nationals
HCP	Healthcare Professional
HR	Human Resources
HRO	High-Reliability Organization
ICH	International Conference on Harmonization
IEC	Independent Ethics Committee
IMP	Investigational Medical Product
IVF	In Vitro Fertilization
KOL	Key Opinion Leader
M&S	Marketing and Sales
MNC	Multinational Company
PAP	Patient Assistance Program
PI	Principal Investigator
R&D	Research and Development
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
USA	United States of America
WMA	World Medical Association

Contents

List of Tables and Figures

List of Tables

List of Figures

1. Introduction

Today's business world is increasingly globalized and increasingly complex and therefore requires companies to operate across multiple countries, cultures and modes of work. Companies are continually met with demands from shareholders and civil society to manage their business in a responsible and ethical way. If not, they risk social media channels disseminating embarrassing news of failures to comply with these demands, no matter where they operate. Companies are therefore keen to comply with corporate ethical standards and to communicate to their stakeholders that they are conducting their business in a responsible manner, a practice amply documented in the vast literature on Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) (see e.g. Carroll and Shabana 2010). This dissertation conceptualizes corporate ethics and responsibility as a 'management idea', similar to other managerial trends that suddenly gain widespread recognition and take on material form within business communities worldwide (cf. Czarniawska and Sevón 2005a). However, the idea of corporate ethics, having been around for decades, does not seem to have the same volatile nature as other 'hot' managerial trends.

In some companies, the idea of corporate ethics has materialized in corporate business ethics programs seeking to respond to demands made by civil society or other stakeholders for ethical corporate conduct (cf. Kaptein 2015; Paine 1994; Weaver, Treviño, and Cochran 1999). However the literature around the 'effectiveness' of such programs has shown to be inconclusive (Erwin 2011; Kaptein and Schwartz 2008; Mcdonald 2009; Singh et al. 2018), and this may be due to the narrow focus of this research literature, such that ethics program components are treated as static, measurable units. In this literature, scholars seek to explain why such programs are successful (or not) rather than seeking to understand 'how' they work in practice. I argue here that if we want to understand more about the processes and workings of ethics programs, we need to explore how such programs are interpreted and enacted in practice. In this spirit, this dissertation follows a corporate ethics program as it circulated within a single biopharmaceutical company, traveling from the firm's corporate headquarters to business units abroad and to various vocational groups. An ethics program is a cluster of activities, aimed at ensuring ethical behaviour internally in a company, most often conducted by a number of ethics officers, often within an 'ethics office', who manage a firm's code of ethics, ethics training and whistleblowing protocols. In the course of investigating the workings of ethics programs, I conducted a multi-sited ethnographic fieldwork within the firm, Ferring Pharmaceuticals, in order to achieve an in-depth, qualitative understanding of local perceptions and enactments of its corporate ethics program.

These ethnographic insights are further developed through an analysis of ethics as a practical endeavour within different vocational communities of practice in the company. As I will show, the analysis presented here challenges the widespread understanding of 'ethics' as something confined to specific moments, as well as the equally widespread understanding that national culture is the primary concern that companies must attend to when attempting to ensure adherence to ethics programs across complex organizations.

The dissertation may be useful for researchers within various fields, but I offer particular contributions to two streams of research. First, I contribute to organizational ethnography by offering a longitudinal, in depth ethnographic study of a multi-national pharmaceutical company, which is a complex and rarely studied industry context. As noted by Brannan et al. (2012), organizational ethnography differs from other qualitative research traditions because long-term engagements in the fields of inquiry are at the centre of methodological attention. The present study offers insights derived from long-term fieldwork, presenting not only empirical insights about business ethics in practice but also methodological reflections about the role, position and conflicts that take place when an ethnographer has long-standing relationships with the those in the field of study.

Second, this dissertation contributes to business ethics studies by introducing theoretical perspectives from anthropology and by taking a non-normative approach to business ethics as a practical endeavour. In addition, this ethnographic perspective on corporate ethics programs sheds light on the experiences and perceptions of such programs at the micro-level.

This first chapter introduces the background for the study and its broader context, and it describes the nature of corporate ethics programs as empirical phenomena.

1.1. Corporate ethics programs in complex organizations

In the literature on ethics programs in complex organizations, most scholars have focused on the effectiveness of such programs (see e.g. Kaptein 2015). Other work has described the challenges and unintended outcomes of efforts to 'implement' elements of ethics programs within MNCs (Hanson and Rothlin 2010; Helin and Sandström 2010; Hoivik 2007). One challenge highlighted by this implementation-focussed research is that seemingly 'universal' values and preferred behaviours cannot simply be 'transferred' from headquarters to subsidiary or from one business unit to another, and international business scholars have demonstrated how values and behaviours are reinterpreted and

given new meaning when introduced into new contexts and cultures (Brannen 2004; Gertsen and Zølner 2012b; Søderberg 2015).

Over a decade ago, Helin and Sandström (2007) concluded that there is a dearth of qualitative studies focusing on the internationalization of ethics programs, and a recent literature review found that this is still the case (Babri, Davidson, and Helin 2019).

Moreover, within the field of social anthropology, including organizational anthropology, research has shown that ethical principles and the underlying values are closely connected to different social communities. As a result, notions of ethics, in so far as these consists of value-based concepts, often diverge due to people's differing political orientations, social positions, educational backgrounds, national origins, etc. (cf. Gallenga 2016). With this point of departure, and recalling the call for more qualitative studies of ethics programs, it is important to explore how ethical principles are promoted and maintained within complex organizations that operate across different vocational and national contexts.

1.2. The context of ethics programs: from communities of life to communities of practice

Drawing on Berger and Luckmann, the organizational theorist Barbara Czarniawska has noted that ethnographic studies can be focused on communities of life and communities of meaning (Czarniawska 1998:26). Whereas the former refers to geographically bound communities that can be observed at a specific point in time in a specific space, communities of meaning are defined, demarcated and observed by a researcher who explores their connections and patterns. In this sense, communities of meaning go beyond a specific time and location (Mahadevan 2017:17).

Scholars of comparative business ethics have studied the differences between those communities of life demarcated by national borders, often conceptualizing them as distinct 'cultures' (see e.g. Choi, Kim, and Kim 2010; Sims 2006; Tsalikis and Seaton 2007). However, 'cross-cultural management' scholars have challenged this narrow focus on national culture (Mahadevan 2017; Romani, Mahadevan, and Primecz 2018; Sackmann 1997).

As Mahadevan argues, the main task within cross-cultural management is not to understand the national differences between groups, but to understand how the multiple cultural contexts in which organizational members are embedded create relevant differences that must be explored and addressed (Mahadevan 2017:14). Following this line of thinking, this dissertation, I argue for the importance of what I term the 'vocational context' for how ethics programs are understood and

appropriated within complex organizations. I deliberately use the word 'vocational' rather than 'professional', as the communities I describe here are comprised of a number of (related) professions. The concept of 'profession' has been debated, but it has generally been used to refer to a synthesis between educational background, employees' autonomy on the job and claims to certain task- and knowledge domains (Abbott 1988; Leicht and Fennell 2001, 2008). By applying the concept of 'vocational communities' instead of 'professions', I wish to draw attention to the communities that are formed across (and regardless of) educational backgrounds and professional jurisdiction within a given vocational context.

In this present study, what starts as an exploration of communities of life in three geographical locations, Denmark, China and Switzerland, becomes an exploration of communities of meaning within vocational groups that transcend national boundaries. Meaning-making, I argue, is informed by practice, and these communities of meaning are shaped by vocational communities of practice within these groups.

As Lave and Wenger (1991; see also Wenger 1998) famously argued, groups of people who share a profession or a sphere of activities also share a belonging to a community of practice. Through their practical engagements in a particular group, individuals learn from each other, and newcomers are socialized into the community by slowly learning the craft and knowledge of that community. Similarly, Abbott (1988) argued that the development of professions and of people identifying with these professions is shaped by the practical work in which these people engage, and various scholars have demonstrated how professional identities are created and reshaped in dialectic processes between the identity work of the individual and her social and organizational surroundings (Alvesson 1994; Van Maanen 2010; Moore 2012; Pratt, Rockmann, and Kaufmann 2006).

Despite the importance of these contributions and their emphasis on the professional and vocational context as central for shaping communities of meaning through practice, most business ethics scholars focus on the importance of geographically bounded communities, i.e. communities of life, as the basis of differences in ethical orientations. From both theoretical and empirical perspectives, this narrow focus on communities of life is a missed opportunity to comprehend more in depth the actual operation of business ethics, because it assumes national belonging to be the most salient community for organizational actors' ethical orientations from the outset rather than exploring how various communities may gain relevance at different moments. From a practical perspective as well, businesses seeking to ensure that their corporate ethics programs operate as intended in complex organizations

may also benefit from considering both communities of life and communities of meaning when designing such programs.

In order to shed light on these questions with both theory and practical development in mind, in this study, I approach business ethics from a descriptive rather than a normative perspective. I explore what happens when an ethics program travels not only across different national contexts but also across different vocational contexts. The three national contexts that I describe here are Denmark, Switzerland and China; and the vocational groups in focus are human resources officers, marketing and sales officers and clinical trials officers.

1.3. Theoretical approach

In this dissertation, social constructionism is the outset for my explorations, and I draw on a number of theoretical approaches within the social constructionist paradigm in order to interpret the empirical material and inform the analysis. Three key concepts run through the argument: *travelling management ideas*, *recontextualization*, and *ordinary ethics.*

The concept of travelling management ideas refers to the ways in which the aforementioned managerial trends and concepts move between contexts and become widespread convictions (Czarniawska and Joerges 1996). The concept of recontextualization was developed to understand shifts in meaning when the assets of a global firm are moved from one national unit to another. Recontextualization is a semiotic concept that points to how meaning-making occurs in context and how the meanings of firm offerings (or anything, really) can shift when the (semantic) context is not shared between sender and receiver (Brannen 2004:603). The concept of recontextualization thus focuses on the historical, political and cultural contexts in which messages are received, and the 'receivers' who try to make sense of the language, objects and symbols that are sent (Brannen 2004:603–4). In this dissertation, I draw on the recontextualization concept to understand what happens when a management idea – in this case the idea of the ethical and responsible business, which has materialized in an ethics program – travels across national and vocational borders and into different national contexts than where it originated. In order to understand responses to the ethics program in terms of a process which is more than simply that of 'national culture', I employ as my third key concept the notion of 'ordinary ethics' as developed by Lambek (2010b, 2010a). The concept of 'ordinary ethics' differs from the widespread normative concepts often applied in studies of corporate

ethics programs in that it highlights the ethical as an inherent part of everyday action. The concept thus draws on Aristotle's notion of *phronesis* – or practical wisdom – and refers to the ways in which the individual makes experience-based judgments and how 'the good' comes to be defined in practice in different ways within different communities. Rather than defining what the ethical consists of from the very outset, I find it important to understand how it comes to be constructed under different circumstances, including national and vocational. Only if we explore what our interlocutors define as ethics and what questions are understood as ethically salient, I would argue, can we start to grasp their motivations and reasons for certain actions; including those actions that we as researchers may otherwise view as unethical. The concept of ordinary ethics helps me in pursuing this task of foregrounding ethics as inherent in ordinary practices.

1.4. The case company

The pharmaceutical industry has been a sector of business that has often been subjected to criticism, perhaps to a larger extent than other sectors. Pharmaceutical developments and scandals have been the object of intense scrutinizing by media, various interest groups and public authorities. Animal testing, payment of humans to participate in early clinical trials, sometimes with risky side effects, treatments that make patients addictive, opaque pricing structures, outrageous profits for certain treatments and a focus on developing new medicine primarily within the most profitable therapeutic areas are among the most widespread criticisms appearing in public debates. While the pharmaceutical industry has no shortage of cases of misconduct, the negative connotations often associated with the industry might also be related to the fact that it embodies two spheres not generally associated with one another: the sphere of care and the sphere of profit-making. In its efforts to be – and to be perceived as - a responsible corporate citizen committed to science and care for patients, the major pharmaceutical companies have established ethics programs to tackle this dilemma of developing medical treatments and making profit. The specific corporate ethics program in focus within this dissertation represents one example of such efforts from the pharmaceutical industry.

The case study company, Ferring Pharmaceuticals, is a multinational, biopharmaceutical company focused on reproductive medicine and women's health. Founded in Sweden in 1950 by a German-born physician, the company has a northern European heritage. Since 2006, Ferring's corporate headquarter has been located in Switzerland, and its largest Research & Development site is located in Denmark.

Ferring has 6500 employees worldwide and has operating subsidiaries in almost 60 countries. It markets its products in 110 countries.

Ferring's ethics program consists of various training concepts, awareness material, a whistle blowing scheme and a code of ethics and is managed by its Global Ethics Office. This is a corporate function which is administered from Ferring's corporate headquarters in Switzerland but with employees also located in Denmark, USA and Israel.[1] The Global Ethics Office has the task of steering the organization towards preferred business behaviours, and is thus a normative corporate function put in place to encourage employees to do what is considered 'the right thing' within the company (cf. Sampson 2016).

1.5. The industrial PhD program

This research was conducted under the so called 'Industrial PhD' programme, whereby PhD research projects are jointly financed by private companies or public organizations together with government stipends for doctoral researchers. The Industrial PhD program was established in 2014 by the Danish Ministry of Science and Education.[2] Within this funding scheme, the researcher is hired, and partly paid, by a private company to do a PhD project on a topic deemed useful for this company. The PhD project must have academic relevance and high scientific quality while still benefitting the company, and the researcher must balance this dual obligation to their funder and their research institution with which they are affiliated. I have been hired and partly paid by Ferring Pharmaceuticals throughout this research, and I will elaborate on the implications (and complications) of this funding scheme in Chapter 3.

1.6. Research questions

Overall research focus
This study aims to explore how a business ethics program is recontextualized as it travels in a multinational and multi-vocational business context.

---

[1] The Global Ethics Office has undergone major changes between 2017 and 2019 during the course of the research. Thus, the descriptions on which this dissertation is based do not correspond to the current organization of this corporate function within Ferring Pharmaceuticals. See Chapter 8 for a description of the changes.
[2] For a detailed description of the Danish Industrial PhD scheme, see Appendix 8.

Research questions

RQ1: What material shape has the management idea of 'business ethics' taken in Ferring Pharmaceuticals, and how is this idea interpreted and recontextualized as it travels to business units abroad?

The aim of this research question is to guide explorations of the materialization of the widespread management idea of 'business ethics' into an ethics program within one particular company, and to guide an analysis of the properties of this ethics program. The goal here is to explore how these properties are recontextualized when the ethics program travels to business units in different national contexts than where the program originated. This research question primarily guides Chapter 4 of this dissertation.

RQ 2: How is Ferring's ethics program interpreted and enacted as it travels into different vocational communities and across levels in the organizational hierarchy?

The aim of this research question is to guide the analysis of how 'the ethical' is expressed in practical, everyday and ordinary action within the communities of practice in two corporate functions, as well as within different hierarchical groups. Moreover, it will guide the analysis of how Ferring's corporate ethics program is understood within each of these vocational communities. This research question lays the foundation for chapters 5-7 as well as informing Chapter 4.

RQ 3: How does Ferring's ethics program change over time?

The last research question addresses how the content and structure of Ferring's ethics program (the materialization of business ethics as a management idea) changes during the course of this longitudinal study. This research question guides Chapter 8.

1.7. Content and structure of the dissertation

This dissertation is structured as follows. The current chapter has briefly introduced the background and aim of the study as well as the central concepts that will be employed throughout the dissertation.

Chapter 2 introduces the reader to the business ethics literature relevant to this study. It identifies a dominant national culture focus as well as commenting on the lack of ethnographic research on the processes of ensuring corporate ethics programs within complex organizations. Chapter 3 describes how the research was designed and offers reflections on the ethnographic methods that were deployed, especially in view of my own position as both an employee of Ferring and a researcher attached to a Danish business university. Chapter 4 offers an analysis of Ferring's corporate ethics program, and of ethics officers' efforts to ensure adherence to this program across global locations as well as local recontextualizations of this program among human resources officers in China and Switzerland. Chapters 5 and 6 dive into the ordinary ethics of two vocational communities of practice at Ferring: the clinical trials officers and the marketing and sales officers, exploring the practice of everyday ethics within these two groups. Moreover, these chapters follow up on questions raised in Chapter 4, specifically proposing that the ordinary ethics of vocational communities of practice may be as important for understanding what happens when ethics programs travel as national culture. Chapter 7 changes the perspective once more and analyzes the reception of the ethics program among two other communities: managers and employees. Contrasting these two groups, this chapter demonstrates how Ferring's ethics program is understood differently depending on their positions in the formal hierarchy. Here again, we find that the organizational hierarchy may be an equally salient factor for understanding the reception of a corporate ethics program as the presumed importance of national culture. Chapter 8 provides a longitudinal account of Ferring's ethics program and describes how its composition and responsibilities have changed during the course of the research.
Finally, Chapter 9 discusses the findings across the chapters in relation to the problem statement and research questions, while Chapter 10 summarizes the main conclusions from the study.

2. Literature Review and Theoretical Approach[3]

2.1. Introduction

This chapter presents the state of research on those topics specifically relevant for answering the research questions addressed in this dissertation. As such, it reviews the literature on corporate ethics programs and codes of ethics, on ethical decision-making studies as well as literature on national cultures and business ethics and proposes theoretical and methodological approaches that could elucidate understanding of business ethics as a practical endeavour and the various outcomes of ethics programs.

Within this dissertation, I deal with ethics in two distinct ways. First, I regard 'business ethics' as an emic concept whose manifestations can be observed in corporate documents (codes of ethics) as well as in job contracts with specific titles (ethics officers) and within organizational structures (ethics offices). I explore this emic understanding within Ferring Pharmaceuticals. As mentioned in the introduction, the overall phenomenon in focus in this study is a cluster of activities often labelled as 'corporate ethics programs'. Hence, this chapter reviews studies of such programs. At the core of the activities comprising an ethics program most often lies a code of ethics, i.e. a corporate document specifying preferred behaviours and guidelines for action. In this chapter, I will therefore discuss previous studies on such codes of ethics.

The intent of corporate ethics programs and codes of ethics is to steer employees towards certain behaviours and attitudes and to ensure that they make decisions that are considered ethically sound according to the framework of the program. 'Ethical decision-making' comprises a vast body of

---

[3] The following chapter contains sections that are based on two papers: a forthcoming chapter in the volume *Responsible Global Leadership: Dilemmas, Paradoxes, and Opportunities* edited by Rachel Clapp-Smith, Günter Stahl, Mark Mendenhall and Milda Zilinskaite written together with professor Anne-Marie Søderberg (Gosovic and Søderberg 2020); and a literature review presented at the Annual Conference of the European International Business Academy in 2017 (Gosovic 2017).

research. In this chapter, I will review the main discussions within this literature as well as propose an alternative conceptualization of ethical decision-making at the individual level.

This alternative conceptualization relates to the second way in which this dissertation deals with ethics: as an analytical category rather than an empirical phenomenon.

To deal with this second understanding of ethics, the second part of this chapter turns to comparative business ethics research and cross-cultural management studies. My goal here is to cite the need to supplement the national difference approach to how ethics programs operate and to bring in the study of other possible communities than the national (e.g., vocational, organizational hierarchy, etc.) when seeking to understand the practical workings of ethics programs. Accounting for cross-cultural management as a research field in its entirety is beyond the scope of this chapter; hence, I will focus on the challenges of introducing global programs, such as ethics programs, into complex, multi-national organizations.

In the last part of the chapter, I review previous studies on strategy-as-practice, arguing that business ethics needs a similar ethics-as-practice approach. The concept of 'ordinary ethics' as articulated by Lambek (2010b, 2018) is introduced as a fruitful way of understanding ethics as practice. Here I emphasize the ethical salience of ordinary situations not necessarily labelled as 'ethical' by the researcher, nor the practitioner, but which in fact have an ethical content behind them; hence 'ordinary ethics'. Let me begin this review with a characterization of what we mean by a 'corporate ethics program'.

2.2. Corporate ethics programs

2.2.1. Definitions of corporate ethics programs

During the past two decades, there has been a growing interest in ethical issues among companies (Sharbatoghlie, Mosleh, and Shokatian 2013). The majority of large organizations around the world have now established codified statements and activities within the ethical field, such as codes of ethics, ethics training and procedures for reporting unethical conduct (Kaptein 2015; Martineau, Johnson, and Pauchant 2016:791; Paine 1994; Weaver et al. 1999). These ethics efforts that have been institutionalized in companies are referred to by various names, such as ethics programs, shared value programs, compliance programs and responsible conduct programs (Weaver and Treviño 1999:315). Weaver and Treviño define ethics programs as control systems that 'aim to create predictability in

employee behaviour and correspondence between specific employee behaviours and more general organizational goals and expectations' (Weaver and Treviño 1999:317; for a similar definition, see Kaptein 2009:264). Martineau et al. (2016) define the components of ethics programs as 'ethics practices', which are 'any rule, method, procedure, process, management tool, structure, or institution that presents an essential teleological character aiming at increasing consciousness, reflection and ethical behaviour in an organization, at the individual, collective and strategic levels' (Martineau et al. 2016:793). Following Weaver and Treviño (1999) and Martineau et al. (2016), in this dissertation, I use the umbrella term 'ethics program' to refer to institutionalizations of ethics practices.

2.2.2. Orientations of corporate ethics programs

Studies of corporate ethics programs have focused on defining and understanding the functions of different programs and – often – arguing in favour of a particular type of program. Despite recent attempts to broaden the 'ethics program' concept (Martineau et al. 2016), most studies that focus on the content of such programs distinguish between values-oriented programs and compliance-oriented programs, which are more legally or regulation based (Warren, Gaspar, and Laufer 2014:89). According to Warren et al. (2014), it is generally accepted among scholars that values-oriented programs are more effective than compliance-oriented programs, as they guide employees' behaviour more generally rather than orienting them towards more limited legal frameworks. Similarly, Paine (1994) distinguishes between 'compliance-oriented' and 'integrity oriented' ethics programs, arguing that legal or regulatory compliance should not be considered an adequate means to address the numerous ethical dilemmas that arise in everyday organizational life (Paine 1994:109). A compliance approach to ethics, she writes, overemphasizes the threat of detection and punishment, whereas studies show that a supportive environment might be sufficient to prevent wrongdoing. Moreover, she writes, while sanctions may be an effective component in encouraging compliance for some, over use of sanctions may even cause people to rebel against the ethics programs (Paine 1994:110–11; see also Weaver and Treviño 1999:320). Nevertheless, researchers have found that compliance-oriented programs are associated with many of the same outcomes as values-oriented programs (Weaver and Treviño 1999:319,327). Missing from these studies, however, is what compliance- and values-oriented programs look like in practice within a corporate setting. Nor do we learn what specific practices lead to these claimed similar outcomes. By gaining insights into the practices of ethics programs and how they are received, we may understand better why previous studies of such programs have been inconclusive.

2.2.3. Normative focus in previous research

Much of the research on ethics programs has been occupied with the 'effectiveness' of such programs in preventing (predefined definitions of) unethical behaviour. In this effectiveness approach, some scholars have focused on specific components of ethics programs and correlated their existence with 'ethical intent' (Ruiz et al. 2015). Other scholars focus on ethics training, where e.g. the effects of such training on elements such as observed unethical behaviour and intentions to behave ethically are measured quantitatively (Ritter 2006; Verma, Mohapatra, and Löwstedt 2016; Warren et al. 2014). As argued by Weber (2007), ethical behaviour can develop and mature over time, and formal ethics training can play a significant role in this maturation process. Similarly, Warren et al. (2014:89) point to social psychological theories, which indicate that formal ethics training will help employees identify ethical dilemmas and how to handle these. However, although we learn that formal ethics training can be positively associated with increased 'ethical behaviour', we learn little about the content of these ethics training programs, the experiences of employees who undergo such training, nor what 'ethical behaviour' might consist of in different circumstances. We learn only that participating in such programs might reduce instances of undesirable behaviour (e.g. bribery, nepotism, sexual harassment).

In a recent study based on a questionnaire survey, Kaptein (2015) measured the effectiveness of ethics programs by comparing components of such programs with the frequency of unethical behaviour as defined on a scale of 37 predefined unethical behaviours such as 'submitting false or misleading invoices to customers', 'discriminating against employees' or 'accepting inappropriate gifts, favours, entertainment, or kickbacks from suppliers' (Kaptein 2008a:988–89). The effectiveness is measured in relation to the scope, composition and sequence of components, and Kaptein concludes that organizations that have an ethics program experience significantly less unethical behaviour than do organizations without such programs (Kaptein 2015:426).

As we have seen, research has largely approached the study of ethics programs in a normative fashion, where 'effectiveness' and 'unethical behaviour' are predefined categories against which are placed a quantitative empirical metric, overlooking any possible variations in understandings of what 'the ethical' or 'the unethical' may consist of for those being studied. But if we restrict ourselves to categorizing actions and orientations as ethical or unethical only according to our own definitions, we miss the opportunity to understand the motivations for why people sometimes engage in acts that may seem unethical according to our own standards for right and wrong. In this dissertation, I take a more exploratory approach. My goal is to offer a perspective on 'the ethical' as it is defined by organizational actors in their everyday practice.

2.3. Studies of corporate codes of ethics

2.3.1. Definitions of corporate codes of ethics

As noted by Singh et al. (2018), a corporate code of ethics is the anchor of an ethics program and the basis around which the ethics practices are formed.

Currently, a growing number of companies publish explicit statements of the ethical principles that are to guide the behaviour of staff and managers across all global business units and for the company in general. Codes of ethics are tools for companies by which they describe the ethical responsibilities that they take upon themselves (cf. Carroll 1991; Erwin 2011; Schwartz and Carroll 2003). In addition, some scholars have argued that codes also serve more general governance purposes (Bondy, Matten, and Moon 2006).

Stevens (1994:64) defines corporate codes of ethics as written documents that attempt to articulate ethics to internal as well as external audiences. Weaver (1993), on the other hand, questions a conceptualization of codes of ethics that limits ethical guidelines to formal ethical codes. Weaver argues that other instructional documents such as operations manuals or policies should also be included as within the realm of the ethical. He calls for a broader conceptualization of codes of ethics which also includes documents that do not explicitly declare themselves to be ethical (Weaver 1993:45). More than a decade later, Kaptein and Schwartz (2008) write that while implicit codes of ethics do exist in other documents, as argued by Weaver (1993), a code of ethics is primarily a distinct and formal document 'containing a set of prescriptions developed by and for a company to guide the present and future behaviours on multiple issues of at least its managers and employees toward one another, the company, external stakeholders and/or society in general' (Kaptein and Schwartz 2008:113).

With a point of departure in this definition, the term 'codes of ethics' will be used in this dissertation to refer to formal ethical codes that are presented as value-based concepts at the corporate level and for which, unlike legal non-compliance, there exist no or very limited mechanisms in place to control or sanction non-adherence (Cf. Paine 1994).

2.3.2. Previous research characterized by quantitative methodologies

Similarly to studies of corporate ethics programs, scholars have also focused on the effects of establishing codes of ethics. Some have pointed out that codes of ethics may contribute to legitimizing

the company by preserving its public image (Erwin 2011:356; Long and Driscoll 2008; Sacconi 1999). Others have argued that codes of ethics improve the internal 'ethical culture' of companies (Kaptein and Wempe 1998:868; Valentine and Barnett 2002), that codes have a positive effect on ethical decision-making (Ford and Richardson 1994:216; O'Fallon and Butterfield 2005:397) and lead to less unethical conduct (Boo and Chye Koh 2001; Erwin 2011:545; Kaptein 2015). Other studies have focused on the impact of codes, in the sense that they enhance the 'ethical climate' (Kuntz, Elenkov, and Nabirukhina 2009) or 'ethical awareness' among employees (Craft 2013; McKinney, Emerson, and Neubert 2010).

As a research field, studies of codes of ethics are largely dominated by quantitative research methods. In a review of empirical research on the 'effectiveness' of codes, Kaptein and Schwartz (2008:116–17) demonstrate that out of the 79 empirical studies included in the review, the vast majority use quantitative approaches. Similarly, two reviews of empirical studies of corporate codes of ethics between 1994 and mid-2005 (Helin and Sandström 2007) and between 2005 and 2016 (Babri et al. 2019) also find that most empirical studies rely on quantitative data.

Thus, scholars have largely approached codes of ethics quantitatively, with a focus on hypothesis testing, and they seem to be driven by questions of determining which factors or variables affect their predefined notions of ethical conduct. However, many scholars have cited the inconclusive results regarding the effects of codes of ethics on ethical behaviour within organizations (Erwin 2011; Kaptein and Schwartz 2008; Mcdonald 2009; Painter-Morland 2008; Singh et al. 2018). Similarly to studies of ethics programs, doubts about the impact of codes of ethics might be an artefact of the methodology applied. This is because researchers treat empirical phenomena such as e.g. code implementation efforts as static, comparable and measurable units, in so far as their intention is to explain why a given code 'works' or 'fails'. In contrast, little attention is given to exploring *how* a code works or fails, or the entire process of a code succeeding or failing, or both simultaneously. As argued by Moore (2011), such neglect of ambivalence and of the contradictory aspects that inevitably cohabitate within complex organizations is widespread. This neglect of ambivalence, of course, is not unique to studies of codes of ethics. But it is certainly a factor in why we know so little of what happens to employees' everyday lives when they are to be socialized, trained or monitored in their code of ethics.

That this problem is hardly new is demonstrated by Stevens (1994), who more than 25 years ago pleaded that scholars should focus more on how codes are communicated and how they function as messages to direct behaviour within organizations (Stevens 1994:68). Following this call, in the

aforementioned literature reviews, Helin and Sandström (2007) and Babri et al. (2019) found a lack of longitudinal studies as well as a limited interest in the transformation *process* when a code is introduced into different organizational contexts. Further, they conclude that questions remain unanswered as to what kinds of challenges arise when trying to introduce a code of ethics, what kinds of actors translate the code and how, and they call for more longitudinal and qualitative studies on codes of ethics in order to explore such questions. This call is also supported by other scholars (Statler and Oliver 2016:95–96; Trapp 2011:544).

The present study offers one such longitudinal perspective on an ethics program. It provides ethnographic insights into the multiple ways in which organizational actors interpret and enact a specific corporate ethics program in a complex organization across national and vocational boundaries.

2.4. Ethical decision-making studies

2.4.1. Quantitative measurements and context-dependent ethics definitions

The purpose of codes of ethics and their associated ethics programs is to steer employees' attitudes and behaviours in the direction set out by the code. As noted by Warren et al. (2014:88), much of the theory on 'ethical awareness' and behaviour is grounded in social cognitive theories. This literature, focusing as it does on the drivers and inhibitors for such 'ethical awareness', has experienced increasing recognition since the early 2000s (Tenbrunsel and Smith-Crowe 2008). The aim of these studies is often to explain the reasons for (normatively defined) ethical and unethical behaviour (Sparks and Pan 2010:405), and 'the ethical' is often either a predefined category to which people can comply to varying degrees, or the ethical is measured as a variable that can be correlated with other variables, such as job-satisfaction (Kish-Gephart, Harrison, and Treviño 2010), demographic variables (O'Fallon and Butterfield 2005), or deviance from normative behaviours amongst employees (Mayer et al. 2009). Understanding the ethical as a predefined category is, of course, also due to the quantitative methodology, its epistemology and the inherent need for stable variables in order to derive statistically valid correlations. As pointed out by Lehnert et al. (2015:206) in their review of empirical ethical decision-making literature, most of the studies within previous literature reviews rely on surveys, particularly scenario-based surveys and student samples. Lehnert et al. (2015) underscore the dearth of qualitative studies which, instead of highlighting scenarios, could give us a picture of ethical decision-making in practice (see also Lehnert et al. 2016).

While I remain sceptical regarding the possibility to capture, demarcate and hold 'ethics' stable as a variable, these studies nevertheless offer insights into the importance of the context of an act, which is said to determine whether or not that act will be perceived as ethical. The ethical decision-making literature often draws on constructs such as 'ethical climate', (Arnaud 2010; Victor and Cullen 1988), which is meant to be the local conditions that determine what constitutes ethical conduct, as defined by an 'Ethical Climate Index'. A related construct is 'ethical culture', which refers to those aspects in the organizational context that stimulate ethical conduct (Huhtala et al. 2018; Kangas et al. 2014; Kaptein 2008b). These studies aim to measure ethics at the level of the organization. They endeavour to demonstrate that understandings of 'the ethical' indeed vary across contexts. Other research has focused more on individual levels of 'ethical decision-making'. Common to these studies, however, is that they emphasize the importance of the context, and that 'the ethical' is rendered measurable (Jones 1991; Treviño, Weaver, and Reynolds 2006).

The point of departure for this dissertation overlaps with the above approaches. Hence, I will explore how 'the ethical' comes to be defined in different contexts. However, instead of a survey or quantitative approach, I deploy an ethnographic methodology to unfold the details and significance of different national and vocational contexts for how the ethical is understood.

2.4.2. Normative constructs for measuring the ethical

The context-sensitive nature of ethical decision-making, as highlighted in the literature, had led Tenbrunsel and Smith-Crowe (2008) to criticize the field for not defining ethics and for lacking normative definitions. As they write in a 2008 literature review, 'Without a universal understanding of the core dependent variable, research will remain inconsistent, incoherent and atheoretical' (Tenbrunsel and Smith-Crowe 2008:548). As mentioned above, these studies tend to treat ethical decision-making as a variable, whereby they measure the extent to which respondents answer 'correctly' within their moral community. Thus, as pointed out by Tenbrunsel and Smith-Crowe (2008), these studies of ethical decision-making are indeed non-normative in the sense that they measure whatever a given community defines as ethical.

While this kind of sensitivity to various definitions of the ethical is certainly an advance over the more normative approaches, the actual constructs used for these measurements and the definitions of the ethical, I would argue, remain highly normative. They establish scales and barriers for what the ethical

could consist of. For example, in their article on ethical leadership, Brown et al. (2005) develop an 'Ethical Leadership Scale' on the basis of which a leader can be assessed. The scale consists of 10 items, such as 'listens to what employees have to say', 'Defines success not just by results but also the way that they are obtained' and 'Has the best interest of employees in mind' (Brown et al. 2005:125). Indices such as these thus define the boundaries of what respondents might consider ethical. Although the understanding of what it means to have the best interest of employees in mind might differ, such scales limit respondents' ability to communicate their own perspectives on what elements would be important to measure in the first place. It is such emic understandings that are the hallmark of an anthropological understanding. Moreover, by relying on such pre-determined indices, the researchers disregard the possibility that respondents may not find it central for their notions of ethical leadership that their leader listens to them or defines success by how results are obtained.

Similarly, constructs such as 'Machiavellianism'[4] are measured and established as predictors for normatively defined unethical behaviour, while constructs such as 'moral identity' are established in order to describe the characteristics of 'moral' individuals, here defined as people who are e.g. caring, compassionate and fair (see e.g. Moore et al. 2012; O'Fallon and Butterfield 2005). Here, the researchers' own definition of unethical behaviour, not to mention an idea of the 'moral individual' forms the basis for these studies and conclusions. Hence, contrary to Tenbrunsel and Smith-Crowe (2008), I would argue that these ostensibly non-normative studies are in fact normative in their design and discourse. And while there is surely value to such normative research designs, they tell us little about how ethical or unethical behaviour unfolds in practice, nor how ethical behaviour would actually be defined by relevant organizational actors.

In short, within ethical decision-making studies, it is most often the researcher who defines what is ethical and what is unethical. I would argue, however, that a focus on predefined behavioural categories of ethical and unethical causes us to risk missing important insights about how 'the ethical' is defined in practice and under specific circumstances. As also pointed out by Painter-Morland (2008), business ethics research is burdened by a conceptualization of 'moral agents' who make decisions in an objective and rational manner (according to a universal standard of rationality). Rather than exploring the reasons why people act in what the researcher might define as ethical or unethical ways, I would point to the importance of also exploring what constitutes 'the ethical' in different contexts, for

---

[4] As Moore et al. write, 'Machiavellianism represents an individual's propensity to be manipulative and ruthless in the pursuit of self-interested goals' (Moore et al. 2012:7). Machiavellianism is measured by using a standard 20-item questionnaire where respondents are asked to rate the extent to which they agree with statements such as 'It is hard to get ahead without cutting corners here and there' (Moore et al. 2012:16).

different groups of actors. It is this kind of practical ethical configuration that is the focus of this dissertation.

2.4.3. *Ethical decision-making as a distinct category of actions*

Ethical decision-making scholars often demarcate ethical actions and decisions as distinct categories of action separate from social life in general. Two of the most prominent understandings of individual ethical decision-making are Rest's four component model (Rest 1986) and Jones' development of this model into the Issue-Contingent Model (Jones 1991). The point of departure for Rest's model is that a so-called 'moral agent' recognizes a 'moral issue'. The main contribution of Jones' model is the notion of 'moral intensity', which is the perceived severity of the moral issue about which a moral agent makes a decision (Jones 1991:368, 372-373). Thus, within these models, the moral issue is assumed to be distinct, an entity that can presumably be recognized as such by a moral agent. Since the publication of these models, a large number of studies have attempted to test them, correlating various individual or societal factors with ethical decision-making. Five extensive literature reviews in the *Journal of Business Ethics* have covered these studies (Craft 2013; Ford and Richardson 1994; Lehnert et al. 2015; Loe, Ferrell, and Mansfield 2000; O'Fallon and Butterfield 2005). However, within the reviewed studies and the models on which they are based, ethical decision-making continues to be distinguished as a particular category of decision-making, the implication being that some decisions are ethically salient, while other decisions lie outside the realm of the ethical. This, I would argue, is a misconception of the ethical, as the ethical cannot be separated from social life in general. Later in this chapter, I will offer an alternative conceptualization of the ethical as inherent in the everyday.

2.4.4. *Key issues*

In sum, the critique I voice is threefold. First, the design of most studies on ethical decision-making comprises a limiting framework for exploring the ethical, as the questions and scales within which the ethical is measured are constrained by the researcher's definitions rather than allowing for alternative understandings or informants' own concepts of 'the ethical'. While it is clear that no research can be entirely free of the researcher's own conceptions, my point here is that predefined research designs, coupled with the quantitative approach, prevent us from even approaching organizational actors' own understandings of 'the ethical'.

Second, ethical decision-making is demarcated as a distinct category of decision-making, and ethical behaviour is viewed as a specific type of behaviour (for more behavior categories, see also Kish-Gephart et al. 2010), as if they were distinguishable from other types of behaviour and decision-making. What I argue, in contrast, is that the ethical is inherent in all actions and decisions. We thus need to explore where and how 'the ethical' penetrates social life, including the social life of organizations and even the most ordinary situations.

Third, while I find the definitions of the ethical as context-dependent insightful, within quantitative studies, this context is defined as a statistical average of respondents' answers that can be captured, measured and held stable as a variable. The downside of such studies is that we risk losing important insights about the complexities and different aspects of these contexts. The present dissertation intends to contribute to expanding this area of research by providing an ethnographic perspective on ethical decision-making as an immanent part of everyday action, and it explores ethical judgments as they unfold in everyday practice.

2.5. National cultures and business ethics

Associated with the ethical decision-making literature (and its focus on context) is the field of comparative business ethics studies, which focuses mainly on describing national culture differences in what is perceived as ethical or unethical in a given national context. Within multinational companies, working with business ethics invariably entails working across national borders and socio-cultural contexts. Within the literature on internationalization of ethics practices (cf. Martineau et al. 2016), one concept has been particularly central: the concept of 'culture', most often conflated with 'national culture'.

2.5.1. Cross-cultural management

With the ever-increasing processes of internationalization, companies are moving not only their products and production technology but also business models, ideologies and various value-based governance systems to subsidiaries abroad (cf. Brannen 2004). A large body of literature is now dedicated to exploring how best to manage such processes of internationalization and how to overcome the differences between headquarters and subsidiary country environments. Such

differences are often conceptualized as cultural differences, and to overcome these, skills within 'cross-cultural management' are proposed as the solution (cf. Søderberg and Holden 2002).

The cross-cultural management approach operates on an assumption of 'cultures' as distinct, reasonably stable units across which one can manage (or fail to do so). Indeed, most studies within cross-cultural management are also based on assumptions that cultures have an 'essence' and can therefore be demarcated, measured and compared (Mahadevan 2017; Søderberg and Holden 2002). In this approach, cultures are understood as a system of values that is tied to a national belonging (Romani, Barmeyer, et al. 2018:247–49; Sackmann et al. 1997; Sackmann and Phillips 2004). Underscoring this conflation of culture with nations is the fact that cross-cultural management as a theme is highly prevalent within inter*national* human resources management and inter*national* business studies (see e.g. Bird and Mendenhall 2016). The assumption is that culture and the national are inseparable.

Within this body of literature, several studies have focused on 'cultural intelligence', referring to the ability to adapt to different (national) cultural environments (see e.g. Blasco, Feldt, and Jakobsen 2012) and on 'bi-culturals' (Brannen and Thomas 2010; Hanek, Lee, and Brannen 2014), or 'multiculturals' (Fitzsimmons, Miska, and Stahl 2011; Nguyen and Benet-Martínez 2010), all of which are terms used to refer to individuals with two or more national identities, but these labels are rarely used to account for belonging to other forms of cultural communities.

Almost inevitable within cross-cultural management studies is the seminal work of Geert Hofstede (see e.g. 2001) who created quantifiable dimensions for comparing essentialist cultural traits and for understanding cross-cultural management challenges. The fact that Hofstede found values differences across employees in one company, IBM, became an argument that these differences represented ideal types of national cultural differences. Despite significant criticism, Hofstede's 'cultural dimensions' are used across a wide array of disciplines (Phillips and Sackmann 2015:11).

The highly cited Global Leadership and Organizational Behaviour Effectiveness (GLOBE) research program (House et al. 2004) has continued the work of Hofstede by drawing on similar dimensions for measuring culture and by equating 'culture' with national culture (see e.g. Koopman, Den Hartog, and Konrad 1999). The GLOBE study begun in 1993 and was extended in 2004, 2007 and again in 2014, and yet another phase of the study is currently being initiated[5], all of which illustrates that this view of essentialist national culture continues to be prevalent.

---

[5] https://globeproject.com/studies, accessed July 1st, 2019.

As pointed out by Søderberg and Holden (2002), cross-cultural management needs to consider the interaction of 'multiple cultures' rather than simply cultures at national boundaries (see also Sackmann et al. 1997; Sackmann and Phillips 2004).

Within social anthropology, the concept of culture has long been debated, and in the early 1990s, there was a rupture in conceptualizing culture in terms of essentialist or place-bound frameworks (see e.g. Hannerz 1992; Malkki 1992; Olwig and Hastrup 1997; Rosaldo 1988). Further, concepts of 'multiculturalism' and 'subcultures' were criticized for attempting to subsume the plurality of human practices into essentialist and demarcated cultures. Metaphors such as 'cultural mosaics' were criticized for replicating notions of cultures as internally homogeneous 'pieces' of one kind and with clear boundaries (see e.g. the critique by Gupta and Ferguson 1992; Schwartz 1997). Since then, the concept of culture as a metaphor has moved out of focus within the discipline.

Despite attempts by some scholars (see e.g. Mahadevan 2017; Moore 2005; Sackmann et al. 1997; Søderberg and Holden 2002), a similar break with the culture concept and its association with territory and national borders is yet to be seen within international business research. As argued by Moore (2015b), the reason for the high degree of scholarly focus on national culture may be that managers largely conceptualize their cross-border operations in national terms, and that these emic concepts have been adopted by international business scholars. Moreover, Phillips and Sackmann (2015) argue that the fact that Hofstede, in his work, equated national belonging with culture created a precedent within cross-cultural management as a field of research as well as among practitioners (Phillips and Sackmann 2015:12).

Within this dissertation, I also take a point of departure in the prevalent focus on national culture as a means of understanding local interpretations of Ferring's ethics program, but I also pursue a different road into the study of complex organizations and explore complexity and difference along multiple and more fluid demarcation lines in order to understand whether there are other communities that deserve attention in studies of business ethics. These communities turn out to be vocational groups and groups within the organizational hierarchy. I will elaborate on this later in this chapter.

2.5.2. Comparative business ethics

Conceptualizing national culture as a primary differentiator and central factor for management is also found within business ethics research. This stream of literature is often referred to as 'comparative business ethics', and the aim is to compare business ethics practices and perceptions across countries

and national business systems (see e.g. Choi et al. 2010). Within this stream of literature, scholars have developed instruments such as the 'International Business Ethics Index' for comparing consumers' sentiments towards business ethics in different national cultures (Tsalikis and Seaton 2007; Tsalikis, Seaton, and Li 2008) and the 'Attitudes Towards Business Ethics Questionnaire' (ATBEQ) which investigates 'cross-cultural differences in business ethics' within different country contexts (Preble and Reichel 1988; Sims 2006:101). These scholars thus engage in the same conceptual conflation of culture and nation as described earlier (see also Bageac, Furrer, and Reynaud 2011; Sims and Gegez 2004). Other scholars have sought to correlate Hofstede's culture dimensions with 'ethics' such as the content of companies' ethics policies and ethical conduct (as defined by the researchers) in quantitative data analytics models, where ethics and culture are treated as variables (Scholtens and Dam 2007:280). These studies show that understandings of ethics are indeed contextual, as also argued in the 'ethical decision-making' literature, and that understandings vary considerably across national cultures. However, these studies operate with the same narrow focus on national cultures as does the aforementioned cross-cultural management literature. Moreover, with the amount of national culture-focused comparative business ethics studies in mind, it seems that the national context is almost by default defined as the most salient cultural context worth exploring in business ethics research.

Whereas most comparative business ethics research relies on quantitative methodology, there exist a small number of qualitative studies. These explore the challenges of introducing codes of ethics and codes of conduct[6] from Western to non-Western contexts (Hanson and Rothlin 2010; Helin and Babri 2015; Helin and Sandström 2008, 2010; Hoivik 2007; Jensen, Sandström, and Helin 2015; Nakhle and Davoine 2016).

Perhaps due to the qualitative methodological design, which uses less predefined response schemas than quantitative surveys, we find that the message of these qualitative studies on codes of ethics is that codes are not merely 'implemented' in new contexts. Rather, in exporting a code into a new context, numerous agents participate in bringing this code into organizational life, thus creating varying outcomes.

The receivers of codes of ethics, then, are not merely passive recipients. They are active interpreters and possible change agents who mould the meaning, outcome and even the importance of codes through their interaction with these codes. Thus, recent research on codes of ethics demonstrates no a

---

[6] Codes of conduct are generally more compliance-focused than are codes of ethics, but as ethics and compliance departments are often combined within companies, and due to the scarcity of relevant studies, I have also included studies on codes of conduct in this literature review.

priori hierarchical relationship between those introducing the code, the code itself and those on whom the code is imposed. Moreover, as demonstrated by Jensen, Sandström and Helin (2009), the code itself also has transformative capacities.

Together, such insights on complex processes and heterogeneous outcomes of introducing a code of ethics in different contexts are important learning points for companies seeking to ensure adherence to codes of ethics. Furthermore, these insights may perhaps even be part of the reason why the quantitative studies have had more inconclusive results regarding the 'effectiveness' of codes (Erwin 2011; Kaptein and Schwartz 2008; Mcdonald 2009; Singh et al. 2018).

The qualitative studies thus provide us with valuable knowledge about the different ways in which codes of ethics are interpreted by employees. However, although some of these studies challenge Hofstedian notions of foreignness and distance and static cultural categories, they continue to operate with a focus on national culture. Thus, these studies have been designed to explore country differences rather than differences among other potential cultural communities. The studies thus follow ways in which corporations often conceive of their own structures as divided into headquarters and foreign subsidiaries. However, we could also conceive of internal firm diversity in different ways; e.g. in terms of organizational processes; or by type of firm, such as a production company supplying other companies, a distribution company without any development of own solutions, a research-focused company, or an end-to-end solutions provider. In the latter case, one might find that the trait of being 'multi-vocational' is equally - or perhaps more - salient than the 'multi-national' for how ethics programs and codes of ethics are received.

In this dissertation, I will show how a corporate ethics program is introduced into contexts that are both multi-national and multi-vocational. As mentioned earlier, I use the term multi-vocational rather than multi-professional to point to the importance not only of professional background (e.g., doctor or pharmacist) but also the communities that are established through particular vocational practices in specific work contexts. I will approach business ethics in a more contextually sensitive manner than previous studies where the recipients of ethics programs are not merely passive receivers but also contributors to co-constructing notions of right and wrong.

2.6. Theoretical approach in this dissertation

2.6.1. Travel and recontextualization of management ideas

Rasche and Seidl (2019:1–2), following Kramer (1975), define management ideas as 'fairly stable bodies of knowledge about what management ought to do … a system of assumptions, accepted principles and rules of procedure'. Czarniawska and Sevón (2005a) point out the ways in which ideas and models of organizations evolve and travel, both locally and globally, and they focus on how ideas such as 'performance management', 'self-management', 'empowerment' or managerial ideals such as New Public Management are materialized in processes, practices and ways of organizing, becoming global ideas through 'travelling' and 'translation' processes.

In an attempt to understand the continuous circulation of management ideas and managerial practices in organizations, the concepts of travelling and translation emphasize that objects or technologies which circulate around the globe do not remain in their pristine form. As Czarniawska and Sevón write, 'to set something in a new place is to construct it anew' (Czarniawska and Sevón 2005b:8–9). Although most often associated with language, they write, *translation* is a helpful term precisely because any translation process involves a degree of transformation. In this dissertation, I will draw on the concept of travelling management ideas to explore how the management idea of 'business ethics' materializes in Ferring Pharmaceuticals. However, although the concept of translation is certainly useful, it does not sufficiently explain how and why such translation processes happen. In order to describe this process, I instead draw on the concept of 'recontextualization'.

In 1999, Brannen, Liker and Fruin (1999) introduced the concept of recontextualization to cross-cultural management studies with their case study of a Japanese firm´s acquisition of a firm from the USA. Under this rubric, they discussed how the meanings attached to techniques and procedures were altered when they were introduced into another national cultural context. Brannen et al. (1999) define recontextualization as 'the transformation of the meaning of firm´s offerings (e.g., technologies, work practices and products) as they are uprooted from one cultural environment and transplanted to another' (Brannen et al. 1999:118). Although this definition connotes a similar demarcation of 'one cultural environment' as criticized earlier, and the concept of 'uprooting' still bears within it a linkage between people and place, between firm offerings and territory, which has long been challenged within anthropology (see e.g. Malkki 1992), the advantage of the recontextualization concept is that it questions the assumption about the possibility of unmediated 'transfer' of firm offerings from one (national) context to another. Moreover, with its heritage in semantics, for explorations of national

culture differences, the recontextualization concept offers a more detailed toolbox than the concept of 'translation', in that it urges us to observe the difference between signifier (firm asset) and signified (the meaning attached to this asset in different contexts).

In her exposition of the recontextualization concept, Brannen emphasizes the 'receiving' historical, political and cultural contexts of those who try to make sense of what is sought transferred (Brannen 2004:603–4).

With a theoretical point of departure in semiotics and using a case study of the introduction of the Disneyland theme park in countries outside the USA, Brannen (2004) describes how Disney experienced great success when transferring the theme park to Japan but ran into severe problems when attempting to transfer it to France. Brannen concludes that Disney's unexpected challenges in France indicate that (in the transfer process) organizational assets take on new meanings. These differences are not simply a result of differences in host country environments or a postulated 'cultural distance' (Brannen 2004:594). In the moving process, she writes, firm assets go through 'recipient cultural sensemaking filters' in which pre-existing meanings are attached to these assets, regardless of the intention of the sender (Brannen 2004:604). Sensemaking, she writes, occurs in context, and when the historical, political, cultural and semantic context is not shared between sender and receiver, the meanings can shift (Brannen 2004:603). The California Disneyland concept thus becomes something different in France and in Japan.

The recontextualization concept is highly relevant to studies of corporate values and preferred behaviours in global organizations. It allows us to track shifts in the meanings attached to such values and behaviours as they travel from a headquarters context to subsidiaries abroad. Some empirical studies draw on the recontextualization concept to understand such processes (see e.g. Aggerholm, Asmuß, and Thomsen 2012; D'Iribarne 2012; Gertsen and Zølner 2012b; Primecz, Romani, and Sackmann 2011; Søderberg 2015). However, longitudinal ethnographic studies of recontextualization processes of ethics programs and codes of ethics are scarce. With this dissertation, I seek to contribute to expanding our knowledge of recontextualizations of ethics programs by offering one such ethnographic perspective.

2.7. Ethics as practice

The first part of this chapter presented an overview of the dominant foci in the literature on ethics programs. A review of this literature showed a dearth of qualitative and non-normative studies. In the

following, I will discuss the role of daily practice as constitutive of 'the ethical', as well as I will outline the so-called 'ethical turn' in anthropology. Drawing on the anthropological discussion, I will present a way of approaching the ethical that avoids the normative restrains.

2.7.1. Practice, praxis and practitioners

The concept of practice has been at the centre of numerous social theory formulations. While a full discussion of practice theories is beyond the scope of this dissertation, I will elaborate my understanding of ethics as practice by focusing on the work of Pierre Bourdieu, Michael Lambek and scholars within the field of strategy-as-practice studies.

Practice, according to Lambek (2015b:10), is the 'relatively unmarked flow of action, including the habitual; it is action viewed or experienced as ongoing and, in effect, intransitive, the doing rather than the done'. Drawing on the, the Aristotelian notion of 'practical wisdom', Lambek further views ethics as constituted by and expressed through practice (Lambek 2010b).

In order to grasp the nature of this connection between practice and the ethical, Bourdieu's (1977) definition of practice as a nexus between embodied, structuring conditions of the social order (habitus) and practical actions that simultaneously express and enforce that order, is useful. Bourdieu emphasizes the way in which ordinary, intuitive practices express and reinforce these structuring structures of the individual (Bourdieu 1977:79–80). Although Bourdieu points toward ordinary practices as part of an argument about the somewhat determinant effects of the habitus, to which I do not subscribe in this dissertation, it is nonetheless noteworthy how he emphasizes the importance of ordinary practices as expressions and co-creators of norms within a community. It is such ordinary practices that I will be focusing on in this dissertation.

Within strategy research, a practice-based view has long prevailed, and a broadly based research agenda has explored strategy as a practical, fluid and co-constructed endeavour rather than perceiving it as a stable entity. As noted by Rasche and Chia (2009), the theoretical heritage of the strategy-as-practice research has been shaped significantly by neo-structuralist and neo-interpretive perspectives. While neo-structuralist theories of practice emphasize the schemes of interpretation that simultaneously shape and are shaped by individual action (such as Bourdieu's 'habitus'), neo-interpretive theories of practice assign more agency to the individual actor, whose actions contribute to constituting these implicit schemes (e.g. Goffman's 'frames'). However, regardless of whether emphasis is placed on the individual or on the tacit knowledge schemes that guide the individual's action, and

whether the collective or the individual is considered the main contributor to such schemes, the common understanding of practice theory approaches is that an individual's practices and her structures for thinking and acting are mutually constitutive. Moreover, practice theory emphasizes the need to elucidate these tacit structures by studying practices as verbal and bodily actions as well as manifestations of the material world (for an example, see Bourdieu's studies and descriptions of the Kabyle house, Bourdieu 1977:89–92).

As Jarzabkowski et al. (2007:6) write, following Johnson et al. (2003), strategy 'is not something that an organization *has* but something its members *do'*. The intention of drawing on practice theory to explore strategy is to develop a closer connection between context and individual action (Whittington 2006:617). In order to study strategy as it unfolds in practice, many scholars within this stream of research distinguish between three interconnected levels of analysis: practices, praxis and practitioners. As defined by Whittington, practices refer to 'shared routines of behaviour, including traditions, norms and procedures for thinking, acting and using "things", this last in the broadest sense' (Whittington 2006:619). 'Praxis', on the other hand refers to the actual activities that people do, their concrete, situated actions (Golsorkhi et al. 2010:4). Practices are thus the tacit norms for doing, whereas praxis refers to the acts of doing. Of course, following the logics of structuration theory, praxis is embedded within practice, and the concrete actions thus express – and constitute - the norms on which they build. As noted by Jarzabkowski et al. (2007:9), practices provide 'behavioural, cognitive, procedural, discursive and physical resources' through which actors act and interact. Practitioners draw on these resources in routinized and patterned ways that can be studied.

Practitioners are those individuals who draw upon the practices (routines, norms, etc.) in their everyday praxis (concrete action). Thus, the three concepts are closely interconnected and cannot be explored as separate objects of study.

The strategy-as-practice research agenda emerged in response to widespread research that tended to define strategy as a top-down process and focusing on the executives formulating the strategy rather than on the organizational actors practicing the strategy. The strategy-as-practice approach thus broadens the view of who is involved in 'strategizing', such that middle managers and employees can also be involved in strategy-making and execution (Jarzabkowski et al. 2007:12).

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, within the business ethics literature, the prevailing focus has been on determining whether a program works or fails, whether it has been 'implemented' or not. Little attention has been paid to *how* a program works or fails in practice among those employees and

managers who are the targets of such programs. However, a similar widespread turn to practices, as has occurred within the strategy research approach, and a research agenda focused on business ethics-as-practice is yet to be seen, despite the obvious advantages of exploring the embedded micro processes of business ethics. The task is not only to understand whether an ethics program is in place or not, nor is it to determine its component elements. Rather, the task is to determine how internal organizational actors conceptualize and define the right thing to do and how they act to pursue it.

One exception to the dearth of literature on ethics as practice is Mollie Painter-Morland (2008), who criticizes many business ethicists' tendencies to dissociate business ethics with certain situated practices. Understanding ethics as practice, she writes, obviates the problem of having to deal with the divide between theory and practice, on which many theories about ethical decisions and actions are based. 'To approach ethics as practice requires that normative priorities and commitments be integrated with the context of their application. (…) Instead of an abstract cognitive exercise, ethics as practice is all about participation, relationships and responsiveness' (Painter-Morland 2008:87). Painter-Morland's plea for understanding ethics as practice builds on a comprehensive review of previous business ethics research as well as societal and corporate trends and their philosophical underpinnings. Hence, she criticizes the underlying assumption among many business ethics scholars and practitioners that individuals in organizations act only as rational agents capable of operationalizing rational protocols for ethical conduct. She argues that individuals' sense of moral agency is shaped by tacit knowledge which emerges over time, through multiple interactions. Her argument for viewing ethics as practice is certainly an improvement over the research which concentrates on gaps between ideal principles and behaviour. However, Painter-Morland does not dive into nor exemplify such individual actions and interactions, and her book lacks an empirical underpinning that could give depth to her claims.

With this dissertation, I seek to provide this kind of empirical depth by examining how business ethics unfolds as practice.

In order to operationalize my ethics-as-practice approach, it is helpful to return to the strategy-as-practice research. Encouraged by the tripartite approach to strategizing (Jarzabkowski et al. 2007; Whittington 2006), which highlights the relations between practices, praxis and practitioners, in this dissertation, I explore what happens when practitioners enact and constitute ethical practices through their daily praxis. Instead of pre-defining actors as 'moral agents' grappling with a set of 'moral issues', an approach typical of the ethical decision-making literature mentioned earlier, I conceptualize organizational actors as practitioners whose situated actions as practices can help us understand how

ethics is embedded within the most mundane daily praxis. In this approach, the actors are always ethical, but they are ethical on their own terms, rather than being judged in terms of their adherence towards predefined definitions of what is ethical. The presumption here is not that anything actors do is ethical. Rather, it is the actors themselves who - sometimes explicitly, often times not - define what is ethical and what is not. It is ethics from the actor's perspective rather than the researcher's or the philosopher's.

Within the strategy-as-practice literature, researchers have tended to explore employees' and middle managers' strategizing by following these actors in activities related to a predefined field of 'strategy' (strategy meetings, strategy workshops, town hall meetings, etc.). The weakness of this approach is that the researcher has already defined the empirical contexts in which 'strategy' can be found. The sites of strategizing are thus artificially limited, and instances of practical strategizing may be overlooked or neglected. Moreover, studies with this kind of focus tend to define strategy practices as deliberate, conscious and intentional, overlooking the unplanned, unintended and non-deliberate practices that invariably emerge outside the contexts labelled as strategy-related[7] (cf. Chia and Rasche 2010). Following Chia and Rasche (2010), an alternative approach that views strategy as immanent in the mundane and unspectacular practices of the everyday opens up for a deeper understanding of the workings of strategies (Chia and Rasche 2010). Just as there is strategizing outside 'strategy meetings', there is ethical behaviour outside formalized ethics program activities. Hence, if we were to truly study ethics as practice, we need also to understand daily practices outside the formal ethics meetings and workshops. We need to escape the predefined notions of where 'the ethical' might be located and look into everyday action. This means that ethical discourses, dilemmas and practices might appear in sites and situations that we normally do not regard as the domain of 'the ethical', in the nuts and bolts of everyday organizational life and in the routines of getting things done. It is what I call 'ordinary ethics'.

Thus, I propose to take ethics as practice one step further than the strategy-as-practice literature and to expand not only the view of who might be involved in shaping ethical orientations but also to broaden the empirical scope for what ethics in practice might consist of and how it takes place in people's daily activities. Of course, one reason why strategy-as-practice scholars have defined certain empirical contexts as strategy-related, and thus relevant for strategy-focused inquiries, is that it might otherwise

---

[7] Some exceptions exist, where scholars have studied e.g. strategy as everyday narrative practices (Fenton and Langley 2011; De La Ville and Mounoud 2015) and strategy as discursive practices (Ezzamel and Willmott 2008, 2010; Knights and Morgan 1991), as well as the continuing sensegiving practices of managers and sensemaking of employees in strategy processes (cf. Cornelissen and Schildt 2015).

seem arbitrary and difficult to argue that one has indeed studied strategy. However, this argument conflates emic and etic notions of strategy. This kind of approach studies strategy as an empirical object, but it also applies a theoretical apparatus that takes its point of departure in empirically-based definitions of what a strategy is and where strategy-making is located. What is required, however, is a stricter separation of the actor's from the analyst's view, i.e., the emic and etic. In this dissertation, I distinguish between business ethics activities as an empirical phenomenon, where I explore Ferring's ethics program and follow ethics officers in their activities, basing my analysis on the framework of 'ordinary ethics', to which I will turn shortly, as a theoretical approach to understanding ethics-as-practice.

Moreover, the distinction from the strategy-as-practice literature between practice, praxis and practitioners is not easily replicable in empirical inquiry, as it seems challenging to explore e.g. practices without praxis or praxis without practitioners. The concept of 'ordinary ethics' is thus a means to operationalize the notion of ethics-as-practice.

2.7.2. The ethical turn in anthropology

Since the birth of the discipline, one of the major contributions of anthropology has been the depiction of understandings, values and practices that differ from what intuitively seems morally proper for most Western scholars (Douglas 1987; Mahmood 2012; see also Mathias 2019). As noted by Mathias (2019), the anthropological literature has promoted the idea that ethics can be found in almost any aspect of human life. Following Mathias, anthropology's conventional definition of ethics has been that ethics is simply what matters most to those we study, and that it can be found in human actions and social situations that may otherwise seem rather mundane (Mathias 2019:2,8). While this may seem like a fairly broad conceptualization of ethics, several anthropologists have devoted their thinking and writings to distancing themselves from normative notions of ethics by taking this conceptualization of ethics seriously. Focusing on ethics in everyday life, they have explored ethics as a mundane phenomenon rather than a pre-defined category of values or actions.

Within what has come to be known as the ethical turn in anthropology (see e.g. Fassin 2014; Laidlaw 2002; Lambek 2018; Zigon 2014), scholars have critiqued studies of ethics and agency for being infused with the ethnographer's (often Western) preconceptions of what is ethical, what is constraining and what is liberating. As Laidlaw puts it, we only recognize acts as agentive when people's choices seem to be the 'right' ones (Laidlaw 2002:315). The anthropological critique certainly applies to the previously

discussed field of ethical decision-making studies or business ethics studies in general, which often rely on the authors' definition of what is ethical and what is not. These scholars often overlook or ignore how the ethical is expressed in other forms or venues.

As Zigon[8] has argued, within questions such as 'is X right?' or 'is Y good?' lies an assumption that there is a prior existence of 'the right' and 'the good' to which these questions could be assessed and answered. As Robbins (2013) notes, rather than making such assumptions about 'the right' being already present, scholars within the ethical turn have focused on the ways in which people understand the good and define its proper pursuit. Imagination is a central empirical focus in this work. Hence, imagination 'signals the extent to which both the people we study and we as analysts have to recognize the good as something that at least sometimes goes beyond the given' (Robbins 2013:457).

Similarly, Fassin (2014) argues that scientists who adopt certain conceptions of the good and make it a basic understanding for their inquiries are far from neutral. The undisputed nature of these claims require a critical examination of what has come to be conceptualized as 'universal' rights and wrongs (Fassin 2014:433). Fassin does not call for a denunciation or abandonment of the moral values that have become widely agreed upon (such as human rights). He merely appeals to scientists that they should be aware of the reproduction and legitimization of certain values over others and reflect on the implications this has for their research and analyses (Fassin 2014:433). In this study, my goal is to elucidate how 'the good' and 'the right' is defined and pursued in daily practice within Ferring Pharmaceuticals by drawing on anthropologist Michael Lambek's (2010b, 2010a, 2018) concept of 'ordinary ethics'. In doing so, although the distinction between practitioners, praxis and practices may be helpful at a conceptual level, I move away from this distinction in my analysis, as practitioners, practices and praxis are mutually constitutive and thus not clearly distinguishable in an empirically founded analysis. Hence, throughout the dissertation, I will use the term 'practice' to refer to the nexus of norms and actions.

2.7.3. Ordinary Ethics

Introducing his concept of 'ordinary ethics', Lambek (2010a, 2015b, 2018) contests the ways in which the ethical is often demarcated as something particular and different from social life in general. His notion of ethics as 'ordinary' is an attempt to confront the distinctions between a realm of the ethical

---

[8] Jarrett Zigon (University of Virginia), Presentation entitled 'How is it between us? Some thoughts on relational ethics', given at the conference "Sensus Communis: Exploring the Ontologies of Coexistence" on June 13th, 2019 at Aarhus University, Denmark.

and a realm of the ordinary that confines ethics to specific arenas of social life (Lambek 2018:138). Ethics, Lambek argues, is intrinsic to action and is not limited to exceptional circumstances or specific moments, such as in discussions around abortion or warfare or in objectified codes and laws (Lambek 2018:142).

Lambek's (2010a) 'ordinary ethics' concept draws on Aristotle's broad understanding of ethics as a human virtue. As Lambek writes,

> 'Aristotle saw ethics as indicative of the human telos; humans strive for excellence and well-being, asking everywhere 'How ought I to live"?' But insofar as ethics is in all these respects basic to the human condition, it need not be singled out as an explicit category or department of human thought, nor constituted (…) at the expense of the ordinary' (Lambek 2010a:2).

Thus, the 'ordinary ethics' approach implies that ethics is tacit and does not necessarily call attention to itself as ethics. It is grounded in agreement rather than rule, in practice rather than in knowledge. Within this study, I follow Lambek's approach to the ethical, showing how the ethical is expressed and constituted through everyday actions and interactions among various actors in an organization.

In order to explore the ethical empirically, Lambek recommends focussing on what he calls 'practical judgment'. Ethics, he writes, is neither a discrete object nor a distinctive force, but an un-detachable dimension of social life (Lambek 2018:138–39). In doing so, Lambek refers to the criteria by which we judge and evaluate our own and others' actions and how these criteria constitute the social world we inhabit. Thus, Lambek's notion of ethics focuses on judgment, and it seeks to identify the criteria that form the basis for judgment. Lambek also draws on Aristotle's notion of *phronesis* – or practical wisdom – arguing that there are no absolute rules about right or wrong in the world. Rather, correctness of judgment is subject to debate, and the ethical consists in partaking in this debate (Lambek 2018:139).[9] Moreover, Aristotelian ethics as practical wisdom refers to the ways in which the individual makes experience-based judgments and weighs different, sometimes incommensurable, goods, against each other in order to find the right balance between them (Lambek 2010a:23). As argued by Mattingly (2012:165–66), the ethnographic research practice involves anthropologists in 'experience-near'

---

[9] Also based on a discussion with Professor Michael Lambek in Toronto, October 2019.

encounters with their informants; to which first-person theoretical perspectives such as the notion of ordinary ethics are well-suited.

Although Lambek focuses on practical judgment and the individual's pursuit of what is deemed 'good', he does not assert that we are free to act and judge outside of any rules or obligations. Rather, he argues that instead of speaking of rules that are followed or broken, it is more relevant to speak of a range of available criteria in different situations. The research task is to discover how we exercise judgment among and in reference to these criteria (Lambek 2018:140). Lambek emphasizes that he 'make[s] no assumptions that reasoning will inevitably reach the same conclusions about what *is* right and good; the point is rather how specific criteria move in and out of relevance' (Lambek 2018:143). Thus, ethical judgment depends on the availability of criteria in a given situation in a given context. Moreover, Lambek writes, such criteria are inherently expressed in ordinary ways of speaking and acting. Drawing on Austin's (1976) notion of illocutionary speech acts, which refers to the ways in which speaking is sometimes the same as carrying out an act[10], and Rappaport's (1999) understanding of rituals as performative (see also Robbins 2001), Lambek also defines speaking and acting as illocutionary. Not only speaking or rituals, he writes, but also ordinary practices usher criteria into a situation; according to which the actor, her context and her interlocutors are judged (Lambek 2010b). Defining the ethical, Lambek (2015b:7–8) writes that 'By *ethical* (…) I mean the simple but profound fact that our actions and words are susceptible to judgment according to whether and how they fit established criteria. So the ethical is not in the first instance what is done right or what ought to be done, but the conceptual possibility of doing right and of discriminating right from wrong'.

2.7.4. Ethics as ordinary is business ethics as practice

As mentioned earlier, business ethics as practice takes place at the intersection between practitioners, practices and praxis, but as mentioned earlier, this tripartition does not easily lend itself to empirical inquiry. Instead, understanding this intersection as 'ordinary ethics' provides an approach to studying and understanding practices as they are expressed by practitioners in praxis. Lambek's focus on judgment and criteria for such judgment thus adds to an ethics-as-practice approach by providing a tangible window into the practices of organizational actors. Studying judgment as pre-reflexive actions through participant observation, and as post-action reflections through interviews, I would argue,

---

[10] Some of Austin's (1976) examples of illocutionary acts include the act of getting married when uttering the words, 'I do' under certain circumstances, or the act of baptizing someone by saying 'I hereby baptize you…'. These are speech acts where the utterance is not only a description of an act but an act in itself.

allows me to approach the nexus between practitioners, practices and praxis, and thus business ethics-as-practice. Moreover, the concept of ordinary ethics addresses the limitation mentioned earlier within the strategy-as-practice literature: instead of researching being limited to what the researcher has pre-defined as relevant strategy contexts to study (such as strategy meetings, strategy workshops etc.), and instead of defining 'ethical moments' or ethics-dense contexts based on some pre-defined idea of where 'ethics' might be located, the 'ordinary ethics' approach foregrounds everyday life and how the ethical comes to be defined through and constituted by practical judgment. As Lambek writes 'The substance of a virtue is never fixed but is a function of contingent circumstances; virtues are attributes in context, not things in themselves' (Lambek 2010b:61–62).

Similar to 'strategy', then, business ethics may have an empirical demarcation at a certain organizational level, and there may be an ethnographic 'site' of business ethics, such as an ethics office and the ethics program activities carried out by this office. Such sites are indeed relevant to explore and will also be discussed in this dissertation. However, we should not stop our inquiries here.

Equally important is to investigate the daily ethical practices outside these labelled contexts, which are more difficult to grasp. One could ask where the ethical is located in daily practice. What makes a given act or situation 'ethical' and how can the researcher recognize it as such? These are indeed valid questions, and the epistemological challenges posed by these questions may be one explanation as to why predefined notions of ethics often guide business ethics research. Defining 'the ethical' when it is embedded in the ordinary is indeed a daunting empirical task, but I suggest that by paying attention to judgment and evaluative criteria (cf. Lambek 2010a), the researcher, with the help of ethnography, can approach the tacit 'schemes', 'habitus' or 'frames' (cf. Rasche and Chia 2009:723) that simultaneously shape and are shaped by individual action and hereby approach the ethical in practice. Inspired by Lambek, in this dissertation I take an exploratory rather than a normative approach to ethical judgment and view it as practical wisdom that finds expression in everyday actions and understandings. Precisely how this task will be pursued is the topic of the following chapter.

3. Methodology and Research Design

3.1. Introduction

The research questions that guide this dissertation focus on practices, perceptions and questions of how and what happens when a business ethics program travels into a multinational multi-vocational business context. These research questions are explorative and open. They strive towards an understanding of the empirical complexities and perceptions rather than pointing towards definitive and 'objective' answers. Such questions are best addressed using a research approach that is 'experience-near' (cf. Mattingly 2012). Hence, this research is guided by a constructionist ontology where I understand reality and truth and - especially relevant for the present study – ethics as socially constructed concepts. The reality experienced by my interlocutors is thus real for them, but this reality exists alongside multiple other constructed realities that may be real for someone else (Berger and Luckmann 1991; Czarniawska 2003; Faubion and Marcus 2008; Saldaña 2016:8). Following anthropologist Nils Bubandt's (2009) arguments from a rather different context[11], in order to grasp these matters ethnographically, I have approached these truths and notions of the ethical as 'methodologically real', as these truths are real to the extent that they are real to my informants and thus make a difference in the field setting. However, this does not entail that I simultaneously consider them to be ontologically real or true in any general way. Taking various ethical orientations seriously methodologically is thus a means to understand how various notions of ethics are constructed by different actors. As such, these orientations are not universal but bounded by time, place, and social group, what I call 'context'. Throughout this dissertation, therefore, I will be elaborating and conveying these multiple constructed truths about the ethical in different contexts.

I likewise operate from an interpretivist epistemological point of departure that entails that 'the knower and the known interact and shape each other' as Lincoln and Denzin describe it (2018:19). My approach also entails recognizing that the knowledge I generate through interviews and participant observation is inherently imperfect, as this knowledge is shaped by my own preconceptions and choices

---

[11] Nils Bubandt bases his arguments on studies of spirit possession in Indonesia, where deceased elders and political figures return and offer their views on political decisions and hereby have a direct impact on the political process. To understand the functions of political life, Bubandt argues, one must understand the impact of these spirits and treat them as informants and as 'methodologically real', although the ethnographer may not recognize them as 'ontologically real'.

in the field as well as the preconceptions of my interlocutors. As argued by Prasad (2015:13), 'all interpretive traditions emerge from a scholarly position that takes human interpretation as the starting point for developing knowledge about the social world'. Further, as Duberley et al. note (2017), within the interpretivist tradition, there is a particular commitment to understanding the meanings and interpretations that informants subjectively ascribe to phenomena in order to be able to 'describe and explain their behaviour through investigating how they [informants] experience, sustain, articulate and share with others these socially constructed everyday realities' (Duberley et al. 2017:21).

Using this interpretivist epistemological approach, I seek to understand the meanings that my interlocutors ascribe to Ferring's ethics program as well as to their everyday work. In doing so, I hope to understand why they act as they do and how notions of what is right and wrong are constructed. Further, as Pascale (2011:4) notes, epistemology concerns the nature, sources and limits of knowledge. It is about how the world can be known. While I view the nature and sources of the knowledge generated from my field research as socially constructed, there are limits to this knowledge presented in this dissertation. It is the knowledge of an interlocutor; it is their reality that they construct in their relations with others. Hence, their reality is but one out of many realities. Moreover, I myself have also contributed to constructing this knowledge through my own immersion in the world of my interlocutors.

With this premise in mind, however, I have strived not to let my own reality and my own definitions of ethics, ethical dilemmas and ethical questions guide the research. Hence, early on in the research, I recognized that I should and could not a priori locate ethics in specific moments or locations. I needed to explore the everyday, including domains that were not necessarily regarded as connected to ethical issues. This required a study design and methodology that could include such everyday situations, and to which ethnographic methods are well suited. In the following, I will describe the methods applied, reflect on my choices, discuss how my field site was constructed, how informants were selected and my own complex position as researcher and employee in Ferring. For questions of research ethics, unlike other countries and research institutions, Danish universities do not have formal ethical review boards for social science projects such as the present PhD study. Therefore, throughout the research, I have endeavoured to follow two sets of research guidelines relevant to social anthropologists: the Principles for Professional Responsibility as articulated by the American Anthropological Association (AAA)[12] and the British Association of Social Anthropologists' (ASA) Ethical Guidelines for good research practice. [13]

---

[12] http://ethics.americananthro.org/category/statement/
[13] https://www.theasa.org/downloads/ASA%20ethics%20guidelines%202011.pdf

As research ethics is inherent in most subjects covered in this chapter, I will reflect on these ethical issues throughout the chapter rather than confine them to a specific section.

3.2. Constructing the field and selection of field sites

3.2.1. Empirical setting and constructing and delimiting 'the field'

As a discipline, social anthropology focuses on the social life of peoples and the logics and practices of various groups, often referred to as 'cultures'. For some decades, anthropologists have questioned the traditional conception of geographically bounded spaces which containing 'a culture' (Gupta and Ferguson 1992) and with it, the notion that cultures are 'rooted' (Malkki 1992) in one particular geographical location. As Hannerz (1992) and many others have pointed out, the incoherence of culture within a bounded space poses a challenge to the ethnographer when constructing the field of study. Anthropologists have suggested how to address this challenge, one of the most influential being Arjun Appadurai's (1990) notion of 'scapes' (ethnoscapes, mediascapes, financescapes, etc.). This is a vision of how to conduct transnational research that breaks with the former ethnographic practices of 'locating' 'a culture' in a specific geographic territory, region or village. Another highly influential work is George Marcus' (1995) review of multi-sited fieldwork approaches, where he addresses the issue of how to delimit an ethnographic field site when studying global phenomena such as migration, cultural diffusion or media.

Marcus suggests a number of strategies for conducting multi-sited research as well as for delimiting a research project and creating coherence but without necessarily spatially delimiting it. He proposes, for example, that the ethnographer 'follow the people', referring to studies of people on the move such as migrants or pilgrims. To study the 'careers' of material objects, he proposes that we 'follow the thing', be it money, commodities or gifts through different contexts. Marcus also proposes that we could 'follow the metaphor', which can be used when the object being studied is within the realm of discourse and modes of thought. In such cases, he writes, the circulation of signs, symbols and metaphors guides the research design (Marcus 1995:106–9). In a more recent contribution, Wright and Reinhold (2011) propose the technique of 'studying through', which involves tracing an object of study, such as a policy, within different sites, different people and different means of communication.

The research strategy used in this dissertation has been inspired by Marcus' proposal to follow persons, objects and ideas and by Wright and Reynolds' proposal to observe these through various sites, people and means of communication. I have thus followed an organizational *thing,* which sometimes takes

physical form in posters, pamphlets and digital content but which to a large extent is a discursive object as well as a mode of thought: namely, an ethics program with its accompanying understandings of 'doing the right thing' as these understandings unfold in practice. This kind of strategy is not without obstacles, among them being the potentially vast scale and large numbers of field site (Burrell 2017:53) that could be impossible to cover by a single researcher's qualitative inquiry. Hence, I have also been inspired by Brannen's (2011) proposal to design multi-sited ethnographic research as a 'focal ethnography'[14] with complementary case studies, where the insights gained from one main site of research are compared with insights from similar 'case studies' for a strengthened analysis. The focal ethnography was carried out at a Ferring subsidiary unit in Denmark, followed up by complementary ethnographic fieldwork at Ferring's headquarters in Switzerland and in a subsidiary in China (where I spent three weeks in each of the latter two places).

In the following, I will describe in more detail how these field sites were selected and how ethnographic material was generated. I will also reflect upon the benefits and limits of these choices of field site. I purposefully use the term 'generated' to underscore my constructionist approach and my understanding that data is not 'out there' to be found but rather co-constructed in the interaction between researcher and field. The first co-construction, and perhaps one of the most fundamental for how a study develops, is the choice of field sites to study. In a large multinational company (MNC), such as Ferring, with its numerous subsidiaries, there exist numerous options for what and where to focus ethnographic attention.

3.2.2. Constructing and delimiting the physical field[15]

The corporate headquarters of Ferring Pharmaceuticals is located in Switzerland, and its largest Research & Development (R&D) site is based in Denmark. The main empirical setting for my research on Ferring's business ethics practices has been these R&D facilities, where the Danish branch of the Global Ethics Office is located and where the central clinical trials department is based.

---

[14] Brannen's (2011) overall argument contains elements that resemble positivist research rigour, to which I do not subscribe. However, the notion of a 'focal ethnography' with comparative case studies is nevertheless helpful to think with and to emphasize that longer, more intensive fieldwork was conducted in the Danish field site relative to the Chinese subsidiary and the Swiss headquarter contexts.

[15] This section is based on: Gosovic, Anna and Anne-Marie Søderberg. (forthcoming). "Developing responsible global leaders in a multinational high reliability organization". In: Mendenhall, M. E., Stahl, G.K., Clapp-Smith, R & Zilinskaite, M (eds.) *Responsible Global Leadership: Dilemmas, Paradoxes, and Opportunities*. The Routledge Studies in Leadership Research series.

The R&D site in Denmark comprises the physical site for this focal ethnography. At the beginning of the project, the main activities of the Global Ethics Office were carried out from Denmark[16], which made it an obvious starting point for examining how Ferring's ethics initiatives were organized and disseminated to subsidiaries. Moreover, due to the requirements of the industrial PhD scheme under which this study was co-funded[17], I have been employed by the Danish branch of Ferring and have thus had an office space here. This arrangement allowed me to conduct an extensive fieldwork and to be present in the Danish offices of the company for the entire period of my field research, including the time before I formally began the fieldwork and the time after completing it.[18]

The decision to also include Ferring's Swiss corporate headquarters as a field site was an outgrowth of my desire to explore the headquarters' perceptions and practices. Moreover, the head of the Global Ethics Office is located in Switzerland, together with the majority of top-level decision-makers. The decision to include China as the third field site was based on several factors. First, China is one of Ferring's five 'Local Board Operating Entities'[19], which are regional headquarters with increased autonomy and which thus have been singled out as key markets for the company. Second, within widespread conceptions of national culture differences (cf. Hofstede 2001), China is stereotyped as being very different from Western national cultural contexts. With this prevailing stereotype somewhat in mind, I must admit, the original purpose of my research was to explore whether, to what extent and how such national cultural differences influenced how the ethics program was received and recontextualized in the local context. Finally, as in any ethnographic enquiry, the choice of field sites was based partially on practical issues of access. The Chinese subsidiary was headed by a Dane with long seniority in Ferring. This individual had served on many levels of management and had experience from Scandinavia, the Swiss headquarters and from central European countries where Ferring also operates. I met him on a number of occasions before the fieldwork and established the necessary connection to be allowed to conduct the fieldwork in the Chinese subsidiary. Moreover, during the fieldwork, I had the opportunity to follow two ethics officers to China, where they trained local colleagues and counterparts. During this first trip, I established contacts with local staff that were central upon my return for the three-week fieldwork period.

---

[16] As I will elaborate in Chapter 8, the Global Ethics Office has undergone significant changes during the course of the research.

[17] As mentioned, the Danish industrial PhD scheme requires the co-funding company to employ the PhD fellow throughout the three-year project period.

[18] My access to informants and material in the company will be elaborated in section 3.6 of this chapter.

[19] This structure of Local Board Operating Entities was discontinued during the project period.

Choosing the three field sites was also an outcome of my negotiations with the needs of the company[20] and the need to balance these with the academic requirements for conducting qualified ethnographic research. One could argue that more time spent in fewer field sites could have facilitated an equally interesting study with more ethnographic depth. However, the number of field sites in this study and the variation between headquarters, subsidiaries and geographical locations facilitated an analysis of vocational communities across geographical locations. This possibility for cross-community comparison opened the way towards insights that contexts besides the national ones could be important for understanding how ethics programs are perceived and enacted. Conversely, a larger number of field sites, with less time spent in each, could have generated further knowledge regarding the extent to which insights from this study are similar across a larger variation of physical sites and within subsidiaries of different sizes and structures. However, as ethnographic work focuses more on in-depth insights than large quantities of cases, I deemed it appropriate to limit the number of physical field sites to three. Thus, the choice of field sites has been based on assessments of empirical appropriateness as well as on access and logistical possibilities.

Furthermore, the choice of work settings as the main field sites was intended to focus in on the content of people's working lives. As such, I chose not to follow them into their private spheres at home. Hence, I could not know whether their practices at work have had an effect on their domestic life or relations with friends and acquaintances, nor whether they brought perspectives from their private lives into their workplace practices.

3.2.3. Constructing and delimiting the virtual setting

Besides the physical venues in which I have been able to move around, my fieldwork also expanded into virtual and digital spaces. In today's work setting, daily work is increasingly enacted through e-mail exchanges, in shared online folders, in online meetings as well as in a range of content on intranets and websites. Furthermore, in a multinational organization, these webs of cooperation are expanded also across time zones and continents.

---

[20] Part of the purpose of the Industrial PhD scheme under which this research was conducted is to create knowledge that is valuable for a private company. In order to ensure that the project responded to Ferring's needs, the company has been involved in the decision-making about the selection of geographical field sites. The rest of the research design described in this chapter has been based on my decisions alone. https://innovationsfonden.dk/da/programmer/erhvervsforsker#accordion2955 Accessed 8. November 2019.

As Hine (2017) writes, studies that are not only multi-sited but also multi-modal, pose practical as well as analytical challenges, as the ethnographer must decide 'when to follow informants between settings and which of the many possible connections between those settings to pursue' (Hine 2017:22). Moreover, for an ethnographer for whom 'being there' and experiencing events along with informants is one of the main methodological tools (and ideals), virtual ethnography poses a methodological challenge (Ruhleder 2000:14). However, as Ruhleder wrote when virtual ethnography was still a novel concept, incorporating digital activities into the field of study also offers an opportunity to capture and analyse interaction in the hybrid spaces that are becoming a fundamental part of how people, institutions and communities organize and carry out their work (Ruhleder 2000:14).

Marcus' (1995) aforementioned proposal for multi-sited fieldwork was written before digital field sites became inevitable parts of many field studies. As Burrell (2017) writes, with the emergence of such new, digital and virtual field sites and thus the expansion of possible fields and interactions to study, the delimitation of the ethnographic field has become increasingly challenging. And this challenge, she writes, is both conceptual and logistical. Conceptually, the emergence of digital ethnography broadens the object of study beyond the means of comprehension of one individual researcher in one research project. Logistically, virtual research broadens the sites of study across the entire globe (Burrell 2017), into communities whose only link is when they log on their shared chat room. Building on Marcus' proposition to follow objects or people, Burrell proposes to view the field site as a network composed of fixed and moving points, including spaces (physical and non-physical), people and objects. Defining the field site as a network, she writes, is a strategy of foregrounding selected social phenomena against a complex social setting in which phenomena find themselves. In this way, a given social phenomenon is outlined in its complexity rather than detached from its context (Burrell 2017:55).

Burrell proposes a number of steps for how to construct a field site which is not spatially bounded. She suggests seeking out 'entry points' rather than sites and to follow the connections that emerge from that entry point (Burrell 2017:56). In the same vein, she proposes to explore the parts of this network by sometimes following these parts, however limited, e.g. *within* a country or a city, and by sometimes staying in place to 'intercept' the circulations of parts of the network as they flow in and out of the physical site of study (Burrell 2017:56–57).

In order to manage the conceptual and logistical challenges pointed out by Burrell, I have chosen in this study to combine her suggestion to intercept with the aforementioned focal ethnography using comparative case studies (cf. Brannen 2011) where I follow an ethics program into different global locations. As the ethics program does not move in the same way that people and objects do (cf. Marcus

1995), I have selected a number of 'entry points' from which to elucidate the ethical field, as proposed by Burrell (2017:56). In this way, the field of study is delimited conceptually, as I follow and explore the perceptions and practices of the ethics program as well as the 'ordinary ethics' as expressed and practiced within different vocational communities. It is also delimited physically, as I have chosen country offices in Denmark, Switzerland and China as physical entry points for these explorations. However, these entry points transcend the physical space, expanding into the digital webs of the company and its various on-line communities. As a fieldworker researching a global organization, whenever I open my internet browser, I am taken to the global intranet, and I am able to see what employees across the company see when they open their browsers. I receive announcements in my inbox sent out to global distribution lists of which I am a member. And on a number of occasions, I have attended global staff meetings from my desk or a meeting room interacting physically or virtually with colleagues around the world. Thus, from these three physical entry points in Denmark, Switzerland and China, I have explored both physical fields located in each country and the hybrid fields generated by global on-line participants in Denmark, Switzerland, China and elsewhere.

3.2.4. Constructing and delimiting the object of study

Usually, one of the main challenges for ethnographers is gaining access to relevant field sites and people. In this project, however, due to my position as an employee in the company and to a rare openness for my ethnographic explorations within Ferring, facilitated by the highly research-driven nature of the company, there were very little limitations imposed on me regarding whom I could talk to or where I could study.[21] I was thus faced with the luxurious, yet equally challenging, 'problem' of what activities to follow and what informants to interview.

In order to narrow down the scope of the study, I selected, along with the ethics officers, three vocational groups: Human Resources (HR) officers, Clinical Trials officers and Marketing and Sales officers. Besides Denmark, where the Global Ethics Office is located (and where I myself live), the HR officers work in most of Ferring's remaining global locations and are in charge of carrying out the work of raising awareness and conducting ethics training as local collaboration partners for the Global Ethics Office. The HR officers thus seemed to be a relevant choice to study. Clinical trials officers were

---

[21] One of these limitations was that I am not allowed to mention any of the cases from the internal whistleblowing line, the Alert Line, in any of my writings. If I had attempted to access board meetings or executive committee meetings, I may have also encountered limits to the open access that I experienced, but as I have been focusing on everyday 'ordinary' decisions and judgments in practice rather than higher managerial ones, I never had to test the limits of higher level boundaries to access.

selected as a focus area because most of Ferring's drug development projects are administered from Denmark, and I thus had a unique possibility to participate on a regular basis in project meetings and gain insight into a central part of Ferring's work. Marketing and Sales was chosen as it represents a vocational group with tasks focused on customers, such that their practices would lie at the interface between the company and the outside world. I could have also chosen to focus on business functions that were more similar or to focus only on a single business function. However, when I originally designed the research, I had intended to focus on national culture differences and recontextualizations across different staff groups in order to assess the salience of these differences across a variety of staff types.

At first, the focus on 'ordinary ethics' within these staff groups – or as I define them later, 'vocational communities' - was not an analytical focus. Rather, the choice of these groups was more a practical matter of limiting the object of study to the three geographical locations. However, as I progressed, I noticed commonalities among the vocational communities traversing the three geographical sites. The Human Resources, Clinical Trials and Marketing and Sales staff, regardless of their working location, were more alike internally than if they were Danish, Swiss or Chinese staff. Hence, my focus shifted to these vocational communities. While my study was originally designed to understand national culture communities across vocational groups, I ended up finding the reverse: vocational community differences across countries and national cultures.

3.3. Selecting people and contexts to follow

Despite the delimitations described in the previous section, within the three national contexts and the chosen employee groups, I had to further select the issues on which I would focus, the empirical material I wished to generate, the practices to follow and whom to interview.

3.3.1. Choosing where to focus

Like many anthropologists entering new field sites for the first time, I entered a milieu that was rather foreign to me. I had not worked for Ferring before and never worked in the pharmaceutical industry. For the area of clinical trials, in order to strengthen my understanding of the context, I decided to focus on two particular clinical trials. One of these was a repetition of a study already conducted in Europe for a drug that had been approved and launched on the European market during the course of the fieldwork. In order to market this product in China, the Chinese authorities require the company to

conduct a new trial where the product is tested on Chinese and Southeast Asian individuals. It was explained to me that this national testing is required because certain drugs may be metabolized differently by individuals depending on whether they have Asian or European origin. Due to the matrix structure of the clinical trials organization, this particular project was administered by Ferring's main office in Switzerland; however, the daily management of the clinical trial was conducted by a team based in Denmark. Moreover, the study was carried out in Asia, including in China, and thus also involved collaboration with Chinese partners in the Ferring-China office that I visited. Moreover, the drug was being marketed in Denmark and Switzerland, guided by the global marketing organization located in headquarters. This particular drug thus became an important window through which I explored the area of clinical trials and marketing and sales in Denmark, at headquarters and in China. Pharmaceutical marketing and sales, as well as pharmaceutical development, are complex endeavours which require thorough understanding of the compounds of the product and details of the trial design and results. Thus, in order to better understand the context of the accounts I was told in interviews and elsewhere and the events in which I participated, I chose to focus on informants involved in this one specific drug. This approach proved to be fruitful. In focusing on a specific drug I gradually came to understand the drug development process, the function of the drug, the difference between this drug and other competitors on the market. In China, where the drug was not yet on the market, I selected interviewees among those marketing and sales staff who were specialized in the same therapeutic area as the new drug. I could have broadened my sample to include marketing and sales officers working outside of this therapeutic area, but I deemed it important to understand the content of what they were marketing in order to follow their descriptions and arguments.

The second clinical trial that I followed was for a new product not yet on the market. This project was likewise led from headquarters but managed by a project team located in Denmark.
Moreover, although the product was not yet on the market, the global marketing department in Switzerland had already begun working on a marketing strategy. This allowed me to conduct interviews with marketing and sales officers with point of departure in this second clinical trial. Hereby, the two trials became a point of departure for choosing the activities in which I would participate and whom I would interview. All those whom I interviewed and interacted with also participated in other projects and trials, and although our conversations took their point of departure in these particular projects, informants often presented me with ideas about other areas of their work as well.

3.3.2. Selecting informants

My strategy for selecting informants has been what scholars have termed 'purposive sampling' or 'non-probability sampling' (Patton 2015:264–65; Saunders 2017:37). In this kind of sampling strategy, the appropriateness of the sample depends on the researcher's judgment and is assessed according to the depth of knowledge that can be gained from choosing certain informants over others. In simpler terms, I focused on those informants who I thought would help me address my research questions. This kind of purposive sampling can be compared to 'probability sampling' where the researcher selects a representative group of informants at random (Saunders 2017:39–40).

Within each clinical trial team, a number of different professions and occupational specialties are represented. Some project members are in charge of ensuring that the regulatory requirements are complied with, while others are in charge of shipping the compound that is used for the trial from the production site to the hospital in which it is to be tested. There are members in charge of the laboratory testing of bio-samples from patients who have been given the drug, and there are team members responsible for writing and ensuring that the testing 'protocols' - a detailed description of how healthcare professionals (HCP) should administer the drug, what samples to take at what time of the day, etc. - has been followed in all the hospitals in which it is being tested. To name a few. By following the work of these teams, I have been following this diversity of professional groups.[22] Hence, I decided to select informants across this range of professions involved in clinical trials.

Another approach to selecting informants could have been to focus on one of these groups across various trials, but I found it more fruitful to try and understand the subject matter of the trial in order to understand the nuances in the narratives that I was presented with, and I based my selection of informants hereon. In Marcus' terms, my field strategy here was 'follow the trial'.

Similarly, marketing and sales officers and human resources officers come from various educational backgrounds and likewise cover different areas of work within their communities. Within human resources, I selected informants who had formal or informal interfaces with the Global Ethics Office and Ferring's ethics program. Marketing and sales officers are a much smaller vocational group in the company than clinical trials officers, and here I sought to interview both marketing staff and sales representatives in all three geographic locations, focusing on those who were responsible for the therapeutic area of the drug that I was simultaneously following in the clinical trial.

---

[22] As mentioned earlier, this diversity in professional groups that are represented within each area of work has been the main reason why I have chosen to use the term 'vocational' rather than 'professional'.

When selecting informants, I was looking for a spread in both functions and level in the hierarchy in order to address my research questions among a broader group of informants. I could have chosen to restrict my choice of informants to either managers or employees. However, I decided that my task of studying ethics as everyday practice could be best achieved by exploring the everyday practices of people in different levels of the formal hierarchy.

3.3.3. Anonymizing informants

For the sake of anonymity as well as the similarities found within the group of clinical trials officers, I have used this general label for each of them. For the marketing and sales staff, also to ensure anonymity and to enhance my analytical findings, I have likewise clustered together sales representatives and marketing personnel. Due to the small size of the Global Ethics Office, I have named everyone as 'ethics officer'. All human resources officers have likewise been named as such, despite their various functions, in order to ensure anonymity in what would otherwise be easily recognizable individuals. In order to ensure consistency in my definitions, my distinction between staff and managers is based on formal job categories[23], as will be elaborated later. Sometimes, I mention 'senior managers' who carry out executive functions but are not only limited to the board of directors. When referring to these top-level managers, I thus refer to a relatively small group of people in the company.[24]

Although this anonymization strategy removes certain nuances that could have been valuable, I find it important to maintain it in order to protect my interlocutors from recognition. This kind of anonymization is standard practice for anthropologists and other qualitative field researchers.[25]

Moreover, I have sometimes also been deliberately imprecise when presenting people, especially those who made sensitive statements, and have not always introduced all demographics, if I felt that revealing their country of origin, vocational background or level in the formal hierarchy might make them recognizable.

---

[23] In practice, I have labelled everyone at the level 'director' or above as managers, as this job category within Ferring generally entails having subordinates.

[24] Formally, I have used this term when referring to anyone with the formal job title of 'Vice President' or above.

[25] As point 2 of the ethical guidelines from the American Anthropological Association (AAA) states, 'In their capacity as researchers, anthropologists are subject to the ethical principles guiding all scientific and scholarly conduct. They must not plagiarize, nor fabricate or falsify evidence, or knowingly misrepresent information or its source. However, there are situations in which evidence or information may be minimally modified (such as by the use of pseudonyms) or generalized, in order to avoid identification of the source and to protect confidentiality and limit exposure of people to risks. ': http://ethics.americananthro.org/category/statement/

In certain cases, these demographic characteristics of my informants have been essential to describe in order to give ethnographic support to the arguments that I make. In order to overcome this challenge and inspired by Krause-Jensen's anonymization strategy (Krause-Jensen 2010:28), I have found it necessary to sometimes change the gender of my interlocutors or to split a person and give them two different names or otherwise disguise the informant by not revealing certain demographic, national or vocational details[26]. In other cases, I have simply chosen not to include certain relevant observations, as they might compromise specific individuals (Madden 2010:90). Nevertheless, this excluded material has not been so serious as to refute or weaken my general conclusions.

I have not anonymized Ferring as a company, as I find that it adds strength to the ethnography to be able to describe more fully the nature of the company[27]. Moreover, any effort at anonymization would have quickly crumbled, as the wording of the 'Ferring Philosophy' can be found on Ferring's corporate website, as well as the research grant that Ferring, Copenhagen Business School and I received for the project is publicly available through the Danish Innovation Fund, which co-financed the project.

3.3.4. Contacting selected individuals

In order to identify individuals for interviewing, my approach differed according to the three locations. The main difference was due to the differences in available time to identify and engage with informants between the field site in Denmark (where I reside) and the two shorter periods of fieldwork at headquarters in Switzerland and in China.

Prior to my arrival in the office in Denmark, a colleague in the Global Ethics Office had contacted the heads of departments of all major functions and arranged that I could contact them to set up a meeting with each of them upon my arrival. This initial contact proved to be invaluable, both as an access strategy as well as an early and much needed immersion into the details and processes of pharmaceutical development. Some of these heads of departments later became gatekeepers[28] so that

---

[26] As this strategy may give the reader the impression that I interviewed more people than I did, I have stated the exact number of interviewees in Table 1.

[27] Anthropologist Jakob Krause-Jensen had similar reasons for not anonymizing the Danish luxury consumer electronics company Bang & Olufsen, where he conducted fieldwork (Krause-Jensen 2010).

[28] 'Gatekeepers are sponsors or individuals who smooth access to the group. They are the key people who let us in, give us permission, or grant access. (...) They may be in a position to grant permission themselves or able to persuade others' (O'Reilly 2009:132).

I could gain access to clinical trials teams and key informants within these. However, the majority of main gatekeepers, I approached myself.

For example, I happened to participate at an introductory course for new employees together with a new head of the clinical trials department in Denmark. This initial contact allowed me to approach him with a subsequent request to interview and follow people in his department. He invited me to present my research at a meeting for the clinical trials staff, and when I later approached informants, many recognized me and understood the overall purpose of the project.

In this endeavour, being an employee at Ferring was also an advantage, and my access within the Danish subsidiary was facilitated by my presence in the physical office. I could drop by people's offices, randomly meet people in the building, and get to know staff members in other contexts. It was also facilitated by my access to the intranet, where detailed organograms specify who is who, the division of functions, and people's place in the organizational hierarchy, which made it easier to recruit informants with the kind of range of job function and hierarchy that I was looking for. If I had a particularly good connection with an informant or had difficulty locating exactly who to speak to next, I used snowball sampling, whereby the researcher recruits new informants via referral from other informants, using the connection and rapport established with one informant to establish trust with another (cf. Bernard 2011:145–47).

My strategy at headquarters was not entirely different. As part of the aforementioned introductory meetings with heads of departments facilitated by the Global Ethics Office, I also had online meetings with a few managers from headquarters, among them a manager from the human resources department. Since I had relations with clinical trials officers in Denmark, one of my primary aims with the fieldwork at headquarters was to understand how Danish ethics office messages were recontextualized locally in Switzerland, as this was a kind of knowledge that I thought I could not gain from fieldwork in Denmark (at that time, I had anticipated that the geographical difference would be the major determinant for how the ethics program was understood).

As the local human resources departments are in charge of administering the ethics program locally, I decided to locate myself within this department during my stay at headquarters. I arranged with the manager that I could use one of the free seats in the human resources wing at headquarters during the period when I was there. Indeed, sharing an office with the colleagues from the HR department facilitated access to this group. However, my physical presence in the HR department also meant that I was less present among the marketing and sales officers or clinical trials officers.

In seeking out members of the clinical trials group, I was limited by the fact that there were few of these located at headquarters; in fact, only a few project managers. However, since I had focused on the clinical trials officers in Denmark, and likewise had access to local marketing and sales personnel in Denmark, I felt it would be most beneficial to share an office space with the human resources colleagues. In retrospect, with the experiences of ordinary ethics of marketing and sales officers and clinical trials officers, my study could have benefitted from having asked for an office with the sales and marketing group or the small clinical trials team at headquarters. On the other hand, having done that would have prevented me from gaining certain insights from the human resources context. Moreover, I did not stay in the HR office for the entire day. I used the office as a platform, conducting interviews and taking coffee and lunches with marketing and sales and clinical trials officers to an extent that I believe I obtained sufficient empirical material from the choices I made.

In order to gain access to interviewees at headquarters, I used the intranet to locate those informants whom I wished to meet and interview. As calendars quickly get booked, I arranged many of my interviews while still in Denmark, before my arrival in Switzerland. Additional interviews not arranged beforehand were arranged using the snowballing strategy.

In China, my sampling strategy was initially quite different. During my first visit in China in October 2017, I had followed ethics officers here in their work to conduct ethics training for managers and for local human resources personnel. As mentioned earlier, the CEO of the Chinese subsidiary was Danish, and when he came to Denmark on Christmas holiday later that year, I had the chance to meet with him and ask permission to conduct fieldwork in the spring of 2018. Moreover, during my first visit in China, I had made good contact with the local human resources officers. Informed by a cultural stereotype of the Chinese as being rather hierarchical and anxious that I as a mere PhD student might be offensive if I approached some of the managers in the Chinese subsidiary, I made the mistake of not taking the same approach of just contacting people as I had in Denmark and Switzerland when preparing for my fieldwork in China.

In what I later realized was a misunderstood effort to do things right in this national culture, I wrote and asked one of my local contacts in human resources that I had met during my first visit there how I should best tackle the interview arrangements and what would be the right approach to make appointments with interviewees. In an effort from her side to help me, I believe but only realized later, she immediately answered that I should just write to her what types of people I was looking for and how many, and then she would approach them and inquire. Subsequently, I experienced the immense hospitality of this local human resources group and their tireless efforts to make my stay as pleasant

and easy as possible. At that time, however, I interpreted her immediate reaction as a hint that her way was the most appropriate and decided not to interfere with what I thought were the national cultural norms. I inquired about the possibility of following a sales representative on sales visits or tagging along with a marketing officer to an event, as I had done in Denmark and Switzerland, but the few times I asked, I was told that it would be difficult. I assumed that for some reason, it was simply not appropriate to have me attend such activities. Nevertheless, I have later reflected on what made me take 'No' for an answer much more easily in China than I would have from a Danish or Swiss informant. When conducting business research in international contexts, the methodological literature teaches us to be highly aware of national cultural differences and of the cultural assumptions with which we interpret events. It also teaches us to thoroughly prepare for fieldwork by learning as much as we can about the national culture into which we will enter (see e.g. Eckhardt 2004; Vallaster 2000). However, the preparation process for such research and in efforts to understand 'the Chinese', 'the Japanese' or 'the Danes' inevitably brings with it an exercise of stereotyping, an issue that is seldom addressed in the methodological discussions (for an exception, see Osland and Bird 2000).

In my preparations for fieldwork in China, and in an effort to get as much out of the few weeks I had in the most respectful and appropriate way, I made this exact mistake of stereotyping the Chinese as overly formal and hierarchical. Had it not been for my fortuitous attendance at an office dinner, my fieldwork would have been severely limited by this stereotyping. This 'lucky dinner', an example of the 'serendipity' that anthropologists often encounter in their fieldwork, occurred shortly after I had arrived in China.

A small group of local Chinese managers as well as a few counterparts from other regions in Asia had completed their quarterly meeting, which would be followed by a dinner. The CEO had kindly asked me to join their dinner, and the encounter that evening made me realize that my cultural stereotypes were ill-fitting and my presumed politeness was in fact nothing more than a self-imposed restriction. I was seated next to a friendly Chinese manager who shortly after I introduced myself invited me to interview him in the coming week. At my other side sat another manager whom I had already met. She inquired about my purpose of being in China, and asked if I was getting the chance to do what I wanted to do. I revealed that I would have liked to go with a sales representative on a sales trip or to a marketing event, as I had done with informants from Denmark and Switzerland but that the HR counterpart with whom I had been in contact had informed me that this was not possible. With an expression of wonder, my companion to the right yelled across the round, Chinese dining table to one of the marketing managers sitting a few seats away and asked him if I could go with him to a marketing event. He

immediately said, 'Yes' and explained that he would be going to another part of China for an event the following week. He also explained that he had actually volunteered to be interviewed when my contact in HR had inquired, but that he had been rejected because they had already made arrangements with another marketing manager. Unfortunately, I already had too many activities and interviews planned for the following week to be able to go with him to the other end of China for the marketing event to which he had so generously invited me, but I gladly took him up on the interview offer. This manager ended up being a central gatekeeper for my access to non-managerial marketing and sales officers in his team.

This 'lucky dinner' was a turning point in my Chinese fieldwork. Because it occurred just a few days after my arrival in China, I had time to correct my mistaken assumptions. From that point onwards, I kept in mind the informal way in which my dining partner had just yelled across the table, and I started simply approaching informants as I had done in Denmark and Switzerland, inquiring about their willingness to participate in the research. Rather than the hierarchical stereotype of 'the Chinese' that had somehow guided my approach, this experience, as well as my impressions as I progressed in the fieldwork, taught me that although thorough preparation can certainly be valuable, it may also reinforce narrow assumptions through which we interpret and understand our fieldwork experiences and with which we artificially restrain our own behaviour in the field. Some fieldwork situations are simply not as exotic, nor as formalized, as we imagine them to be.

A final factor affecting my selection of informants across all three locations was their willingness to participate in the study. I have interviewed some informants several times. This was not always due to a sampling strategy where I had selected them as key informants but often because of their own personal willingness and interest in my research. On some occasions, informants contacted me on their own initiative to tell me more about a subject that they thought might interest me. Many expressed how much they enjoyed having these conversations with me. On other - more rare - occasions, people have been less willing.

One example of informant reticence was when I tried to obtain access to clinical trial teams. There was one particular early clinical study that I was very interested in following, as the compound would eventually be tested on pregnant women, which I imagined would generate a number of ethically relevant discussions. I had approached the manager of this clinical trial, and she had accepted my request to follow the clinical trial process. She put me in contact with one of her employees who was leading the project team and daily operations of this trial. I repeatedly tried to establish contact with this particular employee, who, although friendly enough, invariably forgot to reply to my emails. When I

approached her in person, she would explain that now was not a good time for me to join. After having tried various approaches and many attempts, I came to a point where I had to acknowledge that for some reason, she was simply not willing to have me attend her clinical trials meetings, and I had to respect this hesitancy from her side, despite the permission granted by her manager. Incidents such as these confirm a general feature of social science research, whether qualitative or quantitative, that sampling is a result not only of the researcher's choice but also of the willingness of informants to participate. Moreover, especially in a corporate setting, where the formal hierarchy enables (or requires) managers to decide matters about their employees, it is central to ensure that informants consent to participate not only because they have been told to do so by their managers but also because they are willing to do so, as prescribed by the Principles for Professional Responsibility by the AAA.[29]

3.4. The interviews

The value of the ethnographic method is that the fieldworker can observe practices and understand people's own perceptions and motivations for these practices. As noted by Bechara and Van de Ven (2011:348), within social constructionism 'the world is subjective and only accessible to us by sharing and appreciating each other's conception of the world'. In this study, in order to approach these subjective conceptions of Ferring's ethics program as well as ethics in practice, interviewing with a diverse group of informants has been crucial. Moreover, as Lambek writes, the exercise of ordinary ethical judgment is prospective, immediate and retrospective (Lambek 2010b:43). Interviewing has thus allowed me to explore people's prospective and retrospective judgments, valuations and decision-making processes.

Relating back to my earlier comments on the social constructionist orientation of this study, it is important to emphasize that I do not assume interviewees' accounts to be necessarily true or factual beyond their life-worlds. I acknowledge that people's accounts are coloured by their memories, their past experiences and their understandings of how their worlds work. Interviewees responses are in this sense their accounts of their life-worlds, and from these varied accounts, we obtain a picture of how people view their world, as well as how and why they act upon it as they do.

---

[29] Point 3, 'Obtain Informed Consent and Necessary Permissions'.
http://ethics.americananthro.org/category/statement/

At first, I conducted the aforementioned introductory interviews, where I merely had topics for the conversation and did not seek to steer the interview in any particular direction (DeWalt and DeWalt 2002:122). The purpose of conducting unstructured interviews early in the fieldwork was to gain a general understanding of the terminology of the field and central topics of concern around which to design more focused interview guides and strategies for participant observation. Later on, the interviews I conducted and on which I draw directly in this dissertation, have been semi-structured. I conducted them using an interview guide that contained more specific questions and prompts in order to be able to analyze the interview data in a structured manner afterwards (Brinkmann and Kvale 2015; Kvale 2009).

Below I will describe the process of conducting interviews in this study, and I will then reflect upon my choices as well as the benefits and drawbacks of these choices.

3.4.1. Overview of interviewees

I conducted interviews with 76 persons[30], of which 48 were recorded and transcribed.[31] As mentioned, some of these 76 interviewees were interviewed several times.

The largest number of interviews was conducted in Denmark, as this is also where I have spent the majority of the fieldwork. In Denmark, I conducted 33 interviews, of which 20 were recorded. The Danish office is Ferring's main research and development site, and this is reflected in the relatively higher number of clinical trial officers interviewed in Denmark. The proportion of managers to non-managers is slightly higher than the general staff composition but this reflects the fact that I approached several managers as gatekeepers for recruiting informants and obtaining fieldwork access.

At Ferring's headquarters in Switzerland, I conducted interviews with 18 persons, of which 10 interviews were recorded. As shown in Table 2 I interviewed a much higher number of people in managerial positions here than elsewhere. This, however, reflects the relatively higher proportion of people in managerial positions found at headquarters as well as my deliberate aim to obtain perspectives from people higher up in the organizational hierarchy. Here, due to the more managerial and commercial nature of the headquarters, the number of clinical trial officers I interviewed is relatively small.

---

[30] This number does not include the aforementioned introductory meetings that were arranged by the Global Ethics Office upon commencement of this study.
[31] For more about transcriptions, see section 3.9 in this chapter.

In China, I conducted interviews with 23 persons, of which 18 interviews were recorded. Here, the number of interviewees is almost equally distributed among managers and non-managers, although this does not reflect the ratio of staff and managers in the subsidiary. My focus on managers is due primarily to my aforementioned initial strategy of recruiting informants via the HR department, who selected people in managerial positions whom they thought I might find of interest. It is also due to the English proficiency, which was generally considerably higher among more senior employees. The division between commercial employees and clinical trials officers reflects the staff composition at this subsidiary.

Finally, I conducted one interview with an ethics officer who did not work in any of the three focus countries.

Table 1 below presents an overview of the distribution of interviews. I have divided interviewees into those with managerial and those with non-managerial responsibilities. As job-categories and responsibilities varied, as Ferring attaches managerial responsibility to many with the job title of 'director', I have used this category as the cut-off point for determining who is managerial. Hence, all interviewees with the job grade 'director' or higher are classified as 'managerial' and everyone below as 'non-managerial'.

Besides the interviews listed in the tables below, I have an additional three recordings of team meetings and workshops, which have also been transcribed and included in the data material.

Table 1 - Overview of interviewees by vocational group and location

Vocational group	Denmark	China	Switzerland	Other
Clinical trial officers	21	6	3	0
Marketing, sales and medical affairs officers	6	11	6	0
Human Resources officers	1	4	5	0
Ethics officers	3	0	1	1
Other	2	2	3	1
Total	**33**	**23**	**18**	**2**
Of which: number recorded	20	18	10	0

Table 2 - Managerial levels of interviewees by country

Level	Denmark	China	Switzerland	Other
Managers	9	11	14	0
Non-managers	24	12	4	2
Total	**33**	**23**	**18**	**2**

3.4.2. Before the interview

Whenever possible, I made personal contact with a potential interviewee before requesting an interview. I either visited their office to introduce myself or talked to them at a meeting or another context. Exceptions to this have been the interviews I planned before traveling abroad on fieldwork at the Swiss headquarters and in China. In Denmark as well, there were a few occasions where I had not been able to locate the office of the person I wished to approach or failed to find the person at their desk. Making contact prior to the interview was also a convenient means of explaining my project in more detail, describing what the interviews would be used for, as well as obtaining consent from people to use the interviews in this way. In short, the preliminary contact was a means of ensuring that people's consent to participate had indeed been thoroughly informed, as prescribed by the AAA principles of professional responsibility.[32]

My preference for introducing myself in person was that people could ask their immediate questions and assuage any potential anxieties before the interview. Moreover, it has also been a way of positioning myself as a colleague, in as much as external PhD students would not have had the kind of access to move freely within the building as I did.[33]

If not possible in person, I approached informants by email, briefly describing the project, my reason for interviewing them as well as the general scope of the interview. Due to the openness of the semi-structured interview, I described the themes that I would be covering in the interviews, but I did not share the specific interview guides. In this way, I strived to keep the frame for the interview as open as possible. The one topic I asked people to prepare for prior to the interview session was to think of a situation where they were not sure what action to take or a situation that they had found difficult. I did this in order to gain an understanding of what a dilemma looks like in practice as well as to spark a conversation around how the right course of action is decided upon and what factors have been considered in the decision-making process. This process gave me valuable insights into people's

---

[32] AAA Principles on Professional Responsibility, point no. 3, http://ethics.americananthro.org/category/statement/

[33] See section 3.6 in this chapter for an elaboration on my positioning.

judgments when faced with difficult situations. On the other hand, these situations say little about the judgment that happens intuitively, continuously and un-noticed by the person doing the judging, which again underscores the value of combining interviewing with participant observation.

3.4.3. Following interview guides

For all interviews, I had prepared an interview guide with questions around the central themes I sought to explore. However, for every interviewee, I adjusted this guide and asked questions about their particular area of expertise, about the particular clinical trial in which they were involved or the particular brand they were promoting. During the interview, I would often mention the activities in which we had both participated (such as a clinical trials meeting or an ethics workshop) and ask questions about how they had understood the situation, why they had said what they said or their reasoning for doing what they did. Thus, the interview guides I used cover the same themes, but they have been adjusted to each particular interviewee[34].

3.4.4. Recording interviews

In order to be able to return to interviews and situations, I chose to record my interviews, and despite my anxieties, most people were willing to be recorded. Here again, my position as an employee aided me in establishing the trust needed for people to allow me to record.

When setting up the interview, I would ask interviewees to consider – before we met for the actual interview - if they would be comfortable with me recording the interview. I explained how the recording would be used and stored as well as my strategy for anonymization. In this way, the interviewees were offered a chance to consider if they wanted to be recorded before being in the situation, where they might have not fully thought it through. Moreover, upon completion of the interview, I would reiterate how I would use and store the interview and ensure that the interviewee was still comfortable with the agreement. On one occasion, an interviewee had agreed to be recorded, but when I raised the question again after the interview, she asked in a polite and timid manner if it would be okay that I did not use one of the examples that she had brought up in any quotations. I replied that this was of course no problem and asked if she would be more comfortable if I refrained from using any of her interview quotations or examples. She seemed rather relieved by this and accepted my offer. Therefore, this interview has served as background knowledge for me, but neither

---

[34] For an example of interview guides and how I used them in interviews, see Appendix 6 containing interview guides and transcripts.

content nor quotes have been cited in this dissertation. Situations like this also highlight the importance of ensuring consent along the way; this is especially pertinent when conducting semi-structured interviews, where the conversation sometimes goes in unexpected directions about which we as ethnographers are not able to prepare our interlocutors.

For those interviews that were not recorded, I took notes during the interviews and wrote them up immediately afterwards, allowing for a great level of detail despite the lack of recording. The reasons for not recording all interviews vary. Some respondents preferred being interviewed without the recorder; they simply declined my request to use it. On some other occasions, when interviewees seemed wary or sceptical, I decided not to pose the question about recording, as I felt that the presence of a recording device would create even more uncertainty and thus limit the conversation (cf. Welch and Piekkari 2017:722). I conducted a few interviews over lunch with informants who were pressed for time but were still interested in participating. However, due to these employees' time constraints, and with the lunch situation not fit for recording due to background noise from the canteen, I did not record these interviews. Most interviews lasted an hour, with a few lasting longer and a few lasting shorter time.

At the beginning, I used a recording device but moved to using my phone in later interviews. The mere look of a recorder constantly reminds interviewees that they are being recorded, whereas the presence of a phone on the table is a common sight and thus does not bring with it much attention. I found that removing the constant reminder of the recording made the conversation easier, but of course, this carries with it a risk that the interviewee forgets about the recording and says something not meant to be recorded. In this sense, the interview situation is similar to the general balancing act of the ethnographer, where we must build relationships with informants to an extent where they will actually share their worlds with us while not letting them forget that we are researchers and that they are objects of study.

3.4.5.   Follow up interviews

On several occasions in all three field sites, I conducted follow-up interviews to further elaborate the issues that we had discussed. Especially in Denmark, due to my physical access to informants, I conducted several follow-up interviews and continued to meet with informants, also on less formal occasions, to hear about the latest developments on a topic that we had discussed or to simply check in on a more personal note.

Moreover, I had continuous discussions about my observations with the former head of the Global Ethics Office. With her nearly 20 years within the company (10 of which as the head of the Global Ethics Office), discussing my findings with her has been highly beneficial, especially because she has been able to clarify misunderstandings or give me the background story for certain experiences that I have had. Thus, unlike many anthropological fieldworkers, I have maintained a close relationship with - and presence in - the field, also beyond the fieldwork period and into the analytical phase. This continuous follow up, I found, has not only allowed me to clarify my observations. It has also allowed me to 'test' my analyses, assessing whether they were recognizable to informants from the field. In classic anthropological practice, there has been an unequal relation between the informants in the field and the anthropologist; we anthropologists have the power to represent that field in our academic writing. Upon completion of the fieldwork, earlier on, the anthropologist would return home to write up the findings in academic isolation, and on some occasions, the informants amongst whom she has studied have not been able to recognize themselves in the writings (one famous example is Scheper-Hughes 2000). In this PhD project, the unequal relation between myself and my informants continues to exist, as I still have the power to represent the field as I understand it. However, by having these continuous discussions about my representations, I have strived to paint a picture as recognizable and ethnographically accurate as possible while still maintaining my authority to analyse this picture.

3.4.6. Language

I conducted most of my interviews in English, which is the corporate language of Ferring. Being a native Dane, I used Danish with Danish-speaking participants. As noted by Marschan-Piekkari and Reis (2004:223), the role of English as a corporate language is often used as a justification for why scholars conduct their interviews with non-English natives in English. However, like other scholars, I found that the level of English varied among my interlocutors, despite Ferring's official corporate language being English. Moreover, English is not my own mother tongue, nor the mother tongue of most of my informants. Hence, I have strived to be highly aware of not only what was said but also the way things were said in interviews in order to ensure that certain nuances or wording that I have noticed were intentional. On a few occasions in China, I interviewed people whose English skills were rather poor. In the analyses, I have chosen not to give high priority to these interviews, as I am not certain that the nuances I noticed were an expression of poor English or their intended opinions. An alternative way to mitigate language barriers, as noted by Marschan-Piekkari and Reis, is to use an interpreter, but this introduces a different kind of barrier into the interview process by disturbing the intimacy and natural

rhythm of the situation (Marschan-Piekkari and Reis 2004:225). For this reason, I decided not to use an interpreter.

3.4.7. Translating interviews

Some quotations featured in this dissertation have been translated from Danish into English. In this endeavour, I have strived to translate the meaning of the quotes while staying as close as possible to the direct words that were being said. As noted by van Nes et al. (2010), translation is an interpretive act, and the meaning can be lost if the translation is too literal and does not take into account the culturally specific ways in which the language is used.

For example, I conducted an interview in Danish where a clinical trial officer was discussing the history of pharmaceutical legislation and how on some occasions, clinical trials conducted by other companies have resulted in the deaths of patients directly tied to their participation in the trial. In the interview, directly translated from the Danish, the interviewee stated that dying because of trial participation was 'not very pleasant' (*ikke særlig rart*) for these patients. Later on, in a different context, he also mentions a court case which was in process during my fieldwork about Kim Wall, a Swedish journalist who was brutally murdered and dismembered. Literally translated, in the interview, the interviewee states that it was 'not very nice/friendly' of the murderer to cut Kim Wall's head off (*ikke særlig pænt gjort*). Directly translated, such statements seem almost absurdly cynical, but the way they were said and the origins of who said them made me as a Dane recognize this as a typically Danish manner of severely understating even the most extreme acts, often using a negative form (not very X, not especially Y, etc.). When translating Danish interviews into English, therefore, I have been very aware of the way the language was used as well as the actual words spoken (cf. Marschan-Piekkari and Reis 2004:238–39).
In cases such as this, a non-Dane may not have recognized how the utterances should be understood, which can only make me wonder about the impact on research in general - and on my interviews with non-Danish informants - of misunderstandings due to unnoticed culturally specific language use (cf. Macdonald and Hellgren 2004). Therefore, although I am fairly certain that I must have missed important elements and nuances in my conversations with non-Danish informants, both European and Chinese, I have remained highly aware of not only spoken words but also body language and ways of speaking in order to approach the intended meaning of the statements that I encountered.

3.4.8. Storing interviews

The AAA principles for professional responsibility state that the ethnographer must protect and preserve her records.[35] In this study, my records have mainly been digital, taking the form of electronic field note documents and recorded audio files. I have stored these files in secure online locations in personal, protected folders that I have at both Copenhagen Business School and at Ferring to which only I have access. My backup files have been saved on an encrypted external USB with password protection. Upon completion of the study, I will maintain these files only as long as I continue to work with them and thus have a professional reason for keeping them, as prescribed by the AAA principles as well as the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

3.5. Participant observation

As touched upon earlier, besides the formal interviews, the empirical material from this study has been generated through participant observation, a methodology that concentrates on participation in everyday practices so as to become more familiar with the informants' subjective experiences and understandings. Participant observation is a method where the researcher engages in the life of those under study in order to gain a deeper understanding of the context of people's actions by experiencing this context on her own body with all her senses. The researcher thus observes herself as well as her informants as they engage in the same context (cf. DeWalt and DeWalt 2002). Together with interviewing as a method, participant observation has been particularly useful in order to elucidate the problem statement and research questions connected with how Ferring's ethics program is interpreted, enacted and recontextualized in various national and vocational contexts. As Moore (2011) writes, ethnographic methods have the capacity to unfold the complexities and ambivalence found within organizations. Similarly, participant observation has helped me understand the ambivalent and sometimes contradictory ways in which the ethics program is understood by Ferring's managers and employees. Moreover, since perceptions and judgments that make up the ordinary ethics of my informants find expression in everyday actions, they need to be observed and interpreted precisely through the window of everyday life and administrative routines. This is why interviewing alone would not have been sufficient in this study. There will simply be elements of informants' life-worlds that the researcher does not know to ask about and which the informant finds no reason to mention, precisely because they are an integral part of their life-world. During my fieldwork in Ferring, participant

---

[35] AAA Principles for Professional Responsibility, point 6. http://ethics.americananthro.org/category/statement/

observation helped me realize how informants' understandings and experiences could be very different from what I might have observed.

For example, during my fieldwork, I went to a small conference that was held at a university abroad and was sponsored by Ferring (this event will be described in more detail in Chapter 6). In interviews prior to attending this event, as well as in conversations during the conference, the employees involved in arranging the event emphasized several times that it was not a Ferring event, as the university was in charge of planning it and setting the agenda. Ferring merely sponsored the event and helped with logistics, but it had no influence whatsoever on the actual program, so I was told. It was further emphasized that the conference was a highly scientific educational event for doctors working with a specific medical condition. Had I only conducted interviews, I would have only had these statements to describe this event. However, when I participated in the conference, I obtained a different impression. When I received the conference program, I noticed that it had a Ferring logo at the bottom, with the words 'Supported by a Ferring grant'. This was rather surprising, as I had gotten the impression in the interviews that Ferring was nearly invisible. Second, most of the participating doctors were accompanied by a company representative from their country of origin, and three out of the 13 presenters on the agenda were Ferring employees. A Ferring employee also moderated one of the sessions. Moreover, the entire agenda focused on a condition that can be treated with one of Ferring's products, and the majority of scientific studies presented at the conference had investigated effects of the same compound that also happens to be the active ingredient in this product.

Thus, supplementing interviews with participant observation allowed me to identify a gap between employees' perceptions of the conference as a neutral scientific event and my own experiences of it as a sophisticated marketing initiative, if not an 'infomercial' for Ferring's products. This example to me underscores the strength of ethnographic methods; nothing replaces 'being there'. Conversely, an obvious limitation to participant observation and to ethnographic work in general is the lack of generalizability. However, as Flyvbjerg writes:

> 'The advantage of large samples is breadth, while their problem is one of depth. For the case study, the situation is the reverse. Both approaches are necessary for a sound development of social science. [.... Hence,] a discipline without a large number of thoroughly executed case studies is a discipline without systematic production of exemplars, and that the discipline without exemplars is an ineffective one.' (Flyvbjerg 2001:87).

The present PhD dissertation is one such thoroughly executed study with the aim to contribute to furthering knowledge on ethics programs and ethics as practice.

3.5.1. Participant observation - where, when and how?

As mentioned earlier, I was with the company on a weekly basis from January 2017 until Autumn 2019, while the actual fieldwork period began in June 2017, ending in June 2018. As mentioned earlier, most of the fieldwork was conducted in Denmark. Three weeks of fieldwork were conducted in Switzerland in autumn 2017 and an additional three weeks in China in spring 2018. During the entire project, I was organizationally affiliated with the Global Ethics Office in Denmark, which facilitated my access to documents, informants and activities in which I could participate.

Like other anthropologists in business settings before me (see e.g. Krause-Jensen 2010), and as part of the participant methodology, I have also participated, albeit on a limited basis, in the daily work of the Global Ethics Office in order to gain an understanding of Ferring's ethics program.

Moreover, in order to understand how this program is communicated and brought into action by ethics officers, I have employed the method of *shadowing,* a technique designed for settings where the fieldworker follows selected people in the course of their work in different locations (Czarniawska 2007). Hence, I have shadowed ethics officers abroad for their ethics training and the marketing and sales officers in their customer activities. One might ask where shadowing ends and participant observation begins. Indeed, I have also participated actively in the workshops conducted by ethics officers in Denmark. However, the notion of shadowing is intended to illustrate how ethnographers now need to follow people on the move, especially those whose interpretations and activities can lead us to new insights.

Work, these days, is not just carried out in offices and meetings. It is carried out in front of a screen, theoretically anywhere in the world (including in our own homes or on weekends). The digitalization of work practices has made 'daily work' continuously (and notoriously) difficult to study. Outside of meetings and other 'events', most everyday office work takes place on computers and in email exchanges, or using shared online folders with colleagues around the world. Hence, I have found myself conducting my participant observation also in the digital realm. For example, I have been included in the outlook distribution lists for the clinical trial teams that I have followed; as such, I received the correspondence sent out to these teams, and as mentioned earlier, I have had access to all the shared folders of the Global Ethics Office. I have also conducted virtual participant observation, which entailed

participating in an online training course facilitated by ethics officers for global counterparts. I have also participated in virtual staff meetings, as mentioned in section 3.2.3.

Being a fieldworker in a business setting requires flexibility in one's choice of method (Czarniawska 2007; Gusterson 1997; Krause-Jensen 2010). I have therefore oscillated between observation and participation (DeWalt and DeWalt 2002:19–20; Madden 2010:77–84). In some cases, the method has been closer to participation; e.g. when working in the Global Ethics Office or when participating in general staff meetings as an equal to other employees present. At other times, the method has been closer to observation, for example when attending clinical trial team meetings. As all activities during an entire year of fieldwork are not easily (nor meaningfully) accounted for in a table, Table 3 presents an overview of major activities in which I participated.

Table 3 - Overview of key activities[36]

Activity	Location (or where I was at the time for online meetings)	Time period
One year fieldwork in Denmark	Denmark	June 2017-June 2018
3 weeks fieldwork in the global HQ	Switzerland	November 2017
3 weeks fieldwork in a Chinese subsidiary	China	April 2018
4 Ferring Philosophy Workshops for new employees	Denmark	2017-2018
1 'Train the trainer' workshop on 'the Ferring Philosophy workshop'	Denmark	February 2018
2 'Leading with Integrity' online training for managers in Asia Pacific	Denmark	January 2018
1 'Train the trainer' workshop on 'the Ferring Philosophy workshop'	China	October 2017
2 'Leading with integrity' workshops for managers	China	October 2017
1 'Train the trainer' workshop on the 'Leading with integrity' workshop.	China	October 2017
2 'Leading with integrity' workshops for managers	India	October 2017
1 Medical conference for healthcare professionals (HCPs) sponsored by Ferring	Central Europe	October 2017
1 'Ferring Philosophy workshop' for new employees	China	April 2018
1 'Leading with 'integrity train the trainer refresher workshop (facilitated by me)	China	April 2018

[36] As part of the fieldwork, I have participated in various other formalized meeting settings, such as information meetings, global and local staff meetings, team meetings in the Global Ethics Office, clinical trial meetings and internal presentations. All such activities are part of the fieldwork, but I have only listed the larger key activities in this table.

1 Workshop with ethics officers (facilitated by me)	Denmark	May 2017
1 'Leadership principles' training workshop for all employees	Denmark	September 2018
1 online 'Train the trainer' workshop on Leadership Principles for HR	China	April 2018
1 Sales visit to doctors with sales representative	Switzerland	November 2017
1 Presentation at HQ for Chinese visiting HCPs	Switzerland	November 2017
Biannual multi-day meeting for the Compliance, Ethics and Legal team	Denmark	May 2017

3.5.2. Field notes

Central to qualitative research are the field notes written by the researcher (Sanjek 1990; Sanjek and Tratner 2016). Thanks to the widespread usage of laptops in corporate settings, writing field notes has been relatively unproblematic in this project. Often, anthropologists struggle with the awkwardness of taking out a notebook in social settings, or with the practical difficulty of having a flat surface to write on e.g. when the informants they follow are on the move, or when they have worked in areas where there was no electricity, not to mention sunlight, rainstorms, desert sand, mud, dust and ubiquitous mosquitos. During my fieldwork, however, the laptop was a standard accessory in most contexts. During meetings, trainings and presentations, my informants used their own computers for taking notes, such that I did not stand out when doing so as well. This routine of note-taking has facilitated that I have been able to take notes almost verbatim when attending meetings and trainings, allowing me to capture many details of what happened as well as what was said by whom and in what way.

3.5.3. Documents and written sources

Another source of the empirical basis of this dissertation comprises the internal, written documents that I have encountered in the field. For example, the Global Ethics Office maintains and develops an extensive site on the Ferring intranet, containing guides, tutorial exercises and stories, facilitation toolkit for ethics workshops, etc. Together with reports about the clinical trials that I have followed, documents about Ferring's new Leadership Principles as well as marketing and sales-related materials, these written sources have all informed this project. The vast majority of these materials are internal sources and thus not directed towards external stakeholders or the public.

3.5.4. Informed consent in participant observation

As the AAA Principles of Professional Responsibility state, we must always be open and honest about our work and obtain informed consent from our research participants.[37] As the ASA guidelines further point out[38], when doing participant observation, the problem of consent can be difficult when our observations take place in crowds of people or at large gatherings and events such as e.g. the global staff meetings that I attended from my computer or in an auditorium where it has not been possible to introduce myself to the many hundreds of people who attended worldwide. However, as the ASA guidelines prescribe, whenever possible, I have made myself known, stated by purpose of participation and asked for permissions to carry out interviews or attend meetings. In more formalized settings, such as ethics workshops or clinical trials team meetings, this process of requesting access has been fairly straightforward. For example, the clinical trials team meetings are biweekly events attended by the same group of people. These people already knew why I was there from one meeting to the next. Whenever a new person joined, the meeting manager would start out with individual introductions around the table, where I, too, had the chance to introduce myself and my research project.

3.6. Positioning in the field[39]

In many ways, being an ethnographer in a business setting such as Ferring Pharmaceuticals follows Laura Nader's famous call for anthropologists to 'study up': to study elites rather than focusing only on the poor and vulnerable who had long been favourites among anthropologists (Nader 1969:284-285,303). At Ferring, I have been studying among people who have often been more educated than me and who certainly hold more formal power than me. My informants have been highly reflexive about their practices and standpoints and have sometimes even developed analyses similar to my own. However, as Krause-Jensen (2010) writes, this only opens the way towards the healthy reflection that the anthropologist is not a non-cultural subject with a privileged access to truth, but that informants are likewise both reflexive and knowledgeable (Krause-Jensen 2010:37–41; see also Marcus 1997:100).

Moreover, the scope of this research has been developed and defined in collaboration with Ferring. Due to my position within the company, my immersion in the reality under study as well as the purpose

---

[37] AAA Principles of Professional Responsibility, points 2 and 3, http://ethics.americananthro.org/category/statement/

[38] ASA Ethical Guidelines for good research practice, 'Advance consent' point 2, https://www.theasa.org/downloads/ASA%20ethics%20guidelines%202011.pdf

[39] The following section is based on Gosovic, Anna (2018). 'Social identities in the field: how fluctuating fieldworker identities shape our research', in *Journal of Organizational Ethnography*, Vol. 7, no. 2, pp 186-198.

of my study - to generate insights for Ferring - my relationship with the field has been one of complicity rather than rapport (Marcus 1997). Complicity, Marcus writes, focuses on the involvement of both researcher and informant in the object under study. As such, complicity should be understood as the mutual exploration of both researcher and informant about a 'third' phenomenon. Although researcher and informant do not usually pursue knowledge in the same manner, the notion of complicity refers to the involvement of both researcher and informant in pursuing an understanding of a phenomenon (Marcus 1997:100–101).

3.6.1. Fieldwork in familiar settings

By its very definition, organizational ethnography takes place within organizations, whose structure is often guided by managerial norms that are familiar to the ethnographer. Scholars have paid attention to various methodological aspects of fieldwork in such familiar settings, and some of the most widely discussed methodological conceptualizations of such research are 'at-home ethnography' (Alvesson 2009), 'membership research' (Adler and Adler 1987), and the distinction between insider and outsider ethnography (Brannick and Coghlan 2007). However, such categorizations of being either at-home or away and having an identity as either insider or outsider entail an assumption that we work from only a single fixed position when conducting our fieldwork and that this position can be determined a priori (cf. Ergun and Erdemir 2010; Gosovic 2018; Kusow 2003; Merton 1972; Narayan 1993). However, organizations today are increasingly globalized; they operate across countries and cultures, which forces ethnographers to consider studying multiple field sites rather than staying in a single location (Marcus 1995; Smets et al. 2014). Given the dispersed nature of global organizations, an ethnographic fieldworker will rarely be either an insider or outsider within the entirety of their study (Cf. Marschan-Piekkari et al. 2004:253–54). Some scholars have described this situation as a gradual move from being an outsider to becoming an insider – or vice versa when the research is being conducted in familiar settings (see e.g. Alvesson 2009; Ybema and Kamsteeg 2009). As I have pointed out earlier (Gosovic 2018), ethnographic fieldwork in familiar settings requires the fieldworker to manage multiple and fluid identities that she purposefully takes on, accidentally acquires, or which she is unintentionally ascribed and then experiences during the fieldwork (the most well-known of such labels for anthropologists is to be labelled a 'spy', i.e., someone whose project is assumed be that of obtaining secrets or carrying out subversion for a national or foreign government, or these days, a competing firm).

Likewise, among various ethnographic research fields, it has long been demonstrated how social markers such as age, race, nationality and gender influence the position and access of the fieldworker – even when she is 'at home' (see e.g. Bell 1999; Bolak 1996; Cui 2015; Ergun and Erdemir 2010; Gurney

1985). A few recent contributions within organizational ethnography have challenged the insider-outsider dichotomy and the temporal continuum on which our fieldworker identities are assumed to move (Järventie-Thesleff et al. 2016:246; see also Cunliffe and Karunanayake 2013; Winkler 2012).

3.6.2. Fieldworker identification as a continuous process

What I have proposed elsewhere (Gosovic 2018) is to think of fieldworker identities in a processual fashion, to think of processes of 'identification' rather than a fixed 'identity'. Following anthropologist Richard Jenkins (2008), I have drawn on the notion of 'social identities' and different 'orders of identification' to demonstrate how identities are created at the intersection between researcher selves and ascriptions from the field. I have used these insights to reflect upon how the multiple fieldworker identities among which we oscillate, such as insider/outsider, guide and limit our ethnographic studies. Jenkins' framework revolves around three 'orders' of identification. Whereas other scholars distinguish between individual identities and social identities (Brown 2015), for Jenkins, all orders of identification are social. 'The Institutional Order' refers to the processes by which a group identifies as a group within itself and the process by which a group is categorized as a group by others. This aspect of identity creation has been central in my own research, as Ferring is a legal entity where the formal categorization could provide to insiders or prohibit access to certain information and experiences to anyone considered an outsider.

For example, at the very beginning of the fieldwork, one of my primary ethnographic concerns was my organizational affiliation with the Global Ethics Office. Being a formal employee of the company and placed in the Ethics Office, I feared that people would see me as an ethics 'auditor', a function which might have inhibited the staff's and managers' willingness to participate in my research or to reveal certain dilemmas for fear that I might report them. Therefore, I initially made an effort to emphasize my affiliation with the university. However, I quickly found that people seemed reluctant to share information with me when I was seen as an outsider. Instead, I found it beneficial to clearly emphasize my employment with the company. Whenever I started asking questions, people seemed highly occupied with the terms of my contract. 'So, you are an employee here?' or 'Who do you report to in the company?' were common questions at the beginning of a conversation, asked in a wary tone. When I described the terms of my employment, however, the tone always lightened, and people lowered their guards. In addition, I realized that in a business where patents and intellectual property have a significant presence, this reluctance to answer questions from outsiders is not surprising – particularly

because a confidentiality clause is a standard requirement in every employee's job contract, and an employee who breaches this agreement may experience major legal repercussions.

To understand why it was more fruitful to assert an identity as an insider-employee than as an outsider-researcher, it is helpful to turn to Jenkins' concept of the 'institutional order'. As Jenkins (2008) writes, the institutional order refers to the process by which identities are ascribed to organizational members based on the available classifications within the organization. Within the particular organizational context of Ferring and the reigning logics of non-disclosure, the two most immediate categories available were 'employee' and 'non-employee', essentially insider and outsider. I quickly realized that these categories determined the legal scope of the interaction between my research participants and me, as well as the kind of empirical material that I could obtain. It was thus more practical for me to assert an identity as a fellow employee. However, as I will turn to next, there were still occasions when I could benefit from combining my insider status with my role as researcher.

For example, early in the fieldwork, I wanted to participate in one of the teams in charge of the clinical trials where new products were being tested on humans. I had assumed that gaining access to this particular forum would be difficult, but instead, I encountered open doors and helpful people, and I was immediately granted access to participate in two clinical trial project groups. When reflecting upon what I initially interpreted as sheer luck and after a re-reading of my field notes, I realized that the reason I was given access to these clinical trials was my ascribed identity as a doctoral researcher. Ferring, like all pharmaceutical companies, is a research-driven, highly specialized organization, with a large number of PhD degree holders far exceeding the average in Danish companies. Thus, when I approached clinical trials officers and explained my position, they clearly understood my need for data access, despite our differences in scientific specializations. Despite having only just entered the company, my self-ascription as a PhD researcher was successfully acknowledged, and my requests for data access were recognized as valid. Perhaps because of the familiarity with the concept of PhD research within the company, I was in some way categorized as an insider, certainly a junior one, but still with a legitimate claim as to the kind of requests I was making for research access.

Jenkins next order, which he calls the 'interaction order', is influenced by Goffman's (1990) work on impression management and front-stage/back-stage identities. The interaction order refers to the ways in which our active attempts to take on an identity depend on the acceptance of this identity by others. This aspect of identity creation was particularly important in my efforts to gain access within Ferring, and the findings of this study have been shaped by the way I was perceived by others.

According to Jenkins (2008), individuals negotiate their identity within a dialectic of identification that consists of internal and external moments. In the internal moment, individuals present an image of themselves that they desire to be accepted by others. In the external moment, others can either accept or reject it (Jenkins 2008:93). In my own case, the image I presented was largely accepted by Ferring's employees, which disrupted the outsider-to-insider continuum on which I would – according to spatial and temporal notions of the fieldwork experience – be assumed to gradually move. Despite the novelty of the context in which an academic researcher wants to investigate ethics, Ferring's PhD-dense environment facilitated my claim to an insider identity, such that I was accepted by others and treated like a colleague.

Similarly, just as successful identity claims might grant us access to information, a fieldworker identity is never stabile. In certain situations, for example, informants may decide to unburden themselves personally, or keep knowledge from us because our identity claims as researchers are inflated (we have become 'friends'), or rejected (we are seen as spies). I can illustrate this dilemma with the following example from my fieldwork in Denmark.

> A few months within the fieldwork, I am working at my desk in the Global Ethics Office. By now, I have become a natural part of a weekly meeting routine, and when the manager hosting the meeting asks if there is news from the Global Ethics Office, she looks not just at my colleagues, but also at me, as if any of us could provide updates on behalf of the department in which, she seems to think, we all work as equals.
> I feel quite at home, and instead of nervously preparing myself for the meeting, as I did in the beginning, I brought a cup of coffee from the canteen to make the weekly event cozier.
> After a number of updates on the upcoming summer party and news from the management team, one of the legal advisors shared details of a complicated legal case that they were currently working on. 'Of course, this is confidential information', another colleague adds, and we all nod in assent. At the same moment, one of the other legal advisors sitting beside me turns toward me and says with a smile 'So that means…' and zips an imaginary zipper over her lips, emphasizing that I especially have to pay attention to this message about confidentiality. Everybody looks at me for a second, perhaps

wondering if they have said too much in front of me. The meeting then continues with news about a new IT training module.[40]

The zipped lips gesture may have been meant as a joke. But it was a 'joke' aimed at me, not the others. Regardless of the intention, however, the experience taught me that as a fieldworker, although one feels that one has gained an insider identity, this identity is not fixed. It can be interrupted by outsider 'moments' at any point in time. In an instant, I went from being just another staff member attending a weekly meeting to a potential whistle-blower being reminded to keep things confidential. As Jenkins writes, 'It is not enough simply to assert an identity; that assertion must also be validated, or not, by those with whom we have dealings' (Jenkins 2008:42). My assumption of an identity as an insider was certainly not validated at that moment in time. Thus, fieldworker identities are not stable acquisitions, and we cannot assume our identities in the field to be either insider or outsider or to correspond to an ethnographer's ideal of a gradual transition from being an outsider to becoming an accepted insider who has built rapport with the group they are studying (cf. Ergun and Erdemir 2010). Rather, I find it useful to conceptualize the fieldworker's identities as constantly evolving and changing, including instances where the one identity interrupts the other at unexpected moments (the sudden intimacy of an informant telling a personal secret, or the sudden zip-up gesture indicating that perhaps one cannot be trusted).

Jenkins adds one last order of identification to the formal ascriptions as insider or outsider in the 'institutional order' and the changing ascriptions in the 'interaction order'. This third order of identification, the 'individual order', relates to the felt and personally experienced identities of the fieldworker. The individual order refers to the notion of selfhood and how this is co-constructed in a synthesis between how we as individuals experience and define ourselves and how the external world defines us. Jenkins views selfhood as a person's embodied experience of identity, as our sense of self is always entwined into our past experiences and feelings.

I am a social anthropologist, and my preference for the social sciences streams through my educational history. There are only traces of quantitative and natural sciences from lower-level biology classes in high school and 10 ECTS points in statistics from my bachelor's degree 11 years ago. As mentioned earlier, I have been affiliated with the Danish branch of Ferring, where many of the company's research and development activities are undertaken. However, despite living only a short distance from Ferring's Danish office and sharing Danish language and traditions with my work colleagues, I nevertheless felt

---

[40] Field note excerpt, Denmark, Autumn 2017.

that I was entering a totally different world when I entered the company building. The following excerpt is from my field notes early in the fieldwork, where I sit with a pharmacologist named Liza.

> She has started an elaborate explanation, and I am not sure where it will lead, about a condition where the patient gets large polyps inside the oesophagus. Her description is very vivid, and I am trying to follow her rather technical description of the condition. 'And that can be dangerous, because it can create pressure on the aorta', she says, looking at me with a concerned expression. I nod to acknowledge the severity of the condition she is describing and to confirm that I understand that the oesophagus can be affected. Or what I thought I understood. Without giving it much thought, I ask just to confirm 'So aorta is the word for the oesophagus?' She stops her explanation and looks at me in disbelief. 'No...', she says, staring at me. 'No, the aorta is the main artery in your body...'. From that comment as well as from her expression, I understand that the name of the main artery is rather basic knowledge that I feel I should have possessed. She looks like she agrees.[41]

As exemplified in this excerpt, the fieldworker identity can be fluid, and suddenly interrupted. From being a colleague I became an obvious outsider who did not have the most basic knowledge about the human body that most people in the world of pharmaceutical R&D would possess. Being an outsider is not just a matter of coming from outside; it also a matter of knowing the 'local knowledge', regardless of whether 'the field' happens to be in a far-off tropical village, or a pharmaceutical R&D unit just down the street. Thus, the spatial dichotomy of 'home' versus 'away' seems inadequate when applied to organizational research, as the fieldworker's experienced identity also depends not just on national culture or language similarities with the people studied, but also on esoteric technical knowledge.

Let us return for a moment to Jenkins' (2008) notion of the 'individual order'. It is important to note that the process of identification takes place in the relation between the fieldworker and those whom the fieldworker encounters in their research. Imagine, for example, that I had studied pharmacology or medical science before switching to anthropology. In that case, my notion of selfhood would likely have been that of an insider from the outset. My point her is that our identification depends on both the researcher and the field as a whole and not simply on the spatial (home/away) or organizational (university/firm) affiliations of each. This also means that on other occasions than the situation

---

[41] Field note excerpt, Denmark, Autumn 2017.

described above, in interactions with employees whose backgrounds were similar to mine, my self-ascribed identity was that of an insider. Thus, I would argue that regardless of where the fieldwork takes place, the identity of a fieldworker is defined in the relation between those whom the fieldworker encounters and the fieldworker herself, and that these relations are structured or disrupted by a series of momentary interactions, any of which can alter this relation towards more insider or more outsider status.

In the following, I will delve into another aspect of my role as PhD researcher under the Danish 'industrial PhD' scheme, where I am both a researcher attached to an educational institution and a formal employee of the firm which I am studying. While this scheme affords opportunities for support and financing of PhD research, the dual role brings with it a unique set of ethical dilemmas.

3.7. Employee-ethnography, research ethics and entanglements with the field [42]

3.7.1. How I am entangled

As mentioned earlier, I have primarily oriented myself towards the Principles for Professional Responsibility developed by the American Anthropological Association [43] (AAA) and the ethical guidelines from British Association of Social Anthropologists (ASA). [44] Previously within this chapter, I have described how I have sought to adhere to the principles of being open and honest about my research purpose and ensuring anonymity (AAA principle no. 2), obtaining informed consent (AAA principle no. 3) and preserving my records in a responsible way (AAA principle no 6.). In the following, I will turn to a few of the remaining principles from the AAA and ASA, describing how I have sought to adhere to these principles. I will also highlight some additional ethical concerns pertaining particularly to my PhD research and especially to my position as an employee-ethnographer. It is a status which is not explicitly mentioned by the AAA but which is touched upon in the ASA principles. To illustrate this entanglement of positions, I will begin this section with a situation from my fieldwork.

> It is evening. I am sitting in a small restaurant in a charming little town in Mid-Europe. I
> have spent the whole day participating in a marketing event sponsored by Ferring, and

---

[42] This section is based on an early-cited article in the *Journal of Organizational Ethnography* entitled 'Gifts, reciprocity and ethically sound ethnographic research: a reflexive framework'. (Gosovic 2019).
[43] http://ethics.americananthro.org/category/statement/ Last accessed on October 3rd 2019.
[44] https://www.theasa.org/downloads/ASA%20ethics%20guidelines%202011.pdf

now, the speakers from the event and representatives from the company are gathered to celebrate the successful completion of the day.

The event that we have all attended was sponsored by Ferring but the content has been planned by a local university professor. This is a legal requirement, the purpose of which is to ensure that the content of the event is scientific rather than purely sales-oriented. The participants in today's event are doctors from a number of countries, or 'markets', as they are often referred to, and I have come here to gain a better understanding of the everyday work of the marketing and sales teams.

Here in the restaurant, not all the attendees from the event have been invited; there is only a small group of speakers and company representatives. The speakers fall into the category of so called 'key opinion leaders' (KOLs) who are highly respected doctors within their fields, with many publications, and who are assumed to have the power to influence the opinions of other doctors. Such key opinion leaders are an important asset for pharmaceutical companies, and I am excited to have been invited to the dinner and curious to observe and participate in the interactions between these key opinion leaders and the company representatives. There must be, I thought, lots of interesting ethical dilemmas embedded in such interactions, just waiting for me to explore them.

At the dinner, I end up next to one of these key opinion leaders. We sit in the corner of the restaurant that, with its dimmed lights and young décor has managed to hit what I find to be the right balance between cozy and hip. The doctor and I begin to discuss ethics over a nice glass of wine while our tuna tartare starters are being served by attractive young waiters. During the entire night, the mood around the table is pleasant, people are friendly, the food is amazing, and I am having a genuinely nice time.

So, here I am, an anthropologist, having a great time, cheersing my fellow diners in excellent white wine, after which I will return to my hotel, paid for by Ferring, and the next day fly home, with a ticket that is likewise paid by Ferring. And it strikes me, white wine in hand, tuna tartare on fork, that while I am here, trying to understand the ethical dilemmas in pharmaceutical marketing and interactions between doctors and industry, that maybe I should ask myself where another dilemma lies, and who is actually a bit too involved with whom? I had come here to understand the relationships of exchange

between doctors and pharmaceutical industry, but what I had not anticipated was to also realize a relationship of exchange between myself and those among whom I study.

All research in social science, especially those with close ties to funders, brings with it issues of research ethics and independence. As mentioned earlier, the very construction of the Danish 'industrial PhD' program requires the researcher to be an employee in the company for whom (and in my case also about whom) the research is carried out. This connection has entailed a constant need to reflect upon my position and choices. Of course, historically within anthropology, researchers have always depended on communities to take them in and often on families to house them, but in my case, the formality of the employment contract and my dependence on Ferring to pay my monthly salary seems like a different calibre of entanglements.

Within organizational ethnography, scholars have addressed various ethical issues related to research in settings into which the researcher may be entangled. Some have addressed issues of conducting ethnographic field work as consultants with the aim of increasing profit for private companies (see e.g. Briody and Pester 2014; Cefkin 2012), and many have addressed the often uneven distribution of power in relationships between the researcher and her informants (Gilmore and Kenny 2015; Karra and Phillips 2008; Sedgwick 2017).

Within ethnography in such settings, scholars have paid attention to various ethical dilemmas such as the representation of the group being studied (Court and Abbas 2013), how to write about informants who are also colleagues or perhaps friends (Beech et al. 2009; Natifu 2016) and the issue of informed consent when utilizing one's insider position for a research purpose (Humphrey 2012; Malone 2003) are among the dilemmas most widely covered. Moreover, a few studies have highlighted that loyalty towards the home context may sometimes prevent the researcher from carrying out critical research (Järventie-Thesleff et al. 2016; see also Malm 2018). Ethnographers have only rarely accounted for their emotions as researchers and the conflicts they feel in such situations of entanglement (cf. Anteby 2013; Gilmore and Kenny 2015; Vincett 2018). This is what I will strive to do in the following.

3.7.2. Paying back to the field and protecting interlocutors

Within ethnographic circles, a discussion has taken place regarding how we as ethnographers pay back to the people we study after having been allowed to study them (cf. Bernard 2011:157). This question is

absent in the AAA guidelines on research ethics but is touched upon in the ASA guidelines[45]. Some scholars have discussed the advantages and disadvantages of monetary payments (Head 2009), and addressed how to repay by other means, such as e.g. assisting in the household to which they belong during the fieldwork (see e.g. Srivastava 1992:18). Some have advocated 'relational ethics', which requires the researcher to recognize the personal bonds we have to others and the ethical responsibilities towards our interlocutors as relationships change over time (Ellis 2007). Other scholars have suggested employing 'the intentional ethics of reciprocation' (Murphy and Dingwall 2001:344; Swartz 2011:49), which is an ethical standpoint that one's research itself should be beneficial to participants.

Besides the academic purpose of this present study, one aim has been to provide knowledge for Ferring Pharmaceuticals to facilitate improvements of their ethics program. The goal is not primarily to propose concrete improvements but to provide a knowledge base and a few practical implications of the study for Ferring to determine points of action. Thus, the present research seeks to pay back to the field in this way.

Moreover, in addition to this active intention are the *unintended* and perhaps unacknowledged ways in which ethnographers in general, and I in this study, pay back to the field. Ethnographers rarely devote much attention to such concerns, perhaps due to the rarity of accounting for ones 'awkward encounters' and embarrassing emotions and situations where we do not always behave exactly as our ideals prescribe during fieldwork (Koning and Ooi 2013). However, as the ASA ethical guidelines state, 'Anthropologists who work in non-academic settings should be particularly aware of likely constraints on research and publication and of the potentiality for conflict between the aims of the employer, funder or sponsor and the interests of the communities/cultures/ societies studied.' [46]. In this sense, I have strived to maintain such an awareness throughout.

Within this study, besides my aforementioned monthly salary and benefits related to being a Ferring employee, Ferring provided me with office space and access to its ethics officers during their daily work. Most days, we have had lunch together and besides being my research subjects, they have also become my colleagues. I know the names of their children, I have listened to their home-remodelling projects, and confess that I have grown to appreciate their company. Other informants from other

---

[45] I. Relations with and responsibilities towards research participants, 6.
https://www.theasa.org/downloads/ASA%20ethics%20guidelines%202011.pdf
[46] II. Relations with and responsibilities towards sponsors, funders and employers, 1.b,
https://www.theasa.org/downloads/ASA%20ethics%20guidelines%202011.pdf

departments have likewise taken me in, some of whom have spent numerous hours explaining their work to me. As mentioned earlier, the access I was granted in the company to people, documents, events and meetings has been extraordinary, keeping in mind my expectations for reluctance to participate in a study such as mine within this industry. I have found myself amazed by the openness and willingness of informants to spend time on me, which reveals my preconceptions about this industry as being secretive. On several occasions, however, I have also realized that this amazement of people's kindness has had an influence on how I write.

Hence, on numerous occasions, I have found myself reflecting on how I represent my informants, how my descriptions make them look and if they – or others - would be offended when reading these descriptions. In most cases, my concerns were connected to how I make them look internally in the organization if colleagues from other departments should happen to read my writings. For example, one of my informants has a rather direct way of speaking. By now, I have gotten to know him and grown to appreciate him. He has spent many hours telling me about the company and his work. Moreover, he has been a central gatekeeper in allowing me access to various people and activities in the company. Recently, when writing up a paper, I found myself selecting this informant's more moderate statements to describe his points when choosing quotes to include in the paper. The same meaning was expressed in various statements throughout a number of interviews and conversations, some of which could seem a bit harsh if read out of context by colleagues across the organization. Hence, I chose the more moderate statements in order to protect his department from possible repercussions.

As the AAA principles prescribe, entailed in the obligation to do no harm is the obligation for ethnographers to not only avoid causing immediate harm but to also consider 'carefully the potential consequences and inadvertent impacts of their work'.[47] And, as Gusterson (1997) writes, we always have an obligation to guard the identity of our informants and reflect on how we portray them, and this obligation becomes even more acute when people's careers are at stake.

In this case, it was not one particular employee whose career had to be protected. I made sure to anonymize him thoroughly. However, his department risked looking bad in the eyes of other departments if they had read his more direct comments. Moreover, he has shared much more with me than I believe he would have had I not been a colleague in the company. In the course of my fieldwork, we built what I feel to be a trusting relationship. I have wished not to betray this trust by representing his department in an unflattering way, which might have been the case had I selected only his more

---

[47] http://ethics.americananthro.org/category/statement/, point 1.

harsh statements (cf. Beech et al. 2009), when more moderate statements expressing the same points were actually available.

Nevertheless, I still ask myself whether I should have chosen differently, as I am fairly sure that my selection of his more moderate statements was partly a result of the relationship I had built with him and the gratitude I felt for his help in granting me his time and insights.

It is not unreasonable to conclude that certain feelings of debt created by the relationships that we ethnographers establish in the field might inhibit us from writing an analysis with sharper edges. Sometimes, harsh statements can make the analysis stand out more clearly, and it is certainly tempting to select such statements as 'power quotes' (cf. Pratt 2009:501) in order to underscore a specific point. As researchers, however, I believe that we should balance the need to present clear findings to our research communities with adhering to the nuances experienced in the field, and I find that ultimately, my entanglements in the field have helped me maintain that balance as a priority.

Moreover, such reflexivity is also urged by the AAA principles. Under point 4, 'Weigh competing ethical obligations due collaborators and affected parties', the principle states that 'Anthropologists have an obligation to distinguish the different kinds of interdependencies and collaborations their work involves, and to consider the real and potential ethical dimensions of these diverse and sometimes contradictory relationships, which may be different in character and may change over time (...).' Furthermore, the statement highlights that 'Anthropologists must often make difficult decisions among competing ethical obligations while recognizing their obligation to do no harm (...).'[48] Similarly, while being aware that my original motivation for choosing certain statements over others may have been to protect informants with whom I had become close, I have utilized these statements because they contain the same meaning as the harsher statements, such that they have no impact on the general argument; and because any scientific goal of presenting dramatic arguments to my research community must yield to the ethical prescription to do no harm.

Even without ties between researcher and informants as close as those which I had in my field research, I find it appropriate to reflect on how we represent our interlocutors to those trying to understand their life-worlds. The task is to properly represent their motives and actions in full, via an entire or even several interviews, rather than succumbing to what they happen to say in a frustrated or dramatic moment that makes them look not just unflattering, but which is also not representative of their views.

---

[48] http://ethics.americananthro.org/category/statement/, point 4.

As point 7 in the AAA principles states, 'There is an ethical dimension to all professional relationships. Whether working in academic or applied settings, anthropologists have a responsibility to maintain respectful relationships with others'. I have strived to show my interlocutors such respect by refraining from cherry-picking their more colourful statements, if I feel they do not give us the proper picture. These kinds of choices should not be interpreted as any kind of manipulation or self-censorship. Rather, when I had the opportunity to illustrate a given process or tendency in the material, I have chosen illustrations that do not unreasonably subject certain departments to exposure, nor do frivolous harm to the people who inhabit these departments. However, it is certainly essential to reflect upon when one is adhering to such ethical standards and when one is perhaps surrendering to feelings of debt towards the people one studies without having sufficient professional justification.

3.8. Validity, data saturation and quality in qualitative research[49]

3.8.1.   Qualitative research and research quality

Unlike quantitative research, qualitative research does not have a well-established framework for assessing quality (Amis and Silk 2008; Pratt 2009; Symon, Cassell, and Johnson 2018; Welch and Piekkari 2017), and the nature of 'quality' in qualitative research continues to be discussed (see e.g. a recent special issue on "good" qualitative research: DeGama, Elias, and Peticca-Harris 2019).
Some scholars call for or have sought to establish formulas for assessing qualitative research quality according to a fixed set of standards (see e.g. Bansal and Corley 2012; Pratt 2009; Tracy 2010, 2012). However, frameworks for conducting qualitative research, such as what is known as 'the Gioia methodology', originally outlined by Gioia and Chittipeddi (1991), are often (mis)understood as fixed recipes for rigorous research (for a critique of how their framework has been used, see Gioia, Corley, and Hamilton 2012). Flyvbjerg (2001) has argued that social science should not be confused with natural sciences and should therefore not be judged against the same parameters nor attempt to follow similar regimes for research rigour. Instead, research should be evaluated according to what types of knowledge the researcher seeks to obtain (Flyvbjerg 2001:61).
Symon et al. (2018) note that unlike the philosophical consensus existing within quantitative research, there are a wide range of philosophical positions relative to qualitative research. Hence, they argue that it may be useful to operate with different assessment criteria for different epistemologies (Symon et al.

---

[49] Part of this section is based on a forthcoming article in *Journal of Organizational Ethnography*, 'Gifts, reciprocity and ethically sound ethnographic research: a reflexive framework'.

2018:136-137,143). With the interpretivist epistemology employed in this project, I assume no pretence to find the absolute 'truth'. My goal is rather to approach different truths and understand the perceptions, motivations and realities of my interlocutors. Hence, the criterion that I would argue is most relevant to assess in terms of the quality of this research is to be transparent about the research process in order for the reader to know how empirical material was generated and how my understandings came into being. Similarly, Welch and Piekkari (2017) point out that validity is a relevant quality criterion in qualitative research, but they also argue that the approach to assessing validity should be 'pluralist' and 'context-dependent', meaning that an ethnographer striving for validity should be transparent about methodological choices, assess the appropriateness of these choices for a particular research setting and evaluate analytical interpretations against the context in which the qualitative material was generated (Welch and Piekkari 2017:721–22). Much in the same vein, Symon et al. (2018:146) argue that homogenous and standardized evaluation criteria are inappropriate for assessing the quality of qualitative research; they thus call for more context-sensitive criteria.

Reliability, on the other hand, ensuring that our results can be consistently reproduced by another scholar, is an unattainable and irrelevant concept within ethnographic research, as the ethnographer's role in co-producing ethnographic material makes it un-detachable from the researcher (cf. Pratt 2009:859).

More appropriately, Piekkari and Tietze (2016) mention reflexivity as a relevant quality criterion. Quoting Hardy et al. (2001:554), they write that 'reflexive knowledge is situated and includes a recognition of the multiple translation strategies that bring it into being' (Piekkari and Tietze 2016:230). Following Piekkari and Tietze and others before them (cf. Alvesson and Sköldberg 2000), I likewise argue that reflexivity is a highly relevant quality criterion for organizational ethnography. Hence, I have strived to demonstrate such reflexivity within this chapter and throughout the dissertation.

3.8.2. 'Data saturation' and how much ethnographic material is 'enough'

A fairly established approach to determining a conventional conclusion within qualitative research is 'data saturation', where the researcher comes to a point in the process of generating empirical material where a repetition of themes emerges in observations and new interviews (Burrell 2017:58; see also Fusch and Ness 2015). Although the concept of data saturation is not well-defined, and disagreements exist over when and how it is reached (Hennink, Kaiser, and Marconi 2017), to observe a repetition of themes and deem it significant enough to represent a tendency must, arguably, require a richness and

density in the empirical material that might be hard to achieve with only very few interviews and a few participatory observations. However, a higher number of interviews or a greater amount of time spent in the field will not automatically lead to a richer empirical material, as the richness of the material also depends on the depth of the interviews and observations and the adequacy of selected informants for the purpose of the study (Morse 2015:587). Thus, the question of how deep and how much qualitative material is 'enough' still seems relevant (Hennink et al. 2017:591). The insights presented in this dissertation are based on the ethnographic material described in this chapter, which I have found sufficient to conduct my analysis. By offering the details in this chapter about where, with whom and how much qualitative material has been generated, I have sought to adhere to the quality criterion of transparency and to enable the reader to assess the quality of this research.

3.8.3. A note on rigour in coding

Within organization and management studies, qualitative researchers often attempt to introduce measurements for analytical rigour belonging to more realist ontologies and apply them to interpretive research (see e.g. Seale and Silverman 1997). For example, the practice of coding as well as the codes and the codebook itself is often treated as evidence for the truthfulness of the analysis rather than a tool to conduct the analysis. One example of this is how the practice of inter-rater reliability is assumed to determine the correctness of an analysis; i.e. if two or more researchers code the material in largely similar ways, then the analysis is assumed to be more valid. However, the fact that two people understand a bundle of qualitative material in the same way says more about the degree of coordination between the two researchers than about the truthfulness of the coding or of the 'findings'. This is because the ethnographic material itself has (most often) been generated by the researchers who are doing the coding. As such, their understandings and engagements within the field have shaped the kind of material that has been generated in the first place. Field notes, for example, are not a 1:1 representation of what the researcher has experienced, as it is simply impossible to write down every single aspect of any situation. Rather, field notes are nothing more than a representation of what a researcher has noticed (most often guided by a research question she herself has created), what she has written down, how notes were taken, how interviews were conducted, how interviewees were selected, and what she decided was worth recording.

Similarly, the coding process is not a process of simply ordering and 'teasing out' what is 'really going on'; coding is an interpretive act that involves as much co-creation as the fieldwork itself. The degree to which two researchers attribute similar interpreted meanings to interviews and observations does not reveal any underlying truth within the material (cf. Saldaña 2016:4–5). Rather, as pointed out by

Madden (2010:141), coding is a dual exercise of both ethnographic facts and the ethnographer's choice. Coding qualitative material is thus a matter of indexing concrete events in the field as well as organizing the interpretive aspects of the material (see also Kouritzin 2002). The code book should not be considered a proof or a source of any truth telling, and the coding process should not be viewed as a test that verifies any reliability of the analyses.

What I will do in the following is to account for how the qualitative material for this project was coded and interpreted in order to make my choices and understandings transparent for the readers. Readers can then make their own validity judgments as to whether they find my analyses convincing.

3.9. Coding and analysis

For many a qualitative researchers, data analysis is an ongoing progress which informs – and often changes – the research questions and the direction of the study. Therefore, to demarcate coding and data analysis as a distinctive endeavour seems inappropriate for this type of research. However, there is a specific moment in qualitative research projects where the researcher must decide to cease generating empirical material and, in a more systematic and thorough way, try to make sense of this material. Thus although analysis and coding is an ongoing process throughout the fieldwork, in the following, I will describe the steps in my research process where the analysis and coding changed both in intensity and in kind. Moreover, it must be noted that although my approach leans more towards an inductive rather than a deductive approach, neither of these categories completely captures the oscillation between theory and empirical material that has characterized the research process. Thus, although my approach is not that of theory 'testing', neither do I subscribe to the assumptions of grounded theory that the researcher can indeed approach her empirical material as a clean slate, without being informed by any theory at the outset; this is for the simple reason that immersion in the academic literature throughout the research is a central part of, I dare say, any academic project and any academic career (cf. Mantere and Ketokivi 2013). Within this study, the approach has rather been 'abductive'; a research approach where the researcher takes a point of departure in the empirical material and through a continuous process contextualizes this material (observations, experiences, interview responses, etc.) in - and de-contextualizes it from - existing theoretical knowledge (Mantere and Ketokivi 2013; Reichertz 2014).

3.9.1. First analytical step: transcribing

Although transcribing is a lengthy engagement, I find that much can be gained from doing our own transcriptions, as it offers an opportunity to relive and internalize the interviews by writing them out. Therefore, I conducted my own transcriptions of all recorded interviews.

Although I transcribed a few interviews during the fieldwork, the largest bulk of the interviews were transcribed after completing the fieldwork. In hindsight, I might have benefitted from transcribing more interviews on a continuous basis, as the transcription allowed me to assume an observational role as a third party in the interview situation where I could pay attention to what was being said without having to consider the next question; how to make the interviewee elaborate, or how to explore their perceptions even further. It also offered important insights into my own interviewing techniques that could have been refined and improved along the way.

On the other hand, doing the transcriptions in bulk allowed me to re-live the interviews in the context of one another and to identify similarities and differences that I had not noted while conducting the interviews, some of which were many months apart. This is precisely why I view the transcription process as the first analytical step and – ultimately – the first step in the coding phase, as this exercise greatly informed my coding process.

3.9.2. Second analytical step: familiarization and first order coding

I have used the qualitative data processing software NVivo to code my ethnographic material (pictures, field notes, documents, observations, intranet stories, emails, slides and interview transcripts). As I undertook the coding process abductively (cf. Mantere and Ketokivi 2013; Reichertz 2014), I did not create the codebook beforehand. Rather, the codes were formulated as I reviewed the material. The purpose of this approach was to allow the ethnographic to define the topics to be coded rather than forcing the empirical material into a pre-defined codebook. Of course, I am not suggesting that this is a more objective approach, since it is I as a subjective actor who has generated the empirical material. Nevertheless, the codebook is an attempt to approach the various sources on their own terms rather than immediately assigning theoretical concepts to the material (although, I am aware that I may have done so already by the way I have performed the fieldwork, selected events to study and chosen questions to ask). The downside to this more inductive coding approach is that the entire material will not be coded according to the same codebook. In order to mitigate this disadvantage, however, before starting to use NVivo, I read through the entire data material and noted down initial observations and ideas, resembling the process that Clarke et al. call 'familiarization' (2015:230–32). Through

familiarization, the researcher engages with the dataset in a thorough way before commencing the coding phase, and it involves listening to all recordings and reading all notes and material.

After having coded half the material in NVivo, I reached a stage where I did not add new codes but could reuse the existing ones. In order to ensure that the entire dataset had been coded using the full codebook, I recoded the first half of the material again upon completion of the first coding process. I then reviewed all coded material for each code so as to ensure that the content did indeed reflect the code I had assigned to it and my final understanding of it.

With regards to the type of coding employed, as described by Clarke et al. (2015), codes can often be divided into semantic codes and latent codes. Whereas semantic codes remain at the descriptive level and simply refer to what is being said or done, latent codes are more analytical. They move beyond what is stated by the informant (Clarke et al. 2015:235). Clarke et al. recommend to carry out the latent and semantic coding simultaneously, but I have strived to follow the recommendations of Gioia et al. (2012), (first mentioned in Gioia and Chittipeddi 1991), to divide the analytical phase into first order and second order coding. First order coding is, similar to semantic codes, a coding process with informant-centric codes, whereas second order coding is characterized by more analytical coding, similar to the latent codes mentioned by Clarke et al. (2015). The approach by Gioia et al. (2012) has a temporal separation of the two coding styles that I found helpful in my study in order not to introduce analytical concepts and interpretations too soon in the coding process.

Thus, I coded the entire dataset with semantic first order codes that were either descriptive or what Saldaña terms 'in vivo codes', i.e., codes that refer to statements made by informants (Saldaña 2016:4–5). In practice, however, in order to limit the amount of codes to a somewhat manageable number, some codes started as in vivo codes but were later used as descriptive codes in those instances where informants put similar statements in different wording. For example, the code 'Ferring philosophy is common sense' was created as an in vivo code where the informant (and several informants thereafter) literally stated that '…for me, the Ferring Philosophy is common sense'. However, I broadened the scope of the code and also used it as a descriptive code for statements such as the following: 'A lot of it is also relatively straight forward in a way. If you are a decent person, with some values and things, then there is not too much that is so surprising [about it]. (…) It's a bit… obvious.'[50] I found that statements such as this represented a similar meaning: that the content of the philosophy is 'common sense'. In

---

[50] Please see Appendix 1-5 for more examples of how the empirical material has been coded.

order to address that some of the first order codes were connected yet separate themes, some of the first order codes have been assigned a number of sub-codes.[51] Although this adds another level of complexity to the coding structure, it is also a tool for me to ensure that important nuances of the codes were retained and given individual attention. Thus, the methodology applied in this project varies from the approach presented by Gioia et al. (2012). However, as they also emphasize, their coding method should not be viewed as a template but as flexible enough to accommodate the needs of each individual study (Gioia et al. 2012:26).

Moreover, all interviews were coded with attribute codes, which essentially is to attach demographic categories to each interviewee (vocational backgrounds, country of residence, managerial levels, etc.) (cf. Saldaña 2016:82). Following the advice of Alvesson and Kärreman (2011), and in an attempt to instil some disorder in the coding process to allow for surprising insights, the material was coded randomly, not in chronological order, and I shifted between interviews, documents and field notes.

3.9.3. Third analytical step: second order coding and pattern recognition

As mentioned earlier, whereas first order coding is an attempt to structure empirical material very close to actual events and statements, second order coding introduces more analytical concepts and categories with higher levels of abstraction. My second order coding was an iterative process. I read through the material coded under each code, attempted to cluster codes under common themes, then read through excerpts again and regrouped them until I had a structure that seemed coherent both from the perspective of each thematic cluster and with the entire data material in mind. Although coding involves some form of reduction and detachment of excerpts from their context as they are ordered into the more manageable coding units, it is of outmost importance that the researcher maintain an overview of the material as a whole and insists on viewing each coded cluster of excerpts in relation to their context. I have strived to do so by employing this coding strategy.

Furthermore, as noted by Saldaña (2016:7), recognizing patterns is not only about recognizing similarities and commonalities but also about recognizing the patterns that lie within differences and idiosyncrasies. As Alvesson and Kärreman (2011) advise, we must not let pattern recognition simplify and restrain our analysis, as the irregularities and deviations are key aspects of the social realities that

---

[51] The analyses found in this dissertation stem from the codes and excerpts illustrated in Appendix 1-5, and the reader will thus recognize the themes and concepts from the analyses in these codes and excerpts. However, as noted by Gioia et al. (2012), the static image of the data structure itself is not sufficient for, as the analysis demands a close familiarity with the data and an overview of it in its entirety.

we strive to comprehend. These anomalies or outliers must therefore be explored in relation to – and in conversations with – the patterns we recognize (Alvesson and Kärreman 2011:41–43).

In the empirical chapters that follow in this dissertation, I have strived to explore both the patterns and the outliers from these patters.

3.9.4. Fourth analytical step: Writing up

The last formal analytical step that deserves mentioning here is the leap from individual interviews and field notes to analysis that happens in the writing phase. The writing process is as much an analytical realization process as the previous steps. During write-up, insights gained from the transcription and coding phases materialize into theoretical insights and an ethnographic narrative. Thus, the writing phase consists of much more than simply 'writing up' the 'data'. The reader will be able to evaluate the result of this endeavour throughout the dissertation.

3.10.   Exiting the field

As noted by Michailova et al. (2014:139), exiting the field is as much a continuous and negotiated process as gaining access to it, and the ethnographer's theorizing is greatly influenced by the relationships with the field that continue after the researcher has completed her fieldwork. Moreover, many scholars continue returning to their fields for other projects or further insights for considerable periods of time. In these cases, it is relevant to reflect upon the ways in which prospects or hopes for future collaboration impact our conclusions, and if such hopes and prospects blur our critical gaze or inhibit us from presenting the kind of analyses that might not be appreciated in our field sites. It is therefore relevant to ask ourselves whether we will (or hope to) have a continued relationship with our interlocutors. And if so, if our attitude towards this wish has had an impact on how we conduct our analyses and represent our fields, or if we are willing to jeopardize relations with certain informants, including those with whom we have had close relationships.

Within my field site, I have been given the opportunity of a future in the company to work with the insights from this PhD study. While I greatly appreciate this opportunity to make practical use of the insights from this study, I also wonder what the consequences of this appreciation might be and if it poses a risk to my research integrity, as it represents a further entanglement with those among whom I conducted fieldwork. As with the aforementioned entanglements, I have been at risk of reciprocating this employment opportunity with self-censorship in the analytical process, and such a risk, I argue,

requires continuous reflexivity about how I theorize, what I leave out of an analysis and why. As argued by Macdonald and Hellgren (2004), anyone would likely be less willing to be critical, even if unintentionally, towards a possible future employer than towards a field to which one does not aspire to return. Therefore, I believe, the most viable way to mitigate this risk of self-censorship when presented with the option of future research funding, continued collaboration or future employment is to be aware of this risk. We must maintain a continuous reflexivity about the choices we make in the analytical process and when presenting our research. I wish to emphasize that I do not find the desire for a continued relationship with Ferring as a company to be problematic in itself. In fact, I would argue that being forced to consider whether or not my informants at Ferring would welcome me back, or whether people in any field site would welcome back the person who studied them after reading their work, that such reflection should be part of any fieldwork, regardless of our intimacy to or distance from the field site after completion of our research.

3.11.   Concluding remarks

Within this chapter, I have strived to offer the reader insights into how the ethnographic material for this study was generated, how it was analyzed and how it has been organized into this dissertation. Ethnographic research is a co-creational endeavour, and the impact of the ethnographer on the insights that are generated are therefore inevitable. Therefore, I have strived to provide what I regard as an appropriate level of transparency for the reader as to what aspects of my position, choices and feelings may have impacted the research and how.

4. Recontextualizing the Management Idea of 'Business Ethics'[52]

4.1. Introduction and a note on coding and ethnographic examples

Within this first empirical chapter of the dissertation, I explore the usefulness as well as the boundaries of the focus on national cultures as salient differentiators for how an ethics program is interpreted and enacted. This national focus is a dominant discourse within the business ethics literature, as outlined in Chapter 2. With a point of departure in the theoretical concept of recontextualization, which emphasizes the importance of a 'semantic fit' between a local context and the firm offering that is sought 'transferred to a new milieu, this chapter explores what happens when Ferring's ethics program is introduced into business units away from where this program originated.

This chapter is particularly guided by research question 1, which asks 'What material shape has the management idea of 'business ethics' taken in Ferring Pharmaceuticals and how is this idea interpreted and recontextualized as it travels to business units abroad?'.

I begin by analyzing 'business ethics' as a management idea that has gained widespread support and various institutionalizations worldwide, and which in Ferring Pharmaceuticals has materialized into the Global Ethics Office and the ethics program administered by this office. I then dive into this particular materialization of the management idea and demonstrate that contrary to the focus in many other companies, Ferring's ethics program focuses not only on how to make employees' behaviours comply with certain rules and standards. The program deliberately goes 'beyond compliance', and the Global Ethics Office has been set up as a business function separate from the compliance department in order to clearly articulate the difference between ethics and compliance.

Within this chapter, I take point of departure in a national culture perspective and demonstrate how Ferring's code of ethics rests on values that can be found within a Scandinavian socio-cultural context.

---

[52] This chapter is based on: Gosovic, Anna and Anne-Marie Søderberg. (forthcoming). "Developing responsible global leaders in a multinational high reliability organization". In: Mendenhall, M. E., Stahl, G.K., Clapp-Smith, R & Zilinskaite, M (eds.), *Responsible Global Leadership: Dilemmas, Paradoxes, and Opportunities*. The Routledge Studies in Leadership Research series.

Moreover, I demonstrate that these values, and the way the ethics program is communicated by ethics officers, seem to become a liability when introduced into business units and socio-cultural contexts that differ from the Scandinavian context because ethics officers have failed to consider the sociocultural heritage of the ways in which they seek to disseminate the ethics program. Moreover, rather than adjusting, reinterpreting and transforming the ethics program into local national cultural contexts in business units abroad, as I had expected based on the previous literature on recontextualization processes outlined in Chapter 2, within the two business units abroad (a Chinese subsidiary and the headquarters in Switzerland) that are included in this study, I find that competing values programs are developed to address the perceived shortcomings of Ferring's Scandinavian-coloured ethics program. Moreover, what is noteworthy in particular is that such competing values programs have been developed in both the non-Scandinavian business units under study, and this very similar response is therefore likely to be tied to something else than the national socio-cultural contexts of these business units. My ethnographic fieldwork thus reveals similar criticism of the Danish-based ethics program among human resources (HR) officers from the two global locations, as well as similar solutions to this criticism. Based on this insight, I argue that the HR function comprises a vocational community of practice, and that this community is salient for how a corporate ethics program is interpreted, enacted, or rejected.

Before diving into the chapter, I would like to offer the reader a brief account of the analytical process and how ethnographic examples in this chapter were selected. As outlined in Chapter 3, the analytical process is not easily confined to a specific period or activity in the course of the research, but its more material manifestation can be found in the coding of ethnographic material. Within this chapter, I have drawn on a number of codes related to the work of the Global Ethics Office and Ferring's ethics program such as a code group around 'The Global Ethics Office's approach to working with ethics' and another around 'The Global Ethics Office defining and demarcating themselves'. I have also drawn on codes related to how Ferring's ethics program is received in the organization, such as a code group around 'Interpretations of the ethics program' and 'The Global Ethics Office being challenged'. The ethnographic examples presented in this chapter have been selected because they represent salient themes in the ethnographic material, and they are thus a few examples that have been selected among many.[53]

---

[53] Please see a list of the codes applied in this chapter as well as examples of how material was coded in Appendix 1 and 5.

4.2. The management idea of business ethics

As cited in Chapter 2, in this dissertation, I follow the definition of management ideas as 'fairly stable bodies of knowledge about what management ought to do … a system of assumptions, accepted principles and rules of procedure' (Kramer 1975; Rasche and Seidl 2019).

In their edited volume on global managerial trends mentioned in Chapter 1, Czarniawska and Joerges (1996) conceptualize management ideas as images that 'can be materialized (turned into objects or actions) in many ways' (Czarniawska and Joerges 1996:20). Such materializations of management ideas, the authors write, always create changes and always involve interpretations from those who make such ideas materialize. Within organizations, management ideas can materialize in many ways; e.g. in new processes, policies, structures or even new ways of articulating certain organizational ideas or practices.

Management ideas change over time, and the reader may be familiar with 'trendy' concepts such as Total Quality Management, Lean Management, Performance Management or Self-Management, as a few examples of such management ideas that have materialized in processes, policies and ways of organizing. Another example of one such management idea, however less of a fad and more persistent than the others, it seems, is the idea of the ethical and responsible business, an idea that has been around for long but which has gained considerable footing during the last decade (cf. Rajak 2011).

Although numerous definitions exist (Aguinis and Glavas 2012; Carroll 1999; Dahlsrud 2008; Guthey and Morsing 2014), the idea of a socially responsible business has to do with a collection of activities that researchers have brought together under labels such as 'business ethics' or 'corporate social responsibility' (Solli, Demediuk, and Sims 2005:31)[54]. Besides common labels, the business ethics discourse takes different shapes in different organizational and socio-cultural contexts. The management idea of business ethics, then, is a collection of activities, focused on establishing norms and ensuring that these norms for ethical business practices within a given community are adhered to. As argued by Solli, Demediuk and Sims (2005) about another management idea, one explanation why it is difficult in practice to define the exact contours of 'business ethics' as a management idea is that it seems impossible to localize an original idea that could give the concept clear meaning (Solli et al. 2005:31). This, I would argue, is the challenge with most of such management ideas. What I can and will

---

[54] Business Ethics and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) are often used in ways that overlap. Hence, little agreement exists about the exact difference between the two constructs. Schwartz and Carroll (2008) offer an elaborated distinction and argue that a key difference is that CSR refers to efforts in a company to create a positive societal impact, whereas business ethics refers to efforts to avoid harm and is directed more inwards on managers and employees' ethical behaviour.

do in the following, however, is to trace and describe how business ethics as a management idea has materialized into a specific business function in one global company.

4.3. The Global Ethics Office and Ferring's ethics program

Within Ferring Pharmaceuticals, the management idea of business ethics has materialized into the Global Ethics Office. The Office was established in 2005 as a corporate function operating from Denmark, and the office and all its activities was developed by a Danish manager. Back then, Ferring was a much smaller company and did not have a formal corporate headquarters, nor did the office in Switzerland exist. Being the largest entity within the company, I have been told, the Danish office served as an informal headquarters at that time. This is the reason why the Global Ethics Office was originally based in Denmark and continues to have ethics officers in this location, despite the global headquarters now being in Switzerland.

Ferring's code of ethics, *the Ferring Philosophy,* lies at the core of the Global Ethics Office's activities and, as will be elaborated later, was developed by the owner of the company and a trusted advisor based on consultations with managers and employees worldwide. In 2016, a new head of the office was appointed and based at headquarters in Switzerland, and since then, the Global Ethics Office has been led from here but with employees also located in Denmark, USA and Israel.

Ferring Pharmaceuticals' report on corporate social responsibility for 2015-2016 states that 'The core responsibility for Business Ethics lies with the Global Ethics Office'[55], and the role purpose statement for one of the job categories within the Global Ethics Office is 'Creating awareness about preferred business behaviour' and 'having a strong informal influence on business behaviour and conduct within the company'. Organizationally, the office carries out the directions given by an 'Ethics and Compliance Board Committee' which is under the company's Board of Directors, to which the head of the Global Ethics Office reports. The Global Ethics Office is part of the Compliance, Ethics and Legal Team; a corporate unit consisting of 65 people, headed by the Group General Counsel.

The Global Ethics Office consists of five full-time employees, a part-time consultant and a head of office, all of which will be referred to as 'ethics officers'. As anthropologist Steven Sampson points out, 'ethics officers' are not necessarily legal counsels with the aim to mitigate risk but rather employees in a normative corporate function put in place to distinguish right from wrong and encourage employees to do what is considered 'the right thing' within the company (Sampson 2016:70). The Global Ethics Office

---

[55] http://www.ferringresponsibility.com/pillars/business-ethics accessed 15th of August 2017

maintains a network of approximately 55 'ethics coordinators' who 'act as local ethics ambassadors'[56] and whose managers have agreed to allocate up to 5% of their time to ethics-related tasks.

Kaptein (2009) has defined nine components that ethics programs may contain (see also Kaptein 2015), and Ferring has the majority of these components in place. The foundation of an ethics program, Kaptein writes, is a code of ethics, which in Ferring is the Ferring Philosophy. The second component is to have ethics officers and perhaps even an ethics office, which Ferring likewise has.

The Global Ethics Office carries out their work through a number of activities. First of all, they facilitate the 'Ferring Philosophy Workshop', a mandatory training for to which all level staff and managers in their local business units are invited. According to Kaptein, the third component of an ethics program is to conduct periodic ethics training for employees (Kaptein 2009:264). The Global Ethics Office ensures that local ethics coordinators in the many business units worldwide are equipped to carry out these workshops. They do so by training local trainers and by providing playbooks, training materials, e-learning programs and a comprehensive facilitator kit on the intranet with various sorts of awareness raising material. Moreover, in 2018 the Global Ethics Office tested and introduced an ethics workshop for managers named 'Leading with Integrity'. However, this manager workshop was never rolled out due to the introduction of a new leadership framework by Global HR that I will describe later in this chapter.

The Global Ethics Office is also responsible for the online learning materials found on the intranet, which new staff and managers are likewise urged to complete. Moreover, ethics officers lead various communication and awareness campaigns, organize activities and publish newsletters. Another major task is maintaining the corporate whistle-blowing scheme, the 'Ferring Alertline', where staff and managers can report any wrongdoing they see committed in Ferring or in Ferring's name.

Within Kaptein's (Kaptein 2009:264) framework for ethics programs, the fourth component is likewise to have a hotline or another type of whistle-blowing scheme to report unethical conduct. Kaptein's framework also contains a number of more disciplinary components, such as policies for managers' and employees' accountability for unethical behaviour, policies for how allegations submitted through the hotline are investigated as well as policies for rewards and incentives for ethical conduct (Kaptein 2009:264–65). The Global Ethics Office is responsible for the 'Business Ethics and Conflicts of Interest Policy' which focuses on elements such as fraud and bribery, and a clear process for how to investigate allegations is also in place. However, there are no policies for rewards and incentives for ethical conduct. The last two components of Kaptein's framework are to have systems to assess ethical

---

[56] http://www.ferringresponsibility.com/pillars/business-ethics accessed 15th of August 2017

performance in the organization and to have ethical pre-employment screenings of prospective employees. In line with this component, the Global Ethics Office maintains the biannual 'Risk Clarity Survey' to measure observed misconduct and knowledge of the ethics program across the organization, but to my knowledge, although numerous pre-employment screenings exist, no particular ethics-focused screening takes place in Ferring. Lastly, the office is responsible for tasks related to data privacy, an area of work that was added during the course of this research. [57] The components of Ferring's ethics program are summarized in Table 4 below.

Table 4 - Comparison of Kaptein's ideal definition of ethics program components with Ferring's ethics program

Kaptein's definition of ethics program components	Ferring's ethics program
A code of ethics	The Ferring Philosophy
Ethics officers or an ethics office	The Global Ethics Office
Formal ethics training	The Ferring Philosophy workshop and online courses (and the manager training 'Leading with Integrity', which was discontinued before it was rolled out globally)
A non-retaliatory hotline to report misconduct anonymously	The Ferring Alertline. Non-retaliatory and ensures anonymity if the caller wishes it so
Policies on managerial and employee accountability for unethical behaviour	The business ethics and conflicts of interest policy
Policies on investigations of allegations.	A process for how to investigate allegations exists.
Policies for rewards and incentives for ethical conduct	No policy for rewards and incentives of ethical conduct exists
Internal systems to monitor or assess ethical performance and the effectiveness of their ethics programs	The biannual Risk Clarity Survey measures employees' knowledge of ethics program components as well as observations of misconduct
Pre-employment screenings of whether new employees' ethical orientations correspond to the standards of the company	No such screenings exist in Ferring

---

[57] The composition and tasks of the Global Ethics Office has changed during the course of this research, and this description thus corresponds to the composition at the time of the fieldwork in 2017-2018. Please see Chapter 8 for an outline of the changes in the Global Ethics Office.

As outlined in Chapter 2, scholars often distinguish between compliance-oriented ethics practices that focus on detection and punishment, and values-oriented ethics practices that focus on fostering an environment supportive of ethical reflections (cf. Paine 1994; Weaver and Treviño 1999). As I will highlight in the following, Ferring's approach is highly values-oriented.

4.4. Family values and 'The Ferring Philosophy'

The family heritage is a central trait that flows through the company and also ties into its ethical principles. To introduce the company and to begin to grasp its nature, it can be useful to describe one of my early days in the Danish office:

> It is March, and together with 16 other participants, I am sitting on the 19th floor in Ferring Pharmaceuticals' R&D Centre in Denmark. The room is surrounded by windows as walls, and the view is impressive. Despite the gloomy weather, you can see most of Copenhagen and the bridge stretching towards Sweden. It is 12 o'clock, and we are all new employees, attending the first of a two-day introductory course. An HR business partner introduces us to various administrative matters that must be learnt by new employees, and at 12:30, the program for the day lists 'The history of the founder – video'. The HR business partner in charge of the day explains with a smile that we will now watch a video about the founder of the company. She dims the lights, and we all sit back in our seats. The video is old, with the grainy, brown feeling that older movies have compared to today's high resolution quality.
>
> 'Welcome on board to the island of Föhr' says a pleasant speaker voice, as we arrive to an island with a boat along with the documentarist in the film. 'This German island is where [name] was born on July 31st 1909. In Sweden, he is known as [name], and he has been a major influence on the pharmaceutical industry', the speaker continues, and invites us to 'meet the man behind Ferring, the Swedish pharmaceutical company'.
>
> The film consists mostly of an interview with the founder of Ferring Pharmaceuticals and father of the current Chairman of Ferring's Board of Directors, who in everyday conversation is referred to as 'the owner' of the company.

The video tells us about the inhabitants of Föhr, who have maintained their own language in which they refer to themselves as *ferrings*. It also tells a story of hardship and victory from when the founder was chased by the Gestapo but escaped to Switzerland and later travelled to Sweden. It tells us the story about how he started his own company with the pituitary hormones that his wife had made in a basement, when she was working as his research assistant. The story ends years later, with the company now having become a multinational, multi-million-dollar enterprise.

Arrival scenes, getting off the boat, entering a village, are an important and almost cliché description within anthropological writing (cf. Krause-Jensen 2010). Nevertheless, accounts of arrivals are also often useful descriptions of the first impressions of the field. At that moment, it seemed curious to me that one of the first things on the agenda at an introductory course for new employees was an old movie with the founder of the company. I had expected a sophisticated presentation of the corporate strategy or an enthusiastic welcome by the director of the Danish division. And my initial reflections about the introduction pinpoint what I later realized to be an important feature of Ferring as a company: the role of the private ownership and family heritage, and how this family ownership impacts business decisions and penetrates Ferring's ethics program.

Back to the code of ethics, The Ferring Philosophy. The history – or perhaps I should say *story* – of the emergence of this particular document was told to me on several occasions, and it is also a central feature of the aforementioned Ferring Philosophy Workshop conducted by the Global Ethics Office and its counterparts across the globe. The code of ethics, The Ferring Philosophy, was launched in 2004, and as the Ethics Officers tell it, the story goes as follows: In 2003, the company had grown to become a worldwide operation with more than 40 subsidiaries. The son of the founder was anxious that not all employees knew of the family values on which the company had been built. To address this issue, he asked a friend to visit Ferring's many offices and explore what the employees around the globe found to be the core values in Ferring. After the friend returned, the owner sat down with him and another trusted advisor, and together they formulated the document which is now known as the Ferring Philosophy.

The reason for creating this code of ethics, the story tells us, was to maintain the family values of the company that started with the father and the mother of the current owner. Ferring has chosen to frame

these family values as *ethics* rather than, say, corporate values as do many companies, and to assign responsibility for creating awareness of these values to an ethics office. And this, I would argue, indicates the ambition of Ferring to work in a different way with these values which becomes visible in the way they have structured the work of the Global Ethics Office and the way this office works to communicate the code of ethics.

4.4.1. The Ferring Philosophy – Ferring's code of ethics

The Ferring philosophy is a one-page document setting the expectations for employees' conduct and, as mentioned, is generally referred to as the code of ethics of the company. The statement has one section addressing physicians and patients and what these groups can expect from Ferring, and another section that addresses employees and what they can expect from the company.

The Ferring Philosophy in its entirety reads as follows:

People come first at Ferring

Because:

Patients using our products and physicians prescribing them have a right to expect:
- that we will only make available those products in which we have full confidence.
- that we will offer the best possible products at the most reasonable cost.
- that Ferring's employees will always display courtesy and respect, and act professionally.

Ferring seeks the loyalty of these patients and physicians, and we are prepared to earn this loyalty anew every day.

Ferring expects that its employees will create value for the company and its stakeholders.

Ferring employees, at all levels, have a right to expect from the company and their colleagues:
- respect, support and encouragement.
- a work environment that is safe, stimulating and rewarding.
- the freedom to make mistakes and to admit to them without fear of retribution.
- that the highest standards of integrity will be maintained at all times.
- that colleagues will never knowingly do anything to compromise their position as Ferring employees.
- that all who represent Ferring will do so in ways that generate respect for the company and its employees.

As the story on the emergence of the Ferring Philosophy illustrates, the document does not have a clear home in any particular country. The founder of the company was German, later moved to Sweden, and his son (and successor) has led the firm from Sweden, Denmark and now Switzerland. The multi-national history of the founder and his family thus prevents me from being able to connect the philosophy with any one country. However, the ideas behind this document certainly represent foundational ideas and values that can be found within a Scandinavian cultural community.
In order to illustrate this, I would like to start with the concluding paragraph of the Ferring Philosophy:

> 'No statement of principled behaviour can ever cover every situation, or deal with every contingency. It can only set the tone, making each individual responsible for applying that tone to his or her everyday practice. We strive to set that tone with five simple words:
> People come first at Ferring'.

The individual responsibility to make decisions that corresponds with the Ferring Philosophy resembles an idea highly prevalent in Scandinavia that civic virtues of making good choices can be instilled in people through freedom and enlightenment (Damsholt 2015:164). Rather than giving direct instructions for what is allowed and prohibited, the assumption behind the Ferring Philosophy is that 'setting the tone' for proper behaviour will be sufficient, and that employees, no matter where they are located, will act accordingly.

This approach resembles the management style found in most Scandinavian business contexts, where managers exert very little control over subordinates' work, since subordinates are empowered to take charge of their own portfolio and are thus individually responsible for their work routines and performance (Schramm-Nielsen 2018:30; Udviklingskontoret 1996). Moreover, a cooperative tradition within Scandinavia lays emphasis on 'help to self-help' and on empowerment and emancipation of people to make it on their own (Østergård 2012:46; see also Iversen and Andersen 2008).

Stahl et al. (2016) identify ethics and 'the need to ensure principle-driven, legally sound, and ethically acceptable behaviour in their organizations' as one of the major areas in which global leaders confront significant leadership challenges (Stahl et al. 2016:83). As argued by Hrenyk et al. (2016), the role of ethical global leaders is not only to demonstrate a normative ethical behaviour but also to promote it among subordinates and peers. As they write, 'By helping others make ethical decisions, global ethical leaders can foster ethical behaviour among the wider organizational group' (Hrenyk et al. 2016:60). However, in a Scandinavian context, rather than focusing only on the leader helping others to make sound ethical decisions, the Global Ethics Office also focuses on empowering the individual employee to make sound ethical decisions by themselves. The responsibility for acting ethically and fostering an ethical culture devolves to the individual. It is thus shared among leaders and employees within Ferring.

Tied into this is the Danish notion of '*dannelse*'. Not having an adequate English translation, only a German ('*Bildung*'), the word refers to moral education, enlightenment and emancipation of the individual to be made morally and philosophically conscious enough to make sound judgments about right and wrong for the benefit of a common good. 'Dannelse' is a concept tied to the ideological synthesis still found strongly represented within Danish cultural heritage and the institutions of the Danish welfare state. This ideology is often referred to as 'Grundtvigianism' – named after Danish Lutheran priest, educational thinker and poet N.F.S. Grundtvig (1783-1872), who made a major imprint on public institutions in Denmark (Schramm-Nielsen 2018:15).

As Østergaard writes in his article on Danish national identity, 'The teachings of Grundtvig spring from a fundamental optimism with regard to people's capacities. He demanded economic and ideological freedom and the right to universal education' (Østergård 2012:44). And a similar optimism, I would argue, can be found within the Ferring Philosophy and, as will be demonstrated later, in the communication and dissemination efforts and activities of the Global Ethics Office, which were developed by a Danish manager. The mere fact that Ferring has chosen to formulate its entire code of ethics in a simple, one-page document rather than the considerably longer codes of conduct adopted

by many other companies is indicative of the Scandinavian optimism regarding people's capabilities to understand, reflect and make the right choices in any given situation, without being directly instructed about each and every situation.

The educational traditions in the Scandinavian countries have developed along very similar lines (Gregersen 2017; Korsgaard and Wiborg 2006) and are founded upon principles of critical thinking, where challenging and questioning the teacher is rewarded rather than sanctioned, and considered a demonstration of individual reflection. Returning to Grundtvig, his thinking was largely anti-authoritarian and critical of the paternalistic educational system of the time, and many attribute the current Scandinavian educational system, with its emphasis on citizenship along with skills, to Grundtvig (Korsgaard 2006:143; Schramm-Nielsen 2018:15). But not only in the educational system can these anti-authoritarian values be found. The Scandinavian countries have strong democratic values, and this is reflected within Scandinavian workplaces, where involvement in decision-making processes and consensus-building are commonly highlighted features (Schramm-Nielsen 2018:31). Another central imprint of Grundtvigianism on the Danish sociocultural context is informality, flat hierarchies and respect for individual initiative and input regardless of a person's status (Østergård 2012:45–46; Schramm-Nielsen 2018:33). Similarly, due to the flat hierarchies, anyone is approachable, and even the highest managers are being called by their first name (a practice which begins in school, where even young schoolchildren call their teachers by their first names, to the amazement of foreign visitors).

The Ferring Philosophy seems to reflect this informality and assumption about approachability. 'Speak out when you think that wrongs are being committed in Ferring's name', the philosophy urges Ferring's employees. Linked to this encouragement is 'The Ferring Open Door Policy'. Although not a policy per se, it is referred to in one of the Global Ethics Office's policies about Good Business Practices, which states that:

> 'Ferring takes pride in our open door policy and we support dialogue. We trust our management to adhere to our GBPs [Good Business Practices] and our Ferring Philosophy and therefore we believe that they will listen and act if anyone speaks up. Generally, if you should come across wrongs being committed in Ferring's name or any violation of these GBPs [Good Business Practices], you are encouraged to speak up and report this to your immediate superior. Should he/she not be available, you shall report the incident to the superior's superior and so forth.'

Likewise, within workshops on the Ferring Philosophy, ethics officers stress that all employees are encouraged to always approach the person with whom they have an issue or a concern before escalating it to the next level, but that any manager at any level is obliged to listen to employees' concerns. Sometimes, even the possibility of sending an email to one of the executive board members is mentioned. Within a Scandinavian business context characterized by flat hierarchies and informality, this approach is perfectly acceptable. But, as several scholars have demonstrated, this may pose a challenge in countries where hierarchy is more salient at the work place (see e.g. Gertsen and Zølner 2012a).

The Ferring Philosophy further states that all employees have the 'freedom to make mistakes and to admit them without fear of retribution'.

Within a context of flat hierarchies and informality, where problem-based learning is an integrated part of the educational system (cf. Gregersen 2017), making mistakes, admitting to these, correcting them and learning from them is proclaimed as a risk-free part of any work process. However, as Søderberg experienced during a fieldwork in a research and development (R&D) department of a Danish MNC in China, the expatriate managers struggled with creating such openness among their Chinese colleagues. In order to emphasize the importance of learning from mistakes, they placed a statement that 'failure is the mother of all innovation' in a central area of the office space. Despite such efforts, they had great difficulties in reproducing the kind of informality and openness that characterizes interaction and knowledge-sharing among engineers in a similar Danish R&D setting (Søderberg and Worm 2011).

In the following, I will describe how Scandinavian values are likewise reflected in the way in which the Global Ethics Office approaches its work.

4.5. The difference between ethics and compliance in Ferring

As mentioned earlier, contrary to many other companies, within Ferring, 'ethics' and 'compliance' are two areas of work, and they are placed within separate corporate functions. As illustrated in the often-used slide in Figure 1 below, when the company's approach to business ethics is presented, compliance is understood as behaviours determined by the letter of the law, whereas ethics is understood as the behaviours that are determined by the spirit of the law and beyond, as well as it is based on an individual moral assessment.

Figure 1 - the Global Ethics Office's distinction between ethics and compliance
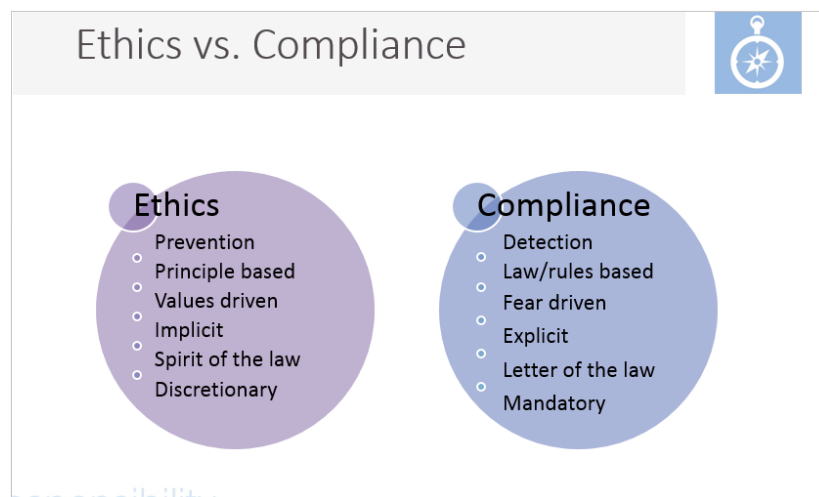
This approach largely resembles Henderson's (1982) framework for understanding the relationship between legal and ethical behaviour in international business contexts. This framework emphasizes that an action may very well be defined as ethical, although it is illegal in a particular international setting; there also exist actions that are legal in some settings but unethical in others. As noted by Lane et al. (2014), this distinction between the legal and the ethical is particularly useful in an international business setting, where laws and norms for appropriate business behaviour may differ. Dilemmas arise, they write, whereby the ethical and the legal come into conflict, and each company must decide in each situation what is the best way forward. Within Ferring Pharmaceuticals, the separation of the Global Ethics Office from the Compliance Department is an attempt to address potential conflicts between the legal and the ethical as well as to instil a mind-set of preparedness within managers and staff for handling such conflicts.

As written in the speaking notes to the slide depicted in Figure 1 for one of the presentations created by the Ethics Office: 'Contrary to how many other companies see Ethics and Compliance, in Ferring we think they are fundamentally different and therefore we keep the two functions separate. This also goes to show that Ferring really puts an emphasis on Ethics and does not want it to be forgotten in the face of all the new Compliance regulations.'[58]

Ferring has thus drawn distinction between compliance and ethics based on the notion that having a compliance approach alone was insufficient (cf. Paine 1994). Moreover, the Global Compliance

---

[58] Excerpt from speaker notes from a presentation about business ethics within Ferring held in Spring 2017.

Department was only recently established as an independent business unit, whereas the Global Ethics Office has existed since 2005 and has been an independent business unit since 2010.

After having started to notice that 'compliance' was being used by the ethics officers to distinguish themselves from other corporate functions by explaining what is *not* their function, I started to include questions about the perceived difference between ethics and compliance in my interviews. Jane, an ethics officer, describes it as follows.

> 'There is a true belief at the board level that there is a difference between ethics', she says and pauses as if to emphasize the difference, 'And compliance'. Another pause. 'Compliance is regulations, rules and laws and that people should do certain things or behave in certain ways because of the rules and the laws, and this is what we must do. And this is important. Compliance is absolutely critical for a company to be successful'. She looks straight at me as to emphasize her words. 'Ethics – the belief from a board perspective is that it's value-based', she continues. 'This is that people should really behave in the right way because it's the right thing to do. Nothing to do with the law, with the rules or regulations per se. Just because it's the right thing to do. Often times, there is the mind-set that… 'Well, the law says we can do this'. Or 'it's not against the law'. Or 'there is really not a clear regulation, it's a grey area, so we could do it'', she says, imitating all the different arguments that could be brought forward for taking advantages of legislative grey zones. She continues: 'Nobody says that you can't. I think what ethics says is: 'Should you?' And that's the difference'.[59]

Thus, the point of the comparison with 'compliance' is to emphasize that it will never be possible to create legislation that responds to all imaginable situations and grey areas in which employees may find themselves. Therefore, a moral compass must be nurtured. Similarly, in the aforementioned Global Ethics Office policy on 'Good Business Practice', there is a section on 'Integrity' that underlines this distinction between what is legal and what is right:

---

[59] Interview with ethics officer, Autumn 2017.

'Integrity is the key

At Ferring we build performance with integrity. By integrity we mean doing what is right. (...)

Therefore, before undertaking action, we must ask ourselves a few questions:

• Is it legal?

• Does it follow company policy?

• Is it commercial?

• Is it right? (Is it ethical?)

• How would it look to those outside the company?'

Not only does the Global Ethics Office ask employees to consider whether an action is legal. It also asks employees to consider whether it is ethical despite it being legal, similar to Henderson's (1982) aforementioned framework [*Is it right? (Is it ethical?)*].

At a very early stage in the research, Maria, another ethics officer, tries to explain the value of the Ferring Philosophy by comparing it to a code of conduct that many companies have and require new hires to sign.

'The whole idea with ethics in Ferring is that you need to think out of the box and beyond the letter of the law (...) My opinion is that if we get a code of conduct, it will describe 70% of the things that can happen to you in your everyday work life. And then there are still 30% where you have to use your head to find the right solution. And then you need the ethical principles to support you anyway', she says, referring to why the one-page Philosophy statement is the best solution to the complex organizational challenge of ensuring that employees behave according to the company values. [60]

She admits that this approach is much more abstract than compliance, but returning to my description of the Scandinavian sociocultural context, this ability to 'use your head' is a cornerstone in the Global Ethics Office's approach. It can be seen as a cultural reference to the aforementioned ideal of critical thinking that runs through the Scandinavian educational system, with its emphasis on social skills and independent learning over rote learning of rules and standards. In fact, one ethics officer directly referred to Grundtvigianism and how the concept of moral education (Danish: *dannelse*) had inspired

[60] Interview with ethics officer, Winter 2017.

how she worked with ethics in Ferring. Moreover, the rhetoric surrounding this ideal of being able to 'think out of the box' and 'use your head' underscores a valuation and legitimization of this particular approach and, perhaps, an implicit devaluation of other approaches.

As expressed in the excerpts, the ethics officers do not mean to say that compliance is not a crucial part of running a pharmaceutical company. However, they plea that employees and managers think 'beyond compliance' as they describe it. The ways in which the Global Ethics Office works to communicate this plea to employees and managers will be described in the following.

4.6. The Global Ethics Office: communicating complexity

As mentioned earlier, one of the main tasks of the Global Ethics Office is to create awareness of the Ferring Philosophy and encourage employees and managers to recognize an ethical dilemma, to reflect upon it and hopefully, to act upon it. The Global Ethics Office uses various channels to underline the complexity of an ethical decision and to highlight the difficulties of deciding what is right or wrong. One of these channels is the 'Ferring Philosophy Workshop'.

On several occasions, I participated in this 3,5 hour workshop presenting Ferring's approach to ethics to all new employees. In the workshop, participants are introduced to the Global Ethics Office, its origins and the family heritage of the focus on ethics. However, most of the workshop time is spent on elaborating the Ferring Philosophy. Ethics officers explain to the participants that Ferring has taken the standpoint that no code of conduct could ever cover everything, which is why the company has chosen a one-page document to guide behaviour. The last hour of the workshop is spent discussing dilemma cases in smaller groups, followed by a general discussion among all participants. The dilemma cases that are discussed derive from real or fictitious situations that employees might encounter in their work in the company, and the subject matter of these dilemmas ranges from on issues such as product safety, financial reporting, and work-life balance. The dilemma cases used in these workshops vary from one session to the next, as the ethics officers select dilemmas which they think resonate with a specific group of participants and their positions in the company. Thus, in the workshops that I participated in, some dilemmas were related to research and development, others focussed on managerial issues, whereas most dilemmas were more general, accommodating workshop participants from various functions. These dilemma cases underscored the aforementioned 'Good Business Practice' policy that requires employees not just to consider whether a given practice is permitted but also if it *should* be permitted, as illustrated in dilemma below:

'You are responsible for ordering office supplies. One of the companies that you order from is trying to bid to become Ferring's sole provider. Their sales representative drops by one day and gives you an e-reader because you are considered to be one of their 'special' clients. After he hands you the e-reader, he makes a 'joking' remark that now you have to put in a good word about his company with the purchase manager.

The corporate policy about receiving gifts states that you may receive a gift from a supplier without needing permission if it is under the value of 200 EUR. The value of the e-reader is slightly less than this amount.

Can you accept the e-reader?'[61]

According to the imaginary corporate gift policy described in the case, the employee could accept the e-reader as a present, as it is worth less than the maximum amount. In this case, however, the Global Ethics Office adds a self-interested intention to the gift-giving and asks employees to consider not only the rules but also to reflect upon whether such gifts *should* be allowed in this particular case, referring implicitly to the aforementioned distinction between the letter of the law and the spirit of the law.

What is interesting about these cases and the way they are presented in the workshops is that they point towards a multiplicity of right and wrong ways to handle them, depending on the information one receives and the ways in which the employees consider the various dilemmas. Common to all cases is that they are difficult to solve and that the right answer is not easily found and sometimes downright non-existent. This complexity is also underscored by the ethics officers who facilitate these workshops. For example, during a workshop I attended and upon completion of a discussion of a dilemma case, Sara, an ethics officer, emphasizes that what is right depends on the particular person you are and the particular circumstances that you find yourself in, as well as on the knowledge you have at a certain point in time about those circumstances. 'There is not only one solution. Depending on the situation, there can be several ways to do the right thing', she concludes.

What I find interesting about the dilemma case with the gift of an e-reader and similar cases discussed throughout such workshops is that they have the purpose of demonstrating complexity and raising questions rather than giving answers. They thus underline the aforementioned distinction between legal compliance and value-based ethics by bringing forward the conviction that ethical dilemmas are complex questions with varying and complex answers.

---

[61] A dilemma case often used at the Ferring Philosophy Workshop.

And this conviction is very much reflected in the way the Global Ethics Office works. As an ethics officer explained to me early during my fieldwork, also noting the distinction between ethics and compliance. 'It is very much an educational model [in Danish: dannelsesmodel] that Ferring has chosen. And that's the difference between ethics and compliance. Should we raise/tell people [Danish: 'opdrage'] to do what they are told? Or should we educate ['danne'] them to do what's right?'.[62]

Within the moral education that is practiced in Scandinavia and described earlier, the ideal is to make informed and - morally grounded - individual decisions. Thus, as expressed in the excerpt above, doing what one is told to do fits less with this ideal than doing what one feels is right. As such, imparting a set of rules and sanctions holds less legitimacy within the approach of the Global Ethics Office. Thus, both the Ferring Philosophy and the way in which it is disseminated by the Global Ethics Office resembles ideals of empowerment and moral education prevalent in a Danish sociocultural context. Moreover, as demonstrated in the quotes presented in this section, the educational approach focused on emphasizing dilemmas and uncertainties is a very conscious choice by the Global Ethics Office in general and by the Danish manager who created the office in particular.

4.7. Recontextualizing the ethics program

As described so far, Ferring's ethics program is based on three key pillars. First, it is shaped by the company founder, whose family values had a Northern European heritage. Second, the work is grounded in the Ferring Philosophy developed by the founder's son, and expresses values of individual freedom, enterprise and enlightenment, and the third pillar is the Global Ethics Office, and its Danish leadership (and building of the entire ethics program) of the Global Ethics Office from 2005 to 2016, where the office was located in Denmark, which seems to have had a significant imprint on how the ethics program is designed.

4.7.1. Recontextualizations in the corporate headquarters

Although still in Europe, in the corporate headquarters in Switzerland, the Ferring Philosophy and the ethics program entered a new sociocultural context. This context was not necessarily 'Swiss', in so far as

---

[62] Interview with ethics officer, Spring 2017.

the corporate headquarters is inhabited by staff and managers from various countries, and the arguments made in the following do thus not necessarily point towards traits of Swiss particularity. But the context was certainly different from its Scandinavian origin and Danish leadership.

As mentioned earlier, the Global Ethics Office is an independent business unit, and is not part of the Compliance Department, the Legal Department, the Human Resources Department or wherever one might imagine an ethics program to belong. However, the local ethics coordinators in charge of facilitating the Ferring Philosophy Workshop and getting the message across at various company sites are placed within these related departments. These coordinators are thus not formally part of the Global Ethics Office but are collaboration partners of the Global Ethics Office placed in different departments. At headquarters, the local responsibility for ethics is placed within Human Resources, a business function that is keen on developing global processes and standards. However, during the first five months of the fieldwork and – I am told – a period of another six months before that, there was no specific ethics coordinator working at headquarters. The original ethics coordinator went on maternity leave, and a new one was not appointed during this entire time. However, there has been one employee from human resources who has conducted the workshops at headquarters every quarter, but no attempts have been made to adapt the program or efforts beyond what is formally required.

When discussing the Ferring Philosophy with human resources officers at headquarters, one of the most prevalent comments was the Philosophy's lack of 'operationalizability'. Human resources officers were simply unsure how to put the Philosophy into practice and what behaviours would indicate that it was in fact being followed.
As Benjamin from HR in the global headquarters describes in an interview:

> 'This is where I struggle in Ferring since I arrived. I think the Ethics Office is somehow dealing with a piece of the culture (…) So when you think about culture and more specifically a company culture, you are talking about a number of different things. You are talking about how people talk to each other, how they behave with each other, how leaders are role modelling, how their managers see that, interpret that and behave like that with their own people, so that it's cascaded, right? And then you have the whole management or evaluation of that. So, what behaviours are accepted, acceptable or not at all? And when we get to Ferring, what is very interesting is that in the Ferring

philosophy, behaviours are not described very easily to understand. They are not
measured. And there is no consequence.'[63]

What I find particularly interesting about this quote is firstly that Benjamin expects what he describes as
'company culture' to be measurable, and secondly that the Global Ethics Office and the Ferring
Philosophy do not live up to this ideal because of a perceived lack of clear behavioural guidance,
measurability and consequence. In the excerpt and the conversation surrounding it, Benjamin
elaborates on his convictions about the 'company culture' cascading down from the management level
to the organization, and that such cascading of a desired company culture will be successful only if
there is a proper management and evaluation system in place to track it. As he says in the excerpt,
there are no clear guidelines on what are exactly the preferred behaviours in Ferring, nor are such
behaviours measured or attached to consequences if not being adhered to. For him, management and
evaluation of measures are the obvious tools with which to shape company culture, in which the
Ferring Philosophy, according to him, plays a central role.
Built into the ethos of the HR function is to consider employees as *resources* with which the company
can increase its (financial) performance. Performance management systems and various ways to render
employees' activities in the workplace accountable are key tools in what seems like a universalized HR
toolbox applied widely across all types of companies. Within this realm, as expressed by Benjamin, if
something is important, it must be ensured through what he terms 'clear guidance' and effective
structures to evaluate if this guidance has been followed.

In a response to their own request for behavioural guidance, at the time of the interview, the Global HR
Department was working on a set of 'Leadership Principles' that were launched the following year after
this interview. These Leadership Principles illustrate quite well what Benjamin understands by
behavioural guidance. The Leadership Principles are not intended to challenge the ethics program, he
explains, but rather to define the preferred behaviours expected from the company and to render these
behaviours accountable:

> 'If we want to drive a company from here to there', he says and shows with his hands the
> distance between here and there, 'we have – and this is one of the projects that we are
> working on – to identify what are the behaviours that will allow us to get there? When
> we look at what we have come through up to now, they [the new Leadership Principles]

---

63 Interview with human resources officer, headquarters, Autumn 2017.

link very much to the Ferring Philosophy, there is no contradiction there. They are very much aligned. But they [the Leadership Principles] are spelled out in a much easier way that people can understand. And how you embed that is that you work through systems and structures to embed that in… Every…. Single… Process… That you can…', he says with emphasis on each word… 'and then you identify how you are going to measure it and how you are going to make sure that that measure has a consequence.'[64]

Within the local framework of meaning in global HR at headquarters, where more operational and strategic tasks are traditionally undertaken, performance management is a valued tool to measure and manage performance and to, ultimately, ensure that adequate performance is identified and underperformance dealt with. Rendering measurable the mind-set of moral education that the Global Ethics Office promotes is not an easy task, and in response to this perceived shortcoming, it seems, Global HR has created the new Leadership Principles.

As Brannen (2004) writes, firm assets such as policies, objects, events or behaviours can be understood through a semiotic lens. As such, these assets consist of two components: a signifier and a signified. The *signifier* refers to the material world and the actual objects or policies that are shared, whereas the *signified* refers to the idea that is expressed in this object or policy (Brannen 2004:601). Within the context of Ferring Pharmaceuticals, the signifier is the Ferring Philosophy, and what is signified is the ethos of moral education outlined earlier in this chapter. However, as Brannen (2004) writes, when the signifier changes context, i.e., when it travels from one system of signification to another, the signified is often left behind.

The signified (the notions of moral education and individual critical thinking) is held in high esteem in the Scandinavian context from which the Global Ethics Office has been operating. But in a new context, a new meaning is attached to the signifier (the Ferring Philosophy) when it arrives at the HR department at the corporate headquarters. It has entered a new system of signification. The Scandinavian cultural context that gives resonance to the approach of the Global Ethics Office has been 'left behind'. And thus, as the signifier is detached from its original signified, the focus on complexity, moral education and individual responsibility that was originally perceived as valuable is now seen as a liability because of the lack of measurability. What is different from Brannen's empirical studies of this process, however, is the fact that human resources officers at headquarters do not attempt to adjust the ethics program to make it more comparable with the local context, as Brannen's concept of

[64] Interview with human resources officer, Switzerland, Autumn 2017.

recontextualization suggests. After what Brannen terms the 'initial semiosis', where new meanings are attached to the firm offering that is introduced (e.g. an ethics program), there occurs an 'ongoing semiosis' in which 'meanings of firm assets evolve as they are utilized and made sense of in the new context.' (Brannen 2004:605). Brannen calls these evolutions of firm assets 'cross-cultural innovations' and writes that '[a]s the firm assets are implemented and then intermixed within the new host environment, they continue to undergo recontextualization' (Brannen 2004:605). The third stage of Brannen's concept of recontextualization is 'reflexive semiosis' where these new cross-cultural innovations feed back and are incorporated into the original context (ibid.).

Within Ferring, only the initial semiosis – the first stage of recontextualization – occurred. The ethics program was never transformed into any such 'cross-cultural innovation', it was never adapted to the local setting. Instead of adapting the Danish-oriented ethics program to the local context of headquarters, the Global HR Department invents an entirely new values program, the Leadership Principles. They could have adjusted the ethics program to fit the local demands for operationalizability by e.g. creating 'Ferring Philosophy principles' or 'ethical behaviours' or some other 'tweak'. But it did not happen. Instead, the ethics program was left aside, and the HR Department in Switzerland developed a 'work-around' by which there is a minimum of engagement, yet still adhering to the Global Ethics Office's requirements to conduct ethics training four times per year, with respect to its ties with the owner of the company. But besides complying with the obligatory training requirements, the HR officers simply rejected the program (and the code of ethics in particular) as a starting point for working towards operationalizing employee's values and behaviours. As Lauren, an employee from Global HR at headquarters explained in an interview about the process of developing the Leadership Principles:

> 'One of the things we didn't want to do since the beginning is to have anything that would somehow look as a stain into the Ferring philosophy. Right? Neither putting it down or pushing it aside… It's the heart of Ferring, and the owner is very… vigilant to that. So it needs to be something that is complementary to the Ferring Philosophy but that gives more guidance. (…) but how can we work around it in a way that expresses it to people in a more obvious way?', she asks, implicitly referring to the Leadership Principles as the answer.[65]

---

[65] Interview with human resources officer, Switzerland, Autumn, 2017.

Thus, within the ethos and logic of the HR function with its 'goal setting', 'measuring' and 'consequences', the global HR group tries to 'work around' the Ferring Philosophy by developing a set of Leadership Principles that express Ferring's preferred behaviours in what they consider a more 'obvious way'.

However, it is important to note that the quest for operationalizability does not necessarily mean that the Ferring philosophy is disregarded by headquarters or by the Global HR Department. Later in the fieldwork, in a video conference held by HR for local counterparts globally, Phil, another HR officer, describes the connection between the Leadership Principles and the Ferring Philosophy as follows:

> 'The Ferring philosophy defines the values and ethical standards and it's there in everything we do. And it has a pretty high level identity focus, where the [leadership] principles help to put it into practice. The Ferring mission sets clear direction for the future, guides our decisions and what we need to achieve. The Ferring Leadership Principles define what kind of leadership we need [in order] to be able to achieve the mission. And also what are the behaviours that we need to put in place to enable the mission. So everything fits together with these three different roles. All interlinked and supporting each other'.[66]

In the video conference, Phil further explains that the launch of the Leadership Principles entails descriptions of each principle and of its preferred behaviours as well as role model stories for each, all aimed at making the principles more operational for employees. And thus, the ways in which these principles are communicated as well as the principles themselves express a response to the criticism that has been raised about the Ferring Philosophy and its perceived lack of operationalizability.

The seven Leadership Principles are: Performance, Empowerment, Innovation, Accountability, Collaboration, Transparency and Purpose. Each principle has its own set of responsibilities for managers and employees. For example, the leadership principle 'Transparency' has the tagline 'We listen and share. We communicate honestly, we do it often, we make it simple, we make it clear' and the responsibilities for 'people managers' (i.e. managers with subordinates) and 'individual contributors' are outlined in the following Table 5.

---

[66] Video conference training for human resources officers globally, attended from China in Spring 2018.

Table 5 - Leadership Principle, 'Transparency'

PEOPLE MANAGERS	INDIVIDUAL CONTRIBUTORS
• Align communication across the organization/department/teams according to the target audience. • Communicate organizational or managerial decisions in a timely manner, explaining the reasons behind them. • Communicate successes, failures and learnings. • Provide honest and constructive feedback. • Listen to others' opinions. • Communicate openly across hierarchical levels to ensure effectiveness and involvement.	• Proactively seek and share complete and accurate information in a timely manner. • Be candid about motives, decisions, failures and learnings. • Take feedback as an opportunity to grow and support others. • Listen to others and make sure you fully understand the message. • Communicate openly across. hierarchical levels to ensure effectiveness and involvement.

Thus, the approach in the Leadership Principles is more command-oriented than the Ferring Philosophy, but I would argue that the content of these principles could have also been built from the Ferring Philosophy. Precisely because of the very open approach of the Global Ethics Office, there could have been sufficient elasticity to recontextualize the Ferring Philosophy in a way that would allow for the same messages around Accountability, Collaboration, Transparency etc. from the Leadership Principles to be expressed as part of – or at least adjacent to – the ethics program.

However, the Ferring Philosophy as a firm asset gains new meaning when it travels from Denmark to corporate headquarters in Switzerland. In the Scandinavian sociocultural context in which it originates, the moral educational approach is perceived as not only legitimate but also preferable to other, more directive approaches, as exemplified in the ethics officers' much expressed distinctions between ethics and compliance and the ideals of individual emancipation and 'using your head'. In the headquarter context among HR officers, however, this ideal is turned into a shortcoming as exemplified in Benjamin and Lauren's call for more clear behavioural guidance and the development of the global Leadership Principles. Moreover, because of this perceived shortcoming, the Ferring Philosophy is not recontextualized, as we have seen with similar values programs in previous studies (see e.g. Gertsen and Zølner 2012b; Søderberg 2015). Instead of local adaptation following recontextualization, what

happens is a local rejection of the code of ethics and the invention of a new approach deemed more suitable.

Due to the highly international nature of the headquarters and the many nationalities represented here, it would be incorrect to ascribe the criticism raised here to any particular national cultural belonging. Managers and staff in Switzerland belong to what Moore (2005) has termed the Transnational Capitalist Society, which a 'globe-spanning, transnational but locally-engaged, social formation which does not comprise a single, solidary group, but a variety of different groups with complex and social connections between them' (Moore 2005:164). Drawing on this concept, Moore emphasizes the multiple belonging and flexible ascription to various cultural communities among business people in multinational corporations. Similarly, within the global headquarters in Ferring, the staff come from various national backgrounds, and many have lived and worked in several countries throughout their careers. Despite this national cultural diversity, the criticism of the ethics program for its lack of operationalizibility was prevalent among the global human resources officers at headquarters, regardless of nationality.

In the following, I will move to a different context and discuss how the Ferring Philosophy and the efforts of the Global Ethics Office that articulate it are interpreted – and perhaps recontextualized - within a subsidiary in China.

4.7.2. Recontextualizations in a Chinese subsidiary

During the fieldwork, I travelled to China on two occasions, first on a trip with ethics officers, followed by a solo fieldwork of three weeks' duration in the Chinese subsidiary.

> In a meeting with Catherine from the Global Ethics Office in Copenhagen, we discuss the forthcoming trip that my Ethics Office colleagues and I would be taking to India and China. The purpose of the trip is for the ethics officers to conduct a 'Leading with Integrity' workshop for local managers and to train local counterparts in how to conduct this workshop and the Ferring Philosophy Workshop themselves (in the world of staff training, those who lead or conduct workshops are called 'facilitators').
> As described earlier, a central element of these workshops is the participants' discussion of a number of dilemma cases. And these dilemma cases, Catherine tells me, are often difficult for the local counterparts to grasp. This is not because they do not understand the dilemmas, but because of the pedagogical approach taken in the workshop

emphasizing independent thinking. Many of the local ethics counterparts in Asian subsidiaries, I am told, have asked for a list of solutions for these dilemma cases, which – *of course* – has not been supplied. When inquiring why solutions have *of course* not been given, different Ethics Officers explain that if you provide the solutions, then people may think that there is some set of right answers, as if ethics were a kind of test. But if the circumstances change, they explain, then another answer might be the right one. The ethics officers fear that providing answers or check-lists for the dilemma cases might instil what they term a 'compliance approach' into the dilemmas, referring to the distinction between ethics and compliance described earlier. Their goal is to 'educate' people to reflect on the ways in which dilemmas change, hereby also changing the right way to handle them.

Later, during my first field trip to China, an ethics officer from Denmark is conducting a 'train the trainer' workshop with local ethics counterparts on how to facilitate the Ferring Philosophy Workshop in the Chinese subsidiary. Jane, the Ethics Officer who is 'facilitating' the workshop, has thoroughly prepared a guidebook for how to facilitate and takes us through 'facilitation skills' as well as the content of the workshop. As the dilemma cases are an important part of the workshop concept, Jane also spends time explaining how to present these and facilitate discussion among the participants. During this training, we are reminded that the dilemma case discussion itself is valuable, and that we must never tell a participant that their assessments are wrong. Instead, we should challenge them with counter-arguments or try to make them see things from a different angle. Within the guidebook for facilitators that accompanies the training, it is likewise emphasized that we must challenge the participants and ask them to challenge each other's beliefs when discussing the dilemma cases, and it is underscored that depending on the circumstances, there might be several ways to do the right thing. 'There is no right or wrong answer, but it's interesting to listen to people's ideas', Jane says while explaining the importance of challenging people instead of telling them directly that they are wrong.

We discuss one particular case used for all the workshops, and Charlie, a local Chinese ethics counterpart asks her: 'So there are no right or wrong answers for the case? You just have to facilitate the discussion?'.

Jane replies: 'Yes, but it's difficult because you have your own opinion also, but try to keep that out of it… but of course, if someone suggests something illegal, you can say that 'I as a Ferring employee would maybe to this'…'.

Charlie nods a lot and says 'Ahh… To try and guide them'. Jane nods in reply.

The next day, in a different train-the-trainer workshop – this time about the Leading with Integrity Workshop for managers, we again discuss the dilemma cases. Ken – another local ethics counterpart – asks what we should do as facilitators if there are disagreements about the right way to handle the dilemma cases. Jane replies that we can try to challenge those with different approaches and make them reflect on it. 'So we don't have to give them the final answer?' asks Jill, another local counterpart who is also participating in the workshop. 'Noooo', Jane replies, shaking her head. 'We don't?', Ken asks, and Jane shakes her head again. All the participants nod, but they also look a bit confused.

Although Jane is rather firm regarding how they should facilitate the dilemma case discussions, she keeps emphasizing that the participants should make the workshop their own and adjust it in a way that works in their own context. [67]

Six months later, I return to China for three weeks; this time alone. In an interview with Charlie, who participated in the abovementioned training sessions, we start talking about the Ferring Philosophy Workshop, and he is still struggling with the Global Ethics Office approach of not supplying 'right answers' for the dilemma cases.

'Actually, I have also thought about that since the last time, and Jane [the ethics officer] also mentioned that there is no right or wrong answer for every dilemma (…) but for some things, we should have a right or wrong answer', he says and then explains that after the training six months ago, they had had an internal discussion within the local group of HR participants where they discussed and shared their fear of confusing the employees. They were afraid that employees might think that there will be no right or wrong answer for anything they do, and that it is up to them to choose. 'We say that it all depends on your judgment, but sometimes, personal judgment is not always right, so…'.

[67] Based on field notes from first field trip to China, Autumn 2017.

He gives me a serious look. 'No matter what kind of dilemma, we do not have the answer for them. And no matter what solution people say, then we say that the purpose is that we challenge each other. Because last time, Jane said that the most important part is that we challenge each other…'

Charlie is clearly worried that in the end, if all you do is challenge the participants, and you never tell them what is right or wrong, that people will think that they can do whatever they want and that it all depends on their own judgment. 'Because [if in] every scenario [dilemma case] we finish, we don't tell them what kind of thing they need to do. So I'm just afraid after a lot of rounds of… that people – especially senior people – will think, 'Why are we doing this?' (…) because at the end there is no answer for this, because everybody can be right'.[68]

The Ethics Office's approach to dilemma case discussions that echoes the Danish ethos of empowerment and moral education, with its emphasis on individuals taking responsibility for their decisions and judgments, a philosophy held in high esteem in Scandinavian societies, is perceived as liability in the local Chinese context. This approach, which refuses to give participants 'the right answers' is seen as not offering the employees any clear guidance on what is right and what is wrong. What the Danish trainers saw as 'empowerment' the Chinese saw as 'anything goes'.

In order to understand this insight, I started out seeking answers in national culture differences as a window to understanding the Chinese reaction to the ethics program.
Literature on the Chinese educational system and the Chinese learner often describes the teaching style found here as more instructing and less encouraging of critical reflexivity than Western teaching styles (Chen and Lee 2008). While such dichotomist stereotypes surely leave out numerous important nuances (cf. Ryan 2010), the difference between the Chinese context, into which the ethics program enters, and the Scandinavian context from which the ethics program originates, may be the reason why the *signified* (notion of moral education) and its value changes as the *signifier* (the ethics workshop) enters this context.

What is noteworthy, however, is that the request for more guidance voiced at headquarters is repeated when discussing the ethics program in the Chinese subsidiary. Even more noteworthy is it that this

---

[68] Interview with human resources officer, China, Spring 2018.

request for more guidance has not resulted in any of the 'cross-cultural innovations' (Brannen 2004:605) and adjustments of the ethics program, that I had expected to observe with the concept of recontextualization in mind. Rather, the ethics program is being complied with in the sense that regular ethics workshops are being conducted, but simultaneously, a competing program, similar to the Leadership Principles at headquarters, is developed also in China:

During the second field visit in the Chinese subsidiary, local human resources officers were in the process of launching a new set of 'local values'. The five local China values are: Accountability, Collaboration, Trust, Respect and Excellence and thus similar to the Leadership Principles formulated at headquarters.[69] Accounts of the need to make preferred behaviours and values more explicit and operational drive this work. Similarly to the aforementioned communication plan surrounding the global Leadership Principles that was developed at headquarters, along with each local China value also comes a detailed description as well as role model stories and a list of 'do's and don'ts' to exemplify the values to Chinese managers and employees. The use of role model stories is a common trait in Chinese business contexts as a didactic means to convey a message in a very concrete yet indirect manner (Miller et al. 1997; Søderberg 2015:248). The development of the role model approach may have been a response to the need for more explicitness about preferred behaviours. While such a didactic tradition is fairly established in a Chinese context, this kind of storytelling may not be taking place in a headquarters context. However, the behavioural guidance for the individual values in China and in the Leadership Principles developed in Switzerland share a number of similarities. For example, note the instructions for the principle 'collaboration' included in the Leadership Principles as well as in the local China values in Table 6 below:

Table 6 - Comparison of behavioural guidance for 'Collaboration' in the Chinese subsidiary and Swiss headquarters

Behavioural guidance for 'Collaboration' in the China local values[70]	Behavioural guidance for 'Collaboration' in the Leadership Principles
1. Reach an agreement on all parties' goals and put goals and common interests first. 2. Think from the big picture of whole company and make concessions even sacrifice if necessary.	**PEOPLE MANAGERS** • Encourage dialogue and achieve collaboration among team members and different parts of the organization. • Initiate and ensure cross-functional/cross-

---

[69] The Leadership Principles are: Performance, Empowerment, Innovation, Accountability, Collaboration, Transparency and Purpose.
[70] This guidance is part of an instruction for do's and don'ts for each of the local Ferring China values.

3. Provide timely and positive feedback to others' requests for collaboration.	geographies collaboration.
4. Take an initiative to care others' needs, ideas and feelings and show empathetic thinking in collaboration.	• Acknowledge and recognize successful cross-functional/cross-geographies collaboration results.
5. Welcome inputs from many diverse sources and demonstrate inclusion and diversity.	• Proactively support others to achieve common goals.
6. See team value and appreciate the efforts and contributions from others.	**INDIVIDUAL CONTRIBUTORS**
7. Put your team's success above individual success and share the successful honor and rewards with your team.	• Proactively share your ideas and resources to support the work of your colleagues, within and outside your department.
8. Take an initiative to establish interpersonal networks both inside and outside department, even company.	• Seek opportunities for collaboration with different teams, functions and geographies.
9. Explore collaboration mode and mechanism with the company's internal and external stakeholders, cultivate long-term partnership, achieve all-win situation.	• Show consideration and respect when dealing with others.
10. Actively take the initiative and propose a collaboration mechanism improvement solution when the responsibility is ambiguous in cross-functional collaboration.	• Seek others' inputs and involvement, listen and understand their viewpoints and motives.

Although the Leadership Principles distinguish between individual contributors and managers, the instructions around cross-departmental collaborations, recognizing success and showing consideration and respect in the interaction with others are very similar to the preferred behaviours listed under the Chinese local value of 'Collaboration'.

While global trends in leadership styles and concepts presumably play a significant role in the similarity that I observed between the Leadership Principles developed at headquarters and the local values and preferred behaviours communicated to the staff in the Chinese subsidiary, these new initiatives appear to be responses to similar requests for operationalizing Ferring´s ethics program. These similar responses occur in both China and Switzerland despite general assumptions that a company headquarters located in Switzerland would be closer to Scandinavian culture than a Chinese subsidiary.

Hereby, I reiterate Brannen's (2004) argument that static notions of foreignness and similarity are less useful in explaining how 'firm offerings', including values-based policies, will be received and dealt with when introduced into contexts that differ from where they originated. At the same time, however, neither at headquarters nor at the Chinese subsidiary does the recontextualization described by Brannen fully occur. Instead of remoulding the ethics program and inscribing it into local cultural understandings, the Swiss headquarters and the Chinese react by developing new competing programs, albeit of different kinds.

Thus, although the Chinese national culture perspectives that I brought out in this section may explain a part of what happens when the Scandinavian ethics program travels to the Chinese subsidiary, national culture alone does not explain why a similar, alternative program was developed at the Swiss headquarters. Some other characteristics thus seem to come into play, and it is to these characteristics that I now turn.

4.8. Human Resources as a vocational community of practice

When attempting to understand this curiosity, I started thinking about what might be the commonalities between the headquarters context and the Chinese subsidiary. I kept returning to the very similar ways in which the human resources officers from both locations criticized the ethics program. In reviewing my field notes and interviews with human resources officers from both locations, I found that they perceived the ethics program as 'high level' and difficult to operationalize in a manner that employees' adherence to the program could be assessed. Their difficulty has been illustrated in the examples discussed earlier in this chapter. This perspective and focus on operationalization was particularly pronounced among informants from the human resources departments[71]; a discovery which led me to consider whether I had actually been focusing my analysis on the most significant contrasts when seeking to understand responses to the ethics program. Perhaps the national demarcation lines were less important. Moreover, as mentioned earlier, the corporate headquarters is staffed by people of various national origins, and national culture explanations therefore seem less straightforward and less relevant to understand what went on. Also, recontextualizations did not happen to the extent where people through 'ongoing semiosis' remoulded the ethics program into their

---

[71] It also came up a few times in interviews with informants from other functions at headquarters and in China, but I found no general trend in the empirical material as strong as the similarities between how HR officers understood the ethics program. This is the reason why I have focused on bringing these similarities forth in this chapter.

local contexts. Instead, the potential (which I argued that the ethics program has) to be adapted locally to respond to the needs for operationalizability and accountability voiced by human resources officers across the two national contexts was rejected, and new competing programs were developed instead.

Thus, the commonality that I found to be salient for how the ethics program was understood and approached was that the informants who voiced this critique belonged not to the same national culture, but to the same vocational community of daily work practice; the human resources department. I began to wonder if belonging to other vocational communities of practice within Ferring would also show the same kind of salience for how the ethics program was received and dealt with.

4.9. Concluding remarks

In this chapter, I have demonstrated how a code of ethics, the Ferring Philosophy, and an ethics program revolving around this code, meet severe challenges when it travels across different business units and sociocultural contexts within a multinational pharmaceutical corporation. This program encounters employee expectations that differ significantly from those ideals of empowerment and reflexivity at an individual and an organizational level that are engrained in the Scandinavian context and which also permeate the ethics program.

I began the chapter by exploring the first part of research question 1[72]. I demonstrated how the management idea of business ethics has travelled into Ferring Pharmaceuticals and materialized in its code of ethics and in the Global Ethics Office which administers the corporate ethics program. We saw how the Global Ethics Office has chosen a values-based approach to business ethics that focuses on fostering a culture of ethical behaviour and responsibility among all staff. I then turned to the second part of research question 1, showing how Ferring's ethics program was interpreted and recontextualized as it travelled across national and vocational contexts. I argued that the Ferring Philosophy, as well as the ways in which ethics officers seek to convey it, rests upon values that are widespread and deeply engrained within a Scandinavian sociocultural context. However, participant observation and interviews revealed that the Ferring Philosophy, the ethics program and the ways in

---

[72] 'What material shape has the management idea of 'business ethics' taken in Ferring Pharmaceuticals and how is this idea interpreted and recontextualized as it travels to business units abroad?'

which it is communicated by the ethics officers was perceived with less enthusiasm within the corporate headquarter in Switzerland and within a subsidiary in China.

The values of empowerment and reflexivity at both individual and organizational levels, and the related training practices that functioned well in the original Scandinavian context, could not be easily 'transferred' when the ethics program travelled into business units in Switzerland and China. At headquarters, the ethics program was met by scepticism so profound that the Global HR department developed a new set of global Leadership Principles that were intended to provide employees with clearer guidance of preferred behaviours and to offer management better tools for assessing employees´ performance according to these behaviours. Similarly, in the Chinese business context, a value program containing guidance for behaviour and do's and don'ts was introduced. Of course, I do not assume that human resources officers have developed these values programs entirely alone, and I do not disregard local management's role. Nevertheless, perhaps because HR officers were instrumental for developing these frameworks, the critique was voiced most strongly among this group; and it was a critique with similar content and similar solutions across national contexts.

These findings highlight the fact that a code of ethics and an ethics program, because of its specific cultural assumptions and embedded practices, will always be reinterpreted, adapted or changed when moved to sites with other frameworks of meaning. However, the question remains as to what frameworks of meaning might be most salient to focus upon and specifically, whether national culture deserves the significance it is often given, almost by default, within studies of large and complex organizations and international policy 'transfer' generally.

Perhaps the barriers to such 'transfer' derive from other characteristics besides national cultural specificities. We may benefit from other ways of conceiving of organizational complexity, and I argue here that we should pay more attention to differences between internal functions and vocational communities within the organization rather than to presumed differences between the geographical locations of its subsidiaries. I will seek to explore the influence of multi-vocational aspects of organizations, and whether they may sometimes even be more compelling when seeking to understand what happens when business ethics programs travel. The remaining chapters within this dissertation are dedicated to investigating this.

It must be noted, however, that I am not suggesting that national culture plays an insignificant role. It seems to be precisely the Scandinavian traits of emphasis on moral uplift and on embracing the ambiguity in the ethics program that human resources officers in China and at the Swiss headquarters

find most challenging. Moreover, as mentioned earlier, previous studies have demonstrated that the characteristics of the Chinese educational system tend to be more instructional oriented (learning by rote) than Scandinavian teaching styles which emphasize reflection and individual decision-making (cf. Chen and Lee 2008). Hence, in this way, national cultural traits deriving e.g. from the educational system surely play their part.

However, I found that the criticism voiced by human resources officers was nonetheless very similar among human resources officers *across* national contexts. Perhaps there are times when national culture is not always *the* most central element, and where we should focus on the culture of the vocational groups, or what I call 'vocational communities of practice'.

Despite openness within the Global Ethics Office for encouraging local adaptations of their materials, as exemplified by the ethics officer Jane, who emphasized that local facilitators should feel free to change the ethics workshop to fit their local contexts, the Ethics Office, in exporting its program, remained steadfast that the program should not be turned into a 'compliance approach' with pre-defined answers, clear rules and check-lists of do's and don'ts. However, by maintaining this position, they simultaneously maintained a fixed standard that did not lend itself easily to local recontextualizations. Thus, while communicating a transnational approach to the ethics program (cf. Filatotchev and Stahl 2015) by encouraging local counterparts to make the workshops and concepts their own, the Global Ethics Office failed to recognize that the only thing they did not allow for adaptations of – i.e. their educational approach to working with business ethics rested upon cultural values that were salient in the Scandinavian context but which did not easily translate into other contexts. Hereby, although the Global Ethics Office did not explicitly state that it was proposing a global standard, their approach within the ethics program showed to be a global standard in practice. And this Scandinavian-based standard seems to have hindered local recontextualizations of the program. This study thus underscores the difficulties pointed out by Filatotchev and Stahl (2015) with having a globally standardized approach to ethics and CSR-related issues in a multi-national or a multi-vocational company.

5. The Ordinary Ethics of Clinical Trials Officers

5.1. When an ethics program travels into a multi-vocational company: Introduction to the next three chapters

As mentioned in the previous chapter, Ferring's code of ethics, the Ferring Philosophy, states that 'People come first at Ferring', and these people are both company employees and external customers and partners. The Ferring Philosophy explains to employees what they can expect from the company, as well as what the company expects from them.[73] Moreover, the code also addresses the physicians who prescribe Ferring's products as well as the patients who use these products and outlines what these two groups of people can expect from the company.[74]

While the message of 'People come first' is widely known across the company, there is little agreement as to which of these groups of 'people' come first and what 'putting them first' actually entails.

In the following empirical chapters, I will focus on how different occupational groups inside the firm, grouped into what I call 'vocational communities', understand and practice Ferring's ethics program

---

[73] "Ferring expects that its employees will create value for the company and its stakeholders.
Ferring employees, at all levels, have a right to expect from the company and their colleagues:
- respect, support and encouragement.
- a work environment that is safe, stimulating and rewarding.
- the freedom to make mistakes and to admit to them without fear of retribution.
- that the highest standards of integrity will be maintained at all times.
- that colleagues will never knowingly do anything to compromise their position as Ferring employees.
- that all who represent Ferring will do so in ways that generate respect for the company and its employees.
Ferring asks its employees to:
- Always do what is right, proper and ethical, and encourage your colleagues to do so.
- Speak out when you think that wrongs are being committed in Ferring's name.
- Be loyal, but only to that which is just, equitable, honourable and principled - and true to the Ferring philosophy.
 No statement of principled behaviour can ever cover every situation, or deal with every contingency. It can only set the tone, making each individual responsible for applying that tone to his or her everyday practice. We strive to set that tone with five simple words:
People come first at Ferring'
[74] "People come first at Ferring. Because: Patients using our products and physicians prescribing them have a right to expect:
- that we will only make available those products in which we have full confidence.
- that we will offer the best possible products at the most reasonable cost.
- that Ferring's employees will always display courtesy and respect, and act professionally.
Ferring seeks the loyalty of these patients and physicians, and we are prepared to earn this loyalty anew every day.'

and in particular the key messages in the Ferring Philosophy of putting people first. It must be noted, however, that I am not claiming that these practices exist because of the Ferring Philosophy, nor am I implying any sort of causality between the practices and the code of ethics. Rather, the following chapters are attempts to understand and explore how different vocational communities tie their practices to their understanding of Ferring's code of ethics as well as how they perceive this code. The empirical material presented here will show the importance of the vocational communities in understanding how codes of ethics are interpreted, enacted, and perhaps resisted in complex organizations.

The vocational community of practice among human resources officers, already outlined in the previous chapter, is also a community that is clearly demarcated in the organizational structure and located within the human resources departments. It is thus not an emerging community similar to e.g. the aforementioned Transnational Capitalist Society defined by Moore (2005). However, it is also not entirely based on organizational structure, as I identified a similar criticism *across* global and local human resources departments. Moreover, the vocational community of practice among clinical trials officers that I will turn to in this chapter consists of various types of professionals from various departments within the research and development organization, and in this case, the community is less confined to a single department. In Chapter 6, I discuss how the ethics program is interpreted and enacted by the community of marketing and sales officers. This group is likewise comprised of various professionals from different global and local marketing and sales departments. Hence, I have chosen the term 'vocational communities' to capture this diversity.

This chapter and the two that follow thus address the second research question posed in this dissertation: 'How is Ferring's ethics program interpreted and enacted as it travels into different vocational communities and across levels in the organizational hierarchy?'.
As I will demonstrate in the following, among clinical trials officers and marketing and sales officers, patients and healthcare professionals (HCPs) are indeed at the centre of attention, as prescribed by the first part of the Ferring Philosophy. However, what it means to put patients and physicians first finds different expressions within these different vocational communities and – as I will point towards - these differences are tied to the practices in each community.

Moreover, when it comes to the inwards orientation of the code of ethics that addresses internal employees, there is a contradiction between the declared message of putting 'people' (as all internal employees) first and the experience of these employees that '*some* people' are given priority over

others, specifically those with certain formal or informal positions of power in the company. This perspective transcends national borders and vocational communities, and it seems to be tied to the organizational hierarchy. It is a criticism voiced by lower ranking employees of higher ranking managers and others in privileged positions throughout the Ferring organization.

Together, the following three chapters on Ferring's vocational communities will seek to substantiate my argument about the importance of looking beyond national cultural differences in understanding how codes of ethics are perceived and practiced. We will see that the vocational communities and formal hierarchical communities, each in their own way, influence how Ferring's ethics program is perceived and enacted, serving to underscore my argument that (international) business scholars should consider more often the possible salience of communities other than national belonging when seeking to understand the workings of corporate ethics programs.

5.2. Introduction to Chapter 5 and a note on coding and ethnographic examples

In order to understand the relationship between the ethics program and vocational communities of practice, we first need to identify these communities and the ethical orientations that guide them, and we need to understand how these orientations inform their understandings of Ferring's ethics program. This chapter explores these questions among one group of staff working at Ferring; those who conduct the clinical trials.

The structure of the chapter is guided by the coding and thus by the themes that have been prevalent in the fieldwork among the clinical trials officers.[75]
The chapter starts out by outlining the regulatory frameworks and the rules, guidelines and structures that define the boundaries for clinical trials officers' work. These regulatory frameworks were key topics raised by informants during interviews, and they were prevalent throughout the meetings and work contexts in which I participated during the fieldwork. These regulatory frameworks, I argue, comprise a key component of how this community is shaped. Moreover, as will be demonstrated in this chapter, the regulatory frameworks play a significant role in clinical trials officers' understandings and enactments of Ferring's ethics program.

---

[75] Please find a list of all codes that have been applied in this chapter as well as examples of coded material in Appendix 2 and 5.

Another central topic which has been prevalent throughout the fieldwork is how the clinical trials officers emphasize their positive contribution to developing new treatments for patients. In their view, the Ferring Philosophy and its focus on putting people first is 'common sense' and therefore deemed somewhat redundant for them. Within this chapter, I will demonstrate how this logic of common sense finds expression, and I will point towards the consequences of this rationale. In so far as the clinical trials officers believe that they work for patients as much as for the firm, I point out a temporal divide between the *future* patient for whom treatments are being developed - and on whom the Ferring Philosophy also focuses - and the *present* patient, who is a 'subject' in clinical trials whose interests must compete for priority among many other considerations, and who is neither mentioned in the Ferring Philosophy. In doing so, I argue that clinical trials officers end up distancing themselves from the ethics program, and that this distancing derives from a rather narrow, time bound definition of the patient.

In this chapter, a number of ethnographic examples are presented to illustrate the ethical orientations, what I call 'ordinary ethics', of this vocational group and how its members relate to Ferring's ethics program. All but one of the examples presented have been selected because they represent salient themes in the ethnographic material, but also because they are illustrative accounts of the ordinary ethics of this vocational group. The last ethnographic example that is offered does not represent such common themes but has been included in the chapter because it illustrates the boundaries of the narrow focus on the future patient and describes a point in time where clinical trials officers shift their attention from the future patient to the present patient. As I strive to illustrate in this chapter, I have defined clinical trials officers as a vocational community of practice, as they - like other communities of practice - share daily work routines and because they identify with the group of colleagues with whom they share these practices. Further, clinical trials officers are a community because they have – and discuss – common reference points in historical events that shape their understanding of their own work. As community members, they share the experience of being governed by the same laws and regulatory guidelines, some of which will be outlined in this chapter. First, let me describe in more detail the process of conducting clinical trials.

5.3. Clinical trials

5.3.1. Protocols and the three phases of clinical trials

A clinical trial is a controlled, scientific testing of the efficacy and safety of a treatment presumed to have the ability to cure, relieve or improve a certain medical condition. A clinical trial may involve a broad range of sampling and assessments, such as taking blood and tissue samples or blood pressure measurements. The main document describing a clinical trial and how it is designed is called a 'protocol', which contains descriptions of all elements of a trial, including the characteristics and number of the trial participants (who normally include both a test group and a control or placebo group), what tests and samples will be taken from these people and the details of taking these samples. The protocol will thus describe whether, how often and when the samples are to be taken and in what sequence. The protocol also describes the criteria used in determining which participants will be allowed into the trial and who should be excluded.[76]

The protocol further states what is the 'primary endpoint', which is essentially the main effect that the trial sets out to test and investigate. The definition of the primary endpoint is a crucial exercise, because if the drug shows itself to be effective and the trial is successful, the drug can only be sold and marketed with reference to the primary endpoint. Thus, although a drug may have unforeseen positive effects on some other disease or condition than the primary endpoint, the company can still only market the drug on what was defined as the primary endpoint in the trial protocol.

The protocol also describes the statistical considerations and methodology as well as how patient safety will be ensured and how any adverse events (side effects) will be reported.

Before a clinical trial on humans is conducted, the drug is tested in pre-clinical studies, most often on two species of mammals, in order to predict potential toxic effects of the drug. If the animal studies show no harm from a toxicology perspective, the drug candidate moves into the first phase of the clinical trials, known as 'first-in-human' studies.

According to international guidelines and legislation, to which I will return shortly, there are three phases of clinical trials on humans before a drug can be approved by the authorities. The purpose of the first phase is to test how the human body responds to the compound, to determine the dosage and to detect side effects. Phase one is often conducted among 'healthy volunteers', i.e. with humans who do

---

[76] It is not uncommon to exclude participants with other severe conditions such as cancer or HIV, or people with substance abuse, since such conditions may interfere with the test results.

not suffer from the condition that the drug is intended to treat. These studies usually have very few patients, often less than 30.

In the following Phase two, the drug is tested for the first time on people who suffer from the condition that the drug is intended to treat. The trial is usually conducted with a couple of hundred patients. The purpose is to start testing the effectiveness of the drug.

If Phase two shows efficacy (according to the parameters for efficacy stated in the protocol), then the drug can move to Phase three, which is a large scale trial aimed at demonstrating effectiveness over a larger and statistically significant sample of patients. In order for the trial to be successful and subsequently approved by the authorities, it generally needs to be demonstrated that the drug is at least as effective as existing drugs already on the market. Therefore, many trials are designed using a randomization process whereby a computerized algorithm randomly assigns some patients to receive the test drug and some to receive either the standard treatment already on the market or a placebo. Usually, the studies are conducted as so called 'double blind studies' where neither the healthcare professional administering the drug to the patient nor the patient are told what drug they have been given. Phase three trials often involve several thousand people and are most often conducted across a range of hospitals in a range of countries in order to recruit the necessary volume of patients within a designated timeframe.

Besides the clinical trial officers and everyone involved with the trial within the pharmaceutical company, a few other actors in the clinical trial milieu must be mentioned. Firstly, pharmaceutical companies often collaborate with so called Contract Research Organizations (CROs) that provide specialized research services connected to clinical trials. Sometimes, CROs are in charge of a smaller part of the trial, such as testing specific bio-samples (blood, urine, tissue, etc.), while on other occasions they are contracted for the entire process of recruiting and managing the clinics and hospitals that are to participate in the trials.

Within the hospitals and clinics, 'trial sites' as they are called by clinical trials officers, a number of nurses and doctors are engaged to carry out the trial according to the specifications listed in the protocol. A Principal Investigator, known in the jargon as the PI, oversees the trial. The PI is often a high profile doctor within the therapeutic area of the drug under study, and engaging such doctors is considered essential for well-run clinical trials. The assumption here is that having a high profile doctor in charge of a trial will make other doctors within other hospitals and countries more inclined to also participate in that trial. I will return to the logics of engaging such doctors in the following chapter and leave this very brief account of clinical research for now.

The pharmaceutical industry, I daresay, is governed by national and international legislation and standards to a relatively larger extent than other industries. In order to get their products approved on different national markets, pharmaceutical companies must be able to demonstrate adherence to a number of regulatory frameworks as well as detailed registration of the entire process of developing the product. During my fieldwork within Ferring, as I will outline in this chapter, managers and staff often referred to these legislative structures – not only as rules to comply with but also as ethical frameworks to adhere to. And importantly for the present study, they were seen as ethical frameworks that took precedence over Ferring's ethics program. Moreover, managers and staff working with clinical trials seem to share common reference points in historical events, and they mention these to underscore the need for these legislative frameworks as well as the 'common sense' of Ferring's ethics program that I shall return to later in this chapter. In the following, I will describe these historical events and regulatory frameworks and their presence in the minds of clinical trial officers.

5.3.2. Vocational history

> It is early in the fieldwork, and I am meeting for lunch with Carl, a manager from the Clinical Trials Department. We know each other from an introductory course in which we have both participated, and he has agreed to introduce me to some of his employees. Beforehand, we are meeting for lunch so that I can tell him a bit more about my research. I start introducing him to the project and my affiliation with the Global Ethics Office, but after a brief description, however, he interrupts and says that if I am looking at ethics in the company, then it would be a good idea for me to look into GCP. At that moment, this abbreviation is not familiar, and I ask him what it is. "Good Clinical Practice", Carl says and explains that this is a set of guidelines for how to conduct clinical trials, and that these guidelines have their origin in the Declaration of Helsinki, yet another document about which I know nothing. The Declaration of Helsinki was the outcome of some 'very unethical clinical studies' conducted during the Second World War on concentration camp victims, Carl tells me. He explains that GCP is about ensuring that the risks to which patients are exposed in a clinical trial must be commensurate with the results expected to emerge out of the trial.

I will elaborate on the historical events leading up to the creation of the Good Clinical Practice Guidelines shortly, but for now, I want to highlight how Carl immediately referred to the GCP guidelines

and to the historical events surrounding them when I mentioned my interest in ethics. During the fieldwork, whenever 'ethics' comes to the table, I have heard numerous similar references to the Second World War and previous misconduct within the pharmaceutical industry, and the presence of these historical events in the minds of clinical trials officers is one of the reasons why I define them as a 'community'; these events are part of the community's 'origin myth', which like many myths, begins with a Fall from Grace, to which the group must now atone by formulating and adhering to a code.

Back at lunch, Carl continues speaking and explains that 'Within recent years, we have had some accidents where it has gone terribly wrong, so that's also why we are extra cautious'. My facial expression must have revealed my surprise, because he quickly added that by 'we', he does not mean Ferring. The accidents happened in other companies, and he is merely referring to 'we' in the industry, as he explains and goes on to tell me about one of these trials that went wrong. It was a drug from the German drug development company TeGenero Immuno Therapeutics that unexpectedly attacked the immune system of the trial participants.

During the fieldwork, in my conversations with clinical trials officers, they often referred to this particular case. Horvath and Milton (2009) describe the incident as follows:

> 'At 08:00 on March 13, 2006, the first healthy volunteer was administered TGN1412 as a three–to six–minute intravenous infusion (…) By 09:10, six volunteers had been administered TGN1412, and two volunteers had been administered a placebo. Within ninety minutes, those who had received TGN1412 had a systemic inflammatory response that was characterized by a rapid induction of proinflammatory cytokines and accompanied by headache, myalgia, nausea, diarrhoea, erythema, vasodilatation, and hypotension (Suntharalingam et al. 2006). Between twelve and sixteen hours postdose, they became critically ill, with pulmonary infiltrates and lung injury, renal failure, and disseminated intravascular coagulation (DIC). Severe and unexpected depletion of lymphocytes and monocytes occurred within eight hours, reaching a nadir at twenty-four hours. By midnight, they had been transferred to an intensive care unit, where they received intensive cardiopulmonary support (including dialysis), high-dose methylprednisolone, and an anti–interleukin–2 receptor antagonist antibody. Prolonged cardiovascular shock and acute respiratory distress syndrome developed in two patients, who required intensive organ support for eight and sixteen days (Suntharalingam et al. 2006). It was soon concluded that TGN1412 had caused a ''cytokine storm'.' Although all

six volunteers survived, the long-term prognosis for these subjects is unknown. One of these patients has since had all of his toes and the tips of several fingers amputated' (Horvath and Milton 2009:373).

During the fieldwork, I have heard numerous accounts about misconduct and accidents in the past and about the importance of having and adhering to the GCP guidelines. When asking questions about these guidelines and why they find it so important to maintain them, clinical trials officers most often reply by referring to scandals, and historical events where pharmaceutical development has gone horribly wrong, such as the TeGenero example. Moreover, clinical trials officers use these examples to emphasize that ethics is already an integrated part of what they do (by virtue of GCP and industry awareness of past scandals) and, often, that Ferring's code of ethics is therefore not of much use for their vocational group.

Before turning to the Ferring Philosophy, let us return to these historical events of this vocational community that are often drawn out, and particularly an event referred to by Carl that dates back to the Second World War.

5.3.3. The Declaration of Helsinki

The guidelines for clinical trials today known as Good Clinical Practice (GCP), have their origin in *the 'Declaration of Helsinki - Ethical principles for medical research involving human subjects'* which was adopted on a meeting in the World Medical Association (WMA) in Helsinki in 1964. The declaration though not legally binding, is the foundation for all other significant international regulation and guidelines on ethical conduct in biomedical research (Darwin 2013:155). Preceding the declaration was what Carlson et al. (2004) describe as 'One of the darkest episodes in the history of medical research – the horrific experiments carried out by doctors on concentration camp victims in Nazi Germany' (Carlson et al. 2004:696).

In the wake of the Second World War, prominent members of the Nazi regime were prosecuted at the Nuremberg trials, including those who had conducted horrific medical experiments on concentration camp detainees. Upon completion of the Nuremberg trials, a set of guidelines for medical experiments, the so called Nuremberg Code, was formulated and published. This code laid the foundation for the

Declaration of Helsinki[77] (Darwin 2013:155), which was later developed into the guidelines for good clinical practice.

5.3.4. *Good Clinical Practice guidelines*[78]

When mentioning the Good Clinical Practice guidelines, Ferring employees refer to the GCP guidelines of the International Conference on Harmonization[79] (ICH). Within Ferring, this is commonly referred to as ICH GCP or simply GCP. The ICH GCP Guidelines were developed during the early 1990s by the regulatory authorities for drugs in the USA, EU and Japan. Prior to the development of these guidelines was a growing public demand for safe and thoroughly tested drugs. However, replicating clinical trials across many countries involved high costs as well as a large number of animals used for testing, and these issues became the main incentives for harmonization. The goal was to reduce the need to repeat the same kind of studies in each country. In 1996, the final guidelines were approved by the ICH, and since then, the conduct of clinical trials has become increasingly harmonized within national public health legislation both among the USA, Japan and EU and within additional countries (Darwin 2013:156).

For example, in the US, the Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) Code of Federal Regulations has its origin in the Declaration of Helsinki. The FDA is responsible for approving new drugs for the market in the USA, and apart from a few minor differences, the FDA has adopted the ICH GCP guidelines (Darwin 2013:155). Within the EU, two directives also have their origin in the Declaration of Helsinki. The EU Clinical Trials Directive (2001/20/EC)[80] describes in detail the legal requirements for how clinical trials of 'investigational medical products' (IMP) should be conducted within the EU. The EU GCP Directive (2005/28/EC)[81] complements the Clinical Trials Directive and describes guidelines for GCP in such trials.

---

[77] https://www.ich.org/page/efficacy-guidelines, E6(R2) Good Clinical Practice (GCP)

[78] Besides the Good Clinical Practice Guidelines, a number of other guidelines also govern pharmaceutical development, such as 'Good Laboratory Practice' and 'Good Manufacturing Practice'. These guidelines are often referred to together as 'GxP'. However, as the GCP guidelines have been most commonly invoked by my interlocutors, I have chosen to focus on outlining these.

[79] https://www.ich.org/products/guidelines/efficacy/efficacy-single/article/integrated-addendum-good-clinical-practice.html

[80] Directive 2001/20/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 4 April 2001 on the Approximation of the laws, Regulations And Administrative Provisions of the Member States Relating to the Implementation of Good Clinical Practice in the Conduct of Clinical Trials on Medicinal Products for Human Use.

[81] Commission Directive 2005/28/EC of 8 April 2005 Laying down principles and detailed guidelines for good clinical practice as regards investigational medicinal products for human use, as well as the requirements for authorization of the manufacturing or importation of such products.

Together, the Nurnberg Code, the Declaration of Helsinki and the Good Clinical Practice guidelines have shaped the historical and legislative context in which clinical trial officers operate and become a set of by-laws to which they continuously refer throughout my fieldwork. Moreover, as I have alluded to earlier, these guidelines and their inherent logics not only guide behaviour among clinical trials officers; they also inform how these officers understand Ferring's own ethics program.

5.4. No need for the Ferring Philosophy when we have GCP

Among clinical trials officers, the GCP guidelines have a strong presence, as these guidelines comprise the framework for their daily tasks. Moreover, as soon as I mentioned my affiliation with the Global Ethics Office, informants would point out that ethics has a central place in their work due to the GCP guidelines, and that these guidelines work as their ethical compass.

For example, in an interview with Jon, a Danish clinical trials officer who I have been following for a while, we are talking about the regulatory context of the industry, and I try to ask him what the regulation means for his work. Perhaps due to his awareness of my interest in Ferring's ethics program, he ties his descriptions to the Ferring Philosophy and its tagline of 'people come first'. Jon explains:

> Jon: 'You can say that you are in a super regulated environment – as clinical trials are. You have these bad guys who want to test their horrible medicines on the poor diseased – said a bit caricatured. So there are tons of rules. Everything needs to be transparent. Every penny that you pay anyone needs to be justified, and you are not allowed to give anyone even a pen[82], and there is this and that rule. In reality, there are rules. But you can be absolutely sure that everybody is behaving well all the way (…) But if you are a company and you follow the rules, then you don't need – in my opinion – a code [of ethics] about doing the right thing and putting people first, because it is already implicit. It's called ICH GCP – it's good clinical practice. It's already there. It is a given. (…) we have people who come to control all the time. And then we have inspectors, auditors to check that what we wrote in the protocol is also what we do in reality. And it has to fit that way. And that's why I have… I have worked in an environment where you can't really cheat because there is so much control that you have to be really skilled at cheating if

---

[82] The pen is a very common example that is mentioned in my interviews of the high level of regulation that pharmaceutical companies are subjected to; that they are not allowed to give any presents to any patients or HCPs – not even a pen. This will be elaborated in Chapter 6.

you want to succeed with that. And that is also not what it is about. For us, it is about winning people's trust, and we don't do that by cheating (…) so you can say. How much does a code with 'People come first' mean to me? I guess that when I was hired, it was interesting… I do think that it makes sense and that they are good principles. But in reality, I'm just in a part of the business where there are other rules which… you can go to jail if you don't follow them. It is almost a law that you want transparency, you want integrity, honesty and probity. All kinds of good things. Openness. And when that is in place, then you can say that the other [code of ethics] is a bit secondary' (…)

Anna: 'Just to be sure that I understand you correctly. It is these GCP rules that contain the same… principles [as the code of ethics]?'

Jon: 'Yes, and overall, a long time ago, doctors decided that a set of rules should be in place. (…) It [GCP] is our Bible. And you can say that when you are in a department that falls under GCP, then you are pretty aware what is right and what is wrong. It is the narrow path of virtue which is described there.'[83]

What Jon describes in the excerpt is a common worldview among clinical trials officers: ethics is already an engrained part of GCP, and since their entire working lives are governed by GCP and controlled by legislation based on GCP, they have little use for the Ferring Philosophy. Moreover, as seen in the above excerpt, Jon talks about 'us' working with clinical trials and how GCP is 'our Bible'. In this way, he declares his identification with the group of managers and staff who work with clinical trials. And such 'native categories' (cf. Moore 2015a, 2015b) that informants use to describe themselves and others have informed my decision to define clinical trials officers as a vocational community. Moreover, as Jon says, putting people first is an implicit part of what he and his colleagues do already. I will return to this later on, but first let me turn to another related attitude that characterizes the clinical trials staff; that of ethics being 'taken care of' by others.

5.5. Independent Ethics Committees and how ethics is understood as already integrated

One of the central elements of the GCP guidelines is that an 'Independent Ethics Committee' (IEC) must be in place in each hospital or clinic (trial site) that is part of the trial, and that this ethics committee must approve the clinical trial, including e.g. the informed consent form, recruitment procedures (such

---

[83] Interview with clinical trials officer, Denmark, Autumn 2017

as advertisements to patients) and the information regarding payments and compensations of participants in the trial. The Independent Ethics Committee can thus approve the trial, request modifications to the trial and even reject a trial before it begins. Within GCP, it is recommended that the Independent Ethics Committee includes at least five members, of which at least one is a member whose primary interest is a non-scientific area and at least one member is independent of the institution or site in which the trial takes place. GCP further recommends that only those members of the committee who are independent of the doctor in charge of the trial (the principal investigator) and the company that pays for the trial (the sponsor) should be able to vote on trial related matters. [84]

In my conversations and interviews with clinical trials officers, they often refer to these ethics committees as evidence that ethics is already an integrated element of their jobs. And because of the need to have the trials approved by ethics committees, I am often told, there is hardly much need for the ethics program.

However, the notion of ethics within these IECs can vary greatly, and within each trial site, an ethics committee can demand changes to certain elements of the trial. As a result, the clinical trial officers in charge of managing and coordinating the trial often have to handle varying understandings of 'ethics'. Hence, although the conviction among clinical trials officers is largely that 'ethics' is an integrated part of their job, what it means to construct and conduct an ethical clinical trial varies. At times, the committee's idea of what is ethical may conflict with clinical trials officers' ideas. In order to give empirical depth to this complex matter, in the following, I will outline a situation of such varying notions of 'ethics'.

5.5.1. The power of IECs to define 'ethics'

Within GCP, it is specified that the IEC should consider how trial participants (termed 'subjects') are compensated. It is stated that the IEC 'should review both the amount and method of payment to subjects to assure that neither presents problems of coercion or undue influence on the trial subjects.' [85]

---

[84] E6(R2) Good Clinical Practice (GCP), Section 3 'Institutional Review Board/Independent Ethics Committee (IRB/IEC)'. https://www.ich.org/page/efficacy-guidelines.

[85] E6(R2) Good Clinical Practice (GCP), Section 3.1.8. https://www.ich.org/page/efficacy-guidelines.

This review of the payment of participants, as the following excerpt illustrates, can thus be subject to debate between the Independent Ethics Committee and the pharmaceutical company sponsoring the trial.

To illustrate these kinds of dilemmas, I ask the reader to follow me into an interview with Bill, a clinical trial officer involved in Phase 1 studies in the company:

> I have asked him to describe a situation from his work that he found difficult and how he handled it. He immediately responds that there are many difficult situations in his work because of the nature of Phase one studies. In these studies, he explains, they enrol healthy volunteers who offer their bodies, but who have absolutely no benefit from the product and who might never benefit from it because it may never even become a viable product.[86] As mentioned earlier, the difference between phases one, two and three is that the participants in phases two and three are patients who suffer from the condition that the new drug has been designed to treat. Thus, Bill explains, these patients obtain some benefit from the new drug being tested and the opportunity for a new cure, whereas the healthy volunteers in phase one trials are compensated according to how much time they spend and what the testing consists of (i.e. how many blood samples, biopsies, scans, etc. are contained in the trial). It is not allowed, however, to compensate volunteers for any discomfort or pain connected to the testing nor for the potential risk involved in the study, he explains.

> 'And this is a dilemma, because they [the healthy volunteers] participate for the money. But on the other hand, we must not pay them too much because they should not be lured with money to take a high risk'. Bill explains that if a company paid healthy volunteers a high sum, say 13,000 EUR, to participate in a trial, then the economic incentive to participate (and to take the risk involved in Phase one trials) would be too big and therefore problematic. On the other hand, he explains, the healthy volunteers should also be compensated properly for the inconvenience, so the payment should not be too low either.

> I ask Bill how they define what constitutes proper compensation. He explains that it varies from country to country. 'Do you know the Big Mac index?' he asks with a smile. I

---

[86] Only a few of the products that are tested in phases 1 and 2 end up as products on the market, as they have to demonstrate efficacy and often superiority to existing products.

have an idea where he is going with this but I ask him to elaborate. He explains that this index describes how much a Big Mac costs in different countries and that, similarly, there is a difference between how much compensation pharmaceutical companies are allowed to offer in different countries. If a potential trial participant in Denmark is offered 250 EUR to participate, he explains, the incentive to participate is very different than if someone in India were offered the same amount. This is why there are different levels for how much can be offered in different countries. Each country and sometimes each hospital or clinic has what he refers to as a 'price list' where they define what a company is allowed to pay for specific samples, and the IEC will assess the company's suggested compensation according to this list. I ask Bill what would happen if the committee required a higher or lower compensation than suggested by the company. 'If they want the compensation to be lower, then you lower it – even though you might think otherwise', he responds immediately. But if they ask to raise the price, then the clinical trials team has to assess whether this is possible, he explains, going on to tell me a story from a trial that he conducted some years back:

The design of this trial included a rather invasive biopsy that had to be taken from the volunteers, and the IEC found that the compensation suggested by the company was too low in view of the discomfort and invasiveness of this biopsy procedure. Bill repeats to me that they were not allowed to pay patients for their discomfort, and I ask him what he then did in this case, as that was exactly what the IEC was asking them to do. He explains that he and his team went back to review the price lists to see if anything could be categorized differently. At first, they and his team had categorized the biopsies as mere unspecified 'samples', which had a lower compensation rate in the price list. They ended up reclassifying them as something with a higher compensation rate. He explains that the price list does not include an exhaustive list of all possible types of samples and that therefore, if a specific sample is not on the list, then it can be reclassified as a procedure requiring a higher compensation rate that corresponds better with what the volunteers are exposed to. If the particular biopsy had been on the list and there had been no way to reclassify it, he explains, then another method could also have been to increase the estimate for how much time the volunteer would need to spend on the trial, as increased time spent would involve increased compensation. In either case, the compensation would have to be based upon the price lists because this is what is

required by the authorities. However, clinical trials officers must also strive to accommodate the wishes of the IECs, he explains.[87]

Bill's account is notable for the way in which he does not express regret about the size of the compensation, although his (and his team's) initial assessment of what constituted a proper compensation had differed from that of the ethics committee. Rather, he went directly into describing how he had solved this IEC request and how he had sought to accommodate the wishes of the ethics committee.

In other interview accounts, clinical trial officers have expressed disagreement with the ethics committees on matters of compensation, but such disagreements are not often raised directly with the ethics committees. The Good Clinical Practice guidelines assign the right and obligation to these committees to review and request changes to the compensation plans. The commonality, then, is that IECs are often allowed to define what constitutes proper compensation, because GCP has assigned this right to them. And because allowing the IECs to decide is in line with GCP; it is deemed to be the right course of action; even in situations where clinical trials officers had initially decided on another course of action.

As Lambek (2010b, 2018) argues, ethics is not a discrete object. Rather, it is inherent in the ways in which humans make practical judgments as they go about engaging in ordinary practices. Moreover, as mentioned in Chapter 2, Lambek draws on the Aristotelian concept of *phronesis* to highlight that the ethical consists of a practical, experience-based wisdom, and that to be ethical within a given community is to pursue 'the good' however it is defined within that community.

Among the community of clinical trials officers, with a communal memory of failed clinical trials and horrific war crimes, 'the good' is understood as following the GCP guidelines that came out of these events. Moreover, 'the good' is to get the clinical trial approved by the IECs, and a phronetic clinical trials officer such as Bill will thus pursue this 'good' in ways that have been shown to be effective in the past.

Moreover, the timelines of clinical trials depend on the approval of the ethics committees. Thus, there is also a temporal (and hereby cost-related) factor that incentivizes the clinical trial teams to accommodate the requests of the ethics committees.[88]

---

[87] This excerpt is based on an interview with a clinical trials officer conducted in Denmark, in Autumn 2017.
[88] The question of time pressure in clinical trials will be addressed and elaborated in Section 5.7.2 of this chapter.

To add yet another layer to the complexity of clinical trial officers' judgments in these cases, part of their annual bonuses – at least in the clinical trial teams that I participated in - are tied to the timelines and patient enrolment targets of these trials. Hence, when entering a discussion with an ethics committee in a trial site, this might prolong the approval time, which delays the time when the trial can begin in this site. With a delayed trial site, the patient recruitment target will most likely not to be met, which is a costly affair for the company as well as for the individual clinical trial officer whose bonus might hereby be diminished. However, it must be noted that although the need to reach patient recruitment targets has on a number of occasions been mentioned in relation to personal bonuses in the clinical trial team meetings that I attended, I never heard mention of personal bonuses as an argument to accommodate the wishes of independent ethics committees. I only mention this because it is one aspect out of many that may influence the judgments in clinical trial teams.

Returning to the example with Bill, he had initially estimated the payment as less than what had been requested by the IECs. However, GCP empowers the ethics committees to demand that the payment be higher, and following the directions given by ethics committees is part of GCP. Although Bill's original understanding of proper compensation did not correspond with the IEC's notion, it is good clinical practice to follow their lead. Returning to Lambek's (2010a) notion of ordinary ethics, and how the ethical is expressed in the criteria against which we judge and evaluate our own and others' actions; the criteria against which Bill assesses 'proper compensation' is what the ethics committee defines as 'proper compensation'. The relevant criteria for judgment about the size of the compensation in this case is thus less Bill's own opinion and original estimate. Rather, the relevant criterion is that the GCP guidelines state that independent ethics committees must review and assess the compensation. Bill's judgment of what is right is thus based on the GCP guidelines' statement of what is right; hence to follow the IEC's request.

Although GCP and the legislative frameworks into which these guidelines have been adopted set strict procedures for conducting clinical studies, the exact meaning of 'the ethical' is to some extent defined by the IECs.
This practice is also tied to the aforementioned legislation around clinical trials, and the purpose is undoubtedly to distribute discussions around medical ethics to more actors than the pharmaceutical company alone, as such companies also have financial interests that might interfere with ethical concerns. However, it raises the question of the extent to which such ethical concerns are present in the minds of clinical trial officers when the responsibility for ethical reflection has been delegated to

the IECs. Secondly, the question is to what extent this delegation of ethical responsibility could create a normalization of practices that are actually considered unethical by clinical trial officers but are nevertheless accepted because of the wishes of the IECs. As sociologist Diane Vaughan (2009) has demonstrated in her study of the Space Shuttle Challenger disaster in 1986, certain barriers and drivers can cause people to deviate from important routines and procedures to an extent that such deviance becomes normalized if no accidents happen immediately.[89]

Similarly, one may wonder if the delegation of ethical authority to the IECs could create a situation whereby pharmaceutical companies accept practices that would have been deemed unethical had they had sole responsibility for making the final decisions or if a strong ethics program for clinical trials demanded continuous reflection and deliberation about these matters.[90]

In the aforementioned example with Bill, he accommodates the wish of the IEC for raising the compensation of trial participants, although he had initially considered a smaller compensation to be appropriate. During my fieldwork, I have encountered similar accommodating approaches to handling requests from the IECs. This is not to argue that the compensation rate originally assessed by Bill is more ethical than the rate demanded by the IEC. Rather, this example illustrates how the wishes of the IECs take precedence over the opinions of clinical trial officers. The example further raises the question as to whether the delegation of ethical responsibility to the IECs could create a practice where ethical questions are not reflected upon because of this delegation. In such cases where the IEC view dominates, 'the ethical' is taken out of the clinical trials officers' remit, so to speak. The clinical trials officers end up viewing the Ferring Philosophy as less relevant to their work, as they argue that ethics is an integrated part of what they do because of the GCP guidelines and the presence of IECs. However, as demonstrated in this section, although ethics is continuously being discussed by virtue of the presence of IECs, the definition of ethics varies and depends less on the assessment of clinical trials officers and more on the assessment of IECs. The IECs' ethics is simply of higher priority than the ethics of the clinical trials officers. And, as will be outlined in the following, perhaps because of this delegation of ethical considerations to the IECs, within daily practice, the clinical trials officers base their ethical

---

[89] In her example, this *normalization of deviance* led to an accident where a NASA Space Shuttle burst into flames and disintegrated shortly after having been launched, killing the entire crew of seven people. Based on historical ethnographic analyses of the practices preceding the accident, Vaughan concludes that the disaster occurred not because of misconduct but because of mistakes and a slow normalization of practices that deviated from established safety regimes and procedures (Vaughan 2004:316).

[90] In Ferring, the ethics program does not include activities specifically related to clinical trials ethics.

assessments on the IECs rather than on their own active deliberation. Ethical reflection, as I will turn to in the following, is replaced by administrative routines.

5.5.2. 'Ethics' as a target

Clinical trials are managed in a manner similar to standard project management models. They include annual targets and the typical periodic 'milestones' to ensure adherence to these targets. Once the trial is up and running, one central milestone is the recruitment of patients or 'healthy volunteers' to participate in the trial, but at the beginning of a trial, however, and as a prerequisite for getting started, the key milestones are enrolment of trial sites and approval of the trial by the IECs of each trial site. One of the clinical trials that I followed during the fieldwork was at a very early stage when I joined the trial team, and as I will describe in the following, at each clinical trial meeting, the project manager of the trial would present an overview of the progress on the various milestones:

> It is 8:55 in the morning, and I enter the large meeting room on the first floor where Joan, a clinical trials officer is setting up the video conference facilities so that the team from China can also join. At exactly nine o'clock, most people have found their seats and the automated voice from the video conference systems intones '…. (scratch)…has joined the meeting'. After a couple of 'Can you hear me?', and 'Hello?', Joan has managed to establish a functioning connection to the team in China.
> A few minutes past nine o'clock, the last physical participants hurry through the door, mumbling with apologetic smiles about coffee machine queues and slow elevators preventing their timely arrival.
>
> Joan starts the meeting by going through the timeline and the status for the hospitals that are planned to be included in the trial as trial sites. She explains that the approval of the trial from the China FDA is now in place and that 12 ethics committee approvals have been obtained in China so far. She shows a PowerPoint slide projected on the screen behind her with a list of all the hospitals that are planned to be included in the trial. The slide contains a column of red or green marks, indicating whether the ethics committee approval is in place.
> In Japan, two out of four ethics committee approvals are in place, and the expected date for starting up the trial in the first site [site initiation] is December 2017, with the

expectations that the first six patients will be screened for a possible participation in the trial before the end of 2017, Joan explains. In Malaysia, IEC approvals from all four sites are in place, and Joan expects that seven patients will be screened here before the end of the year, while one site in Laos is conditionally approved by the ethics committee and a few are still missing. The site that has been only conditionally approved is expected to be approved in November, she explains.

After reviewing the status of the IEC approvals, Joan moves over to Jesse and asks him to provide an update on the approval of the new protocol.

The discussion continues and ends with Brigitte, who declares that she will be on holiday the next two weeks and that Ann will cover for her. Joan adjourns the meeting, and later that same day, we all receive a summary of the meeting with three sentences dedicated to outlining the status of the IEC approvals and impacts on recruitment targets and timelines.[91]

The excerpt above is in no way unique. It could be a description of almost every clinical trial team meeting in which I participated. These clinical team meetings always started with a presentation of the status on the main milestones, such as site initiations, IEC approvals and recruitment rates. However, the unspectacular nature of these meetings and the ways in which IEC approvals are presented alongside a number of other milestones as project items to be managed is worth considering, as they are treated as targets among many rather than objects of ethical deliberation.

As Lambek (2010b, 2018) writes, the ethical is inherent in the way that we go about doing ordinary things, and the ordinariness of treating IEC approvals as project targets thus tells a story about how these IEC approvals are understood among clinical trials officers: as milestones to be managed rather than discussions to be engaged with. Ethics has become bureaucratized into red and green markers. This further underscores the argument made earlier, that the definition of what is ethical is largely delegated to the IECs under the framework of good clinical practice. The goal is to speed ethical approvals through the system, to make ethics more efficient. Deliberation, not to mention contestation, only gets in the way of this process.

---

[91] Based on field notes from a clinical trial meeting in Denmark, Autumn 2017. Please note that I have anonymized and changed the country names in this excerpt.

5.6. Why the Ferring Philosophy is 'common sense'

Besides the argument that ethics is already covered by GCP (and hereby by IECs), the second main reason why clinical trials officers distance themselves from Ferring's ethics program is that the messages in the Ferring Philosophy are simply too familiar. Because of the nature of their work, they argue, patients are always at the centre of attention, and as a result – they further argue - there is little need for them to turn to a code of ethics that urges them to put people first, as they are already doing so. In order to give empirical depth to this argument, in the following, I will turn to a few examples from the field. Together, these examples represent positions that have been prevalent within the ethnographic material, and they illustrate the emphasis that clinical trials officers place on helping patients as well as how they connect this emphasis to Ferring's ethics program, which they end up viewing as simple 'common sense' rather than a code to be followed:

> It is late 2017, and for a while, I have been following a clinical trial focused on developing a new treatment for septic shock.[92] Independently of each other, when different members of the team told me about the trial, they have all emphasized how important it is to develop a treatment for this critical and often fatal condition.
>
> While following the trial team, I have been copied in on their internal email correspondence. One afternoon, while sitting at my desk, an email arrives from Dennis, one of the team members. He has forwarded an email from a global sepsis organization, asking team members to sign an online declaration about sepsis and how to fight it effectively in Africa. Dennis writes with encouragement that with the help of the team, the organization will get one step closer to their target. In my field notes from that day, I have noted my astonishment with how much clinical trials officers emphasize the patients and the condition they are trying to treat in their communications with each other.[93]

---

[92] Septic shock is a critical condition following a severe infection and leads to dangerously low blood pressure.
[93] The fact that I was surprised says a lot about my own preconceptions about the pharmaceutical industry that I had when I began the fieldwork. For more reflections about my own role, position and prejudices, please see Chapter 3.

On a different occasion, during my fieldwork in Switzerland, another team member – Alex - is giving a presentation as part of an internal information session about this clinical trial for a wider group of colleagues:

Alex begins by stating that all companies who have tried developing a treatment for septic shock in the past have failed, and that he will now explain why Ferring thought it was important to engage with such a risky area of research. The risk he refers to here is the risk of failure and thus the potential loss of a significant investment in clinical trials costs. Alex shows a slide projected up behind him with a simple graph with two axes that refer to two central considerations for clinical trials. At the X-axis, is says 'Risk' and the Y-axis is marked 'Likelihood to succeed'.

'People prefer to be in this square', he says pointing to the part of the graph where there is low risk and high likelihood of success. However, in this study, he explains, there is a high risk and a very low probability to succeed. 'But this is not about risk or about probability of success. This is about septic shock', he says, now showing a slide with a picture of a woman lying in a bed, looking rather ill and with a myriad of tubes and monitoring equipment attached to her. After we have all had a moment to consider the severity of her condition, Alex goes on to describe how septic shock is a leading cause of mortality and critical illness and that incidents of septic shock are increasing all over the world. He further explains that survivors from septic shock often have prolonged recovery processes involving high costs for society as well as for the individual patient.

After reviewing some details about the design of the clinical trial, he moves to a slide containing a picture from a patient organization focusing on sepsis. 'Septic shock is really a complex condition, so I thought I would do some awareness here', he says, explaining that there is a very high chance that all of us in the room will encounter septic shock at some point in our lives, with a family member or a friend or even ourselves getting this condition. While sitting in the audience, I noted in my field notebook how engaged he seemed in talking about the condition that the drug on trial is intended to treat.

When it is time for questions, a colleague from the audience takes the floor and spontaneously shares how she recently visited an intensive care unit and while there had come to realize how much need there is for a treatment for sepsis. 'There is really an unmet need here, and I actually think you are understating it', she says and looks around

in the audience. People are nodding and looking serious, and I doubt that I am the only one with this feeling of urgency, that Alex has tried to mobilize to find a treatment for septic shock.[94]

What is noticeable in the excerpt above is the way in which Alex uses the severity of the condition to explain why the company has started a clinical trial, and how he argues that the motivation was to find a treatment for it. Thus, the logic that he expresses is that conducting the clinical trial is not only important from a commercial perspective – it is also important as a mission: to find a successful treatment for patients suffering from septic shock.

Furthermore, this sense of contributing to helping patients is also the way in which clinical trials officers render their work important and meaningful. As Karen, a clinical trials officer and medical doctor from Denmark, describes in an interview:

> 'To work for the pharmaceutical industry as a doctor 15 years ago, people thought, 'What are you doing? Have you sold your soul'? And that it was not really proper. But now, I think that this has really changed, and I am here precisely because I believe that I can help many patients in the end; that I can help to create new pharmaceuticals, and that I can perhaps help many more patients than I would have been able to help if I had been working at the hospital.'[95]

Karen's rationale is a common way for clinical trials officers to understand their own work and the purpose of what they do. Clinical trials officers have a strong sense of mission: they are there to help patients. This notion of helping patients, of being part of a caring industry, is a central reason why clinical trials officers often dismiss the ethics program as not applicable to them, simply because they see it as superfluous. They find 'People come first' as already engrained in how they operate. This is not to say that they find the ethics program and the message of putting people first to be irrelevant or non-important. Rather, the position seems to stem from their already existing focus on patients.

For example, Mary is a clinical trials officer who has been with Ferring for many years. In an interview, I ask her if she remembers what happened when the Ferring Philosophy was originally introduced. She

---

[94] Based on field notes, Switzerland headquarters, Autumn 2017.
[95] Interview, Clinical trials officer, Denmark, Autumn 2017.

explains that when she started, the Global Ethics Office was not yet in place, but that 'putting people first' has always been both her goal and her driver:

> For me, I think that this 'People come first'. I think it is… The patient is really the driver in my work. I think it is exciting to invent medicine that can help patients in the end. So that's why, in all my trials, I make sure to contribute to helping the patient. And that made me, beyond everything else, very motivated in the [name of project] project when the patients are that ill. To be able to do something for them. With this, you have been able to see that at the investigator level and in the community that they have really needed a new product. And that has made me feel a drive and that I really wanted [name of project] to succeed. So that's why I think that I see the Ferring Philosophy. I actually see it as the everyday.[96]

We continue our conversation, and Mary explains that she recently participated in the ethics workshop, which did not exist back when she started her job in Ferring. I ask her how the workshop has changed the way she thinks about putting people first. She replies that:

> 'Well, it hasn't changed my perspective… It has always been like that, that I want to… I have an ambition that I work to help create medicine for patients, so that has been my motivation the entire time. So I don't think that was changed by the Ferring Philosophy.'

Thus, because developing new treatments to help patients is experienced as an inherent element of her job and as a primary motivator for why she works in this industry, the notion of 'putting people first' becomes almost common-sensical. Because clinical trials officers already perceive themselves as contributing to helping patients, the Ferring philosophy is perceived as 'common sense'. Observe, for example, how Andrea, a clinical trials officer and manager in the Danish office, describes her attitude towards the Ferring Philosophy, when I ask her how she uses it:

> 'I think that the Ferring Philosophy… For me it's common sense. I think that a bit too much work is put into something which should be common sense. Personally… It is – I can't say that I use it in my daily life. I think it's great that there is an alertline [Ferring's whistle-blowing hotline] and all these things, and that Ferring is focused on it, but I don't

---

[96] Interview, Clinical trials officer, Denmark, Autumn 2017.

look at it. It's not like there are things that you change in your daily work [because of it]. You don't. And even me as a manager who is exposed to lots of those things like ethics and dilemmas and personalities and conflicts etc. Here, I have my assessments, of course, and they are in line with the Ferring Philosophy, of course. But as for my personal use [of the philosophy]... then no.'[97]

As Andrea describes, the Ferring Philosophy to her seems so much like common sense that she does not feel any need to refer to it or use it for any sort of ethical guidance. However, it is also noteworthy that she nevertheless reiterates that her assessments are in line with the Ferring Philosophy, but that this alignment, however, is not an outcome of the ethics program. It is simply her inherent 'common sense', her personal attitude about right and wrong that is a property of her as a person, rather than as a Ferring employee using a company ethics code. And this is another central reason that people give when describing the Ferring Philosophy as common sense: the key messages of the Ferring Philosophy are already part of who they are, and of how they conduct their work as employees or managers, of how they think in general as humans; therefore, the code is somewhat redundant for them, personally.

Nevertheless, like Andrea, many employees note how good it is that Ferring has made these principles explicit, and they often state that the philosophy may be relevant for *others*. Sometimes, 'the other' in need of teaching from the Ferring Philosophy is assumed to be located in other countries; on other occasions these ethically deficient others are assumed to be in other departments or among other generations (older or younger) or among other vocational groups. Regardless of who 'the other' is defined as, the commonality is that clinical trials officers see *them* (the others) as in need of the ethics program whereas they themselves have no personal use for the program. With their common sense and personal values, they are above the pedagogical scope of the organization's ethics program. They are already ethical enough.

For example, during the fieldwork in China, I participated in a local ethics workshop for new employees. At the workshop, I met Albert - a relatively newly hired clinical trials officer whom I subsequently interviewed. For Albert, the Ferring Philosophy will not make a difference to him, he says, as he is already thinking in this way. Nonetheless, he finds it important to have such codes of ethics in the pharmaceutical industry, as 'others' may not have the same values as him. For Albert, the 'others' who need such guidelines are located in local Chinese, non-international pharmaceutical companies, or they

---

[97] Interview, Clinical trials officer, Denmark, Autumn 2017.

may also be new employees within Ferring. In the interview, I ask him to describe what he thinks about the workshop that he just attended:

> Albert: 'I think it was run very well. Ally [the workshop facilitator] did a good job and it's quite clear what she wants to deliver: What's the core essence of this philosophy? So, what are your principles when you work in Ferring? And also… you know. Also another important thing is about the Alertline [Ferring's whistle-blowing scheme]. It means that you have options if you have any questions or doubts or dilemmas. If you are not comfortable to discuss this with your boss, you have options. And I think it's important to deliver this [message] to new employees. Even though I think a lot of these things are very common sense to a person, but still, it's good to be able to say it clearly to all employees… All you can say is to remind them or to make it clear to them, so I think it's a good session for the employees.'
>
> Anna: 'What do you mean by 'common sense'?'
>
> Albert: 'I think that everybody has their philosophy. They have their basic – a set of principles in terms of how to behave. Even in terms of thinking – okay, different people have different ways of thinking, but at least we have basic rules or principles of how to behave. So this is something which we know already – it's not something that Ally [workshop facilitator] told me this morning. It's already there. Its… I have already been living in this world for a long time, so I know these things already, so it's just… This is why I said it. It's common sense to me. But of course – different people have different criteria in terms of what is ethical. What is fair. All these things. So I think… it will be good to tell them what we think is important in Ferring.' [98]

Thus, Albert similarly describes the Ferring Philosophy as common sense and as basic principles that he already has, but he also emphasizes that it may be good to articulate this to (other) new employees. Despite being a new employee himself, Albert does not find this applicable to him, as he already possesses a set of personal principles to guide him in his work. This idea of a personal ethical endowment, something they bring with them into the organization, is a very general position among clinical trials officers.

---

[98] Interview with Clinical trials officer, China, Spring 2018.

This way of describing the Ferring Philosophy as 'common sense' is similar to what Jensen et al. (2015) found in their study of managers' understandings of a Swedish MNC's code of ethics in different country contexts. Here, the authors point to how some managers criticized and distanced themselves from the code because it was perceived as common sense and therefore redundant, while others supported the code again precisely because it was experienced as common sense and therefore harmless and impossible not to follow. Jensen et al. (2015) hint towards the national context as a central factor for understandings and enactments of the code of ethics, but they do not elaborate on why and in what way these understandings and enactments differ. I would argue that one reason for such differences may also be found in the self-understandings that exist among different vocational communities of practice, such as clinical trials officers' understanding of themselves as people who help patients and as individuals who already possess high ethical standards.

What is noteworthy within Ferring is that while the position that the Ferring Philosophy and its focus on patients and HCPs as simply 'common sense' is prevalent among clinical trials officers, these officers do not discard it or criticize it, as was the case in the study by Jensen et al. (2015). Jensen et al. do not reveal the vocational background or affiliations of the managers included in their study, but the difference may lie in the vocational communities of the managers in their study and the vocational background of informants with whom I did fieldwork. For the clinical trials officers in this present study, one reason for understanding the Ferring Philosophy and its focus on patients and HCPs as common sense might be that many have a background in the medical sciences – most often as pharmacologists as well as medical doctors and nurses with clinical experience. Thus, their educational upbringing has been patient-focused, and their previous working lives have often been characterized by activities close to patients. With this patient-focus in their vocational 'baggage', so to speak, clinical trials officers find that they do not need the company code to tell them to put people first.

5.7. 'Patients' and 'subjects': who comes first?

Until now, I have highlighted how clinical trials officers make an effort to underscore that the emphasis in the Ferring Philosophy on putting 'people' first is reflected in their daily work with GCP and IECs as well as in their stated purpose of developing new products for patients; it is a work in which they find immense pride, in the sense that they will help people recover from diseases. Their understanding of

Ferring's code of ethics is clear: the 'people' who come first are the patients who will eventually be treated with Ferring's products; just like the first part of the Ferring Philosophy states[99].

In the following, I will delve a bit further into this understanding of the 'people' and explore what it entails in practice to hold the end-users of the products first. In doing so, I point to the various other 'people' who are not (only) beneficiaries of the products but also experimental subjects in the process of developing these treatments and who are neither addressed directly within the Ferring Philosophy nor defined as the primary 'people' who come first by clinical trials officers. The purpose of this section, therefore, is to further explore the understanding of Ferring's ethics program among clinical trials officers and what that understanding entails.

5.7.1. Weighing risks for 'trial subjects' against societal benefits

As pointed out earlier, pharmaceutical development entails an element of risk for the volunteers and patients enrolled in clinical trials, and the potential benefit for patients should be seen in light of this risk. When viewing clinical trials officers' emphasis on helping patients, they are aware of the risk factors, but assume that these risks are worth taking when a potential new product is in sight. In fact, one could argue that the ordinary ethics underlying the entire process of pharmaceutical development is imbued with such risk judgments: An unknown substance is tested, and this testing involves an element of risk and on a few occasions in the history of the industry (See e.g. Horvath and Milton 2009), has caused severe injury or even death among the people being tested. However, the rationale for testing is its long-term benefit: the testing is conducted on a limited number of people with the purpose of potentially benefitting a larger group of patients in the future and ultimately, society. The risk involved in testing is deemed justifiable because of the prospects of a greater good in the future (here, understood as the development of a new treatment for patients). The criteria against which 'the good' is evaluated is the potential benefit for a large group of people, and thus the ordinary ethics of clinical trials lies in this criteria (cf. Lambek 2010b).

---

[99] "People come first at Ferring. Because: Patients using our products and physicians prescribing them have a right to expect:
- that we will only make available those products in which we have full confidence.
- that we will offer the best possible products at the most reasonable cost.
- that Ferring's employees will always display courtesy and respect, and act professionally.
Ferring seeks the loyalty of these patients and physicians, and we are prepared to earn this loyalty anew every day.'

This kind of logic (risk now, potential benefits later) is not limited to pharmaceutical companies, of course. The agencies responsible for approval of new drugs likewise demand that these substances have been tested on humans according to international guidelines for doing so, before they can be approved and sold. Returning to the Declaration of Helsinki introduced earlier, the Declaration begins by stating a number of general principles, also set forth in other declarations:

> 'The Declaration of Geneva of the WMA [World Medical Association] binds the physician with the words, 'The health of my patient will be my first consideration,' and the International Code of Medical Ethics declares that, 'A physician shall act in the patient's best interest when providing medical care'.'[100]

What is noteworthy is how the language changes when moving into the general principles of the declaration, where the term to describe trial participants changes from 'patients' to 'subjects'. In the general principles of the declaration, it thus further states that 'Medical progress is based on research that ultimately must include studies involving human subjects'[101] but that 'While the primary purpose of medical research is to generate new knowledge, this goal can never take precedence over the rights and interests of individual research subjects'[102]. Thus, in order to progress, new treatments must be tested on human subjects, but still keeping in mind that the health of the patient is the primary consideration, cf. the introductory quote above. As mentioned earlier, in the first phase of pharmaceutical testing, so-called 'healthy volunteers' are enrolled in the trial, and patients are not enrolled until the subsequent phases two and three. The term 'trial subject' thus presumably intends to cover both patients and non-patients. However, in clinical trial protocols and internal standard operating procedures (SOPs) and internal communication within clinical trial teams in Ferring, the term 'subject' is also used in phases two and three trials to refer to the patients who are enrolled. Returning to the Declaration of Helsinki, under the headline 'Risks, Burdens and Benefits', the Declaration further states its position on the risk involved in clinical trials on humans, stressing that the potential benefits of conducting a trial must always outweigh the risks. Hence:

---

[100] Declaration of Helsinki, point 3. https://www.wma.net/policies-post/wma-declaration-of-helsinki-ethical-principles-for-medical-research-involving-human-subjects/
[101] Declaration of Helsinki, point 5
[102] Declaration of Helsinki, point 8.

'16. In medical practice and in medical research, most interventions involve risks and burdens.

Medical research involving human subjects may only be conducted if the importance of the objective outweighs the risks and burdens to the research subjects.

17. All medical research involving human subjects must be preceded by careful assessment of predictable risks and burdens to the individuals and groups involved in the research in comparison with foreseeable benefits to them and to other individuals or groups affected by the condition under investigation.

18. (…) When the risks are found to outweigh the potential benefits or when there is conclusive proof of definitive outcomes, physicians must assess whether to continue, modify or immediately stop the study.'[103]

What we learn from the declaration, then, is that the best interest of the patient always comes first. We further learn that testing on 'human subjects' is a precondition for medical progress, but that such testing involves risks and burdens. Hereby, a slightly paradoxical element enters the declaration, as the care for the individual subject's well-being competes against the goal of medical progress. Although it is clearly stated that the interest in furthering research must not take priority over the well-being of an individual subject, it is also stated that clinical trials *will* involve certain risks and burdens imposed on the 'subject'. And the question arises how one can maintain the best interest of the individual subject while also subjecting the individual to risks. This, it becomes clear from the declaration's points 16-18 stated above, is a matter of weighing the potential benefits of such a trial with the potential risks to the subject. However, while the potential benefits may help a larger group of patients – also outside of the study if it is completed and shows successful – the potential risks are imposed only on the individual test subjects who participate in the trials, some of whom may not be patients at all.

Similarly, within the aforementioned GCP guidelines, according to which clinical trials are designed, weighing potential risks and potential benefits is also a central concern. These guidelines are based on 13 principles, and contain a similar paradox of ensuring trial subject safety while still recognizing the existence of potential risks for this very subject. Observe, for example, the first three principles of the ICH GCP:

---

[103] Declaration of Helsinki, point 16-18.

'1. Clinical trials should be conducted in accordance with the ethical principles that have their origin in the Declaration of Helsinki, and that are consistent with GCP and the applicable regulatory requirement(s).

2. Before a trial is initiated, foreseeable risks and inconveniences should be weighed against the anticipated benefit for the individual trial subject and society. A trial should be initiated and continued only if the anticipated benefits justify the risks.

3. The rights, safety, and well-being of the trial subjects are the most important considerations and should prevail over interests of science and society.'[104]

As stated above, risks and inconveniences for individual 'trial subjects' should be weighed against the anticipated benefit for this subject who participates in the trial as well as the benefit for society. However, in Principle 3, it is established that the interests of society should not take priority over the interests of the individual subject. Thus, any potential risk should only be taken if the potential benefit for the subject *and* for society is deemed larger than this risk. This assessment raises the question of how such incommensurable benefits and risks are weighed against each other in practice and what logics are guiding – and constituted by - this exercise.

As Lambek (2010a) reminds us, the ethical is not confined to specific moments, domains or specific types of questions. Ethics is a part of our daily practices, and is embedded in the logics with which we evaluate and judge what is right or wrong. 'Ethics', he argues, is to strive towards a particular conception of the good, and ordinary ethical practice entails having to make judgments between different, sometimes incommensurable goods. Lambek thus refuses to demarcate the ethical as and define it as some*thing,* arguing instead that the ethical lies in this striving and in the discriminations that we make between competing choices, between the many competing roads we could take.[105]

In the following, I will turn to three ethnographic examples where such ordinary ethical weighing of risks for a subject and benefits for a (future) patient, as recommended by the Declaration of Helsinki and ICH GCP, is conducted in practice. I have chosen these examples in order to show how clinical trials officers, as described earlier in this chapter, deem the Ferring Philosophy redundant because of their existing 'mission' to develop products that will help patients. However, as I will point out, their notion of patients is rather narrow. It is focused on those patients who can be helped in the future rather than

---

[104] Good Clinical Practice (GCP) E6(R2), page 15 https://www.ema.europa.eu/en/documents/scientific-guideline/ich-e-6-r2-guideline-good-clinical-practice-step-5_en.pdf
[105] Based on conversation with Michael Lambek in Toronto, October 2019.

on those 'subjects' who are part of the present-day trial. The first two examples illustrate a prevalent interpretation held by clinical trials officers of Ferring's code of ethics: that the 'people' who come first are the patients as the end-users of the products. At the same time, in practice, the people who participate in the trials are defined as 'subjects'. These subjects, or the situation they are in, compete with a number of other considerations when clinical trials officers make ordinary ethical judgments.

The third example explores the boundaries for this interpretation and illustrates a tipping point when the 'subject' participating in the trial becomes a 'patient' and takes priority over the future patient for whom the products are being developed.

While the first ethnographic examples have been selected among many, illustrating themes that have been prevalent throughout the fieldwork, the third example has been selected because of the richness of the account and the specific situation it portrays. In particular, it highlights the limits of the temporal displacement whereby the welfare of an existing subject is subordinate to the future patient.

5.7.2. Patients, protocol and potential profits

It is late afternoon, and I am attending a global staff meeting for all Ferring's employees held at headquarters in Switzerland and live-streamed to offices around the world. In the office in Denmark, a number of meeting rooms have been reserved for staff to participate remotely, and I am sitting in the one on the 19th floor, where chairs have been arranged, facing the large screen on which the meeting is being projected. After a short welcome, a senior manager from the research and development department (to which clinical trials officers belong) goes on stage of the auditorium. The headline on the slide projected behind him has only two words on it: 'Our Purpose'. The manager then shows a video clip with a young couple and their small baby. The couple is talking about the difficulties and emotional stress of failed pregnancies and of going through In Vitro Fertilization (IVF) treatment, which is one of Ferring's therapeutic areas. I doubt that I am the only one who is moved when a tear slowly takes shape in the corner of the eye of the father as he speaks of the hardship they were undergoing trying to conceive.

After the end of the brief video and the applause that followed, the senior manager returns to the stage. 'It is amazing. It is amazing to be contributing to that...', he says and starts talking about the purpose of the company:

'Our purpose is to change and improve people's lives. Our purpose is to allow families to be built all over the world, no matter what creed or composition they may be. That is a very important purpose. It is a purpose that is unique to the life science industry. It's what makes us unique. We are not just any business. We deal in people's lives, we deal in life and death, and doing things the right way is exceptionally rewarding. Because we do change people's lives. We actually create health, enable families – nothing can be more purposeful than that. Not done right, we could also cause harm and damage. And we could actually take lives or at least contribute to lives not being sustained. (…) this is what drives me every day when I go to work. The opportunity to make a huge difference. And I know that's true for, I would say, all of you. (…) we do this, at the end of the day, because we feel that we make a difference in peoples' lives. In patients' lives. In families' lives. And it really helps to understand the end-user. Of course, whatever you are in, fast moving consumables, whatever business or trade, you need to know what the customer wants. But what the customer wants here is much more profound and existential than someone who is buying a new car or a new iPhone or something like that. And understanding that requires a different depth of engagement and commitment. That's coming back to purpose (…) So now, how are we going to fulfil this? Because you need more than purpose. And we will talk about a few things today. And one of them is our mission and how we actually get there (…)'.

A statement of Ferring's mission is projected on the screens to all of us who are attending the meeting online. The last of the four paragraphs in the mission statement, which is now visible on the screen, states that:

'We are, and will continue to be, part of a transparent and aligned company. We strive to best address the needs of patients, stakeholders and costumers by collaborating across functions, experimenting and sharing our practices, and continuously learning. We are always guided by the Ferring Philosophy'.

After going through the first three paragraphs of the mission statement, the manager ends his description of how the purpose of developing new treatments to patients is going to be fulfilled in Ferring by turning to this last paragraph cited above and says:

'At the end of it all, we have people [the last of the four paragraphs]. So, the Ferring Philosophy defines how we are going to behave. It's like the golden rule in many many words, and we all know it. This is how we treat each other; this is how we excel together. This is how we treat others.'[106]

This example has many facets that I would like to emphasize. First, this senior managers' focus on the purpose of creating products that can help the 'end-user' in the future relates to the aforementioned sense of purpose among clinical trials officers of contributing positively to patients (in the future). Second, it is noteworthy how he at the same time hints towards the risk it entails for those individuals involved in the trials by saying that if not done right, 'we' (i.e. Ferring) could also 'cause harm and damage' and even 'take lives or at least contribute to lives not being sustained'.

Third, the manager ties the purpose of developing new treatments for 'end-users' to the Ferring Philosophy. Similarly to the quote, where the manager emphasizes the importance of knowing one's customers and addressing their needs, in the mission statement that he paraphrases and which is displayed behind him, the Ferring Philosophy is also tied to the importance of addressing the needs of the patients as end-users as well as to the needs of other stakeholders and customers.[107]
And thus, the purpose of developing treatments for the end-users who need them is tied to the messages in the Ferring Philosophy which likewise focus on those end-users. And this link between the Ferring Philosophy and the end-users, I would argue, reiterates the understanding that the 'people' who come first are in fact limited to these end-users; leaving the 'subjects' out of the group of 'people' who should be put first.

Thus, among clinical trials officers, as I have also outlined earlier, there is a strong sense of purpose and a strong sense of contributing positively to patients; and this is a purpose which, in my experience, they rarely lose sight of. However, this laudable goal refers to the end-users of products and not to 'trial subjects'; and within clinical trials, considerations of trial subjects' interests compete with a number of other considerations.
As mentioned earlier, even when following the GCP guidelines when designing and conducting a clinical trial, there are still innumerable choices to be made, as each compound and what is being tested is

---

[106] Based on video transcript and field notes from global staff meeting, Winter 2018.
[107] The costumer is not always the same as the end-user, as many products are purchased by HCPs in hospitals and clinics.

different. Moreover, considerations about trial design involve much more than the scientific considerations about how to best test a given compound, and they take into account the given time span, available internal staff resources as well as the budget. The elements to be weighed against each other within a commercial clinical trial context are thus complex and many.

The context of the following ethnographic example is a phase 2 trial where the 'trial subjects' are patients who suffer from the condition that the drug on trial intends to treat. The purpose of this example is to illustrate the difference between 'the patient' as an abstraction, an image of the purpose and future outcome of the trial to which thorough and continuous attention is given in the company, as exemplified in the previous ethnographic description from the global staff meeting, and the 'trial subject' who must compete for attention with numerous other considerations of trial testing with its risks, routines and budgets. We will see how clinical trial officers make ordinary ethical judgments among these multiple considerations.

> I am sitting together with Ellie, a clinical trial officer from one of the studies that I have
> been following. Last time we spoke, Ellie introduced me to the trial and the condition
> they were aiming to treat, and she gave me a copy of a document containing the main
> considerations around the design of the study. We had agreed to meet again after I had
> read the document in order to review the trial presentations for the investigators
> (doctors and nurses) involved.
>
> Meeting in the canteen, Ellie has brought her laptop, and she asks me to look at her
> screen with her. She notices that I have written a lot of notes in the margins of the
> document she sent me and asks me to pose my questions before we begin with the
> presentation. I start out by asking her about the trial design, how they selected the clinics
> and hospitals that should participate in the trial and how they got patients to participate,
> as I did not completely understand this from reading the document that she had
> supplied.
>
> Ellie explains that in the beginning, the clinical trial team wanted to have 50 sites (i.e.
> hospitals and clinics) but that they ended up with close to 60 so that they could recruit a
> sufficient number of patients to participate in the study.
>
> Finding the right number of sites is a balancing act, she explains, because for every site
> that is added to a study, the risk of variations in how the study is conducted increases.
> Although the protocol is the same for all sites, she explains, for every site, there is a risk

that the doctors and nurses have understood it differently or that their practices are different from the other sites; therefore, a balance must be maintained. For example, having 250 sites, she explains, would make patient recruitment much faster but this would also increase the risk of errors. The errors that she refers to, she explains, can affect the data quality, but they could also have consequences for the efficiency of the test drug on trial subjects. This angle, however, does not take up much of the story when she explains these different considerations, and Ellie does not mention any potential safety risks for these subjects. The reality in some study hospitals, she tells me, is that there are a large number of nurses - sometimes up to 1.000 - who might encounter a subject to be included in the trial, and all these 1.000 nurses must all know what to do and how to administer the drug according to the protocol. But with every 1.000 nurses that are added, the risk of one of those nurses not being sure what to do or not administering the test drug correctly increases. Moreover, the more sites included, she explains, the less routine will the staff at the sites have with administering the drug to the subjects, and the chance that precisely those nurses who have previously enrolled a subject in the trial are also on their shift when a new subject comes in is very slim. Conversely, if the entire trial was carried out in only one hospital with the same staff, the nurses and doctors would obtain a lot of experience with the protocol and with administering the drug, which would greatly increase the likelihood that the trial was being conducted according to the protocol and that it had not been administered incorrectly to trial subjects. However, it would also take this one hospital several years to complete the trial. And, as I know from conversations with patent attorneys in the company, in pharmaceutical development, time is valuable.

As one attorney explained to me just after I entered the company, in order to initiate a clinical trial, various approvals from authorities must be sought, and the trial is publicized online. Due to such transparency requirements, many pharmaceutical companies submit their patent applications early in the clinical trials in order to mitigate the risk of others patenting the substance that they are in the process of testing. This, too, is another balancing act, because the patent typically expires after 20 years, and if it takes the company 10 years to complete the clinical trials and get the new drug on the market, then there are only 10 years left to recoup the benefits of the investment.[108] Therefore,

---

[108] The short timespan to earn back what is surely an extraordinary amount of money spent on drug development is an argument that is often used to justify high drug pricing, but this issue lies beyond the scope of this study.

the faster a trial can be completed, the more time will be left to the patent, and the more time the company has before cheaper generic products are launched on the market. Conversely, every delay in a clinical trial is patent time lost and therefore money lost.

The choice to include 60 sites rather than the 50 that were initially planned should be seen in this light, Ellie explains. After having started to recruit patients for the study, the clinical trial team realized that recruitment was proceeding too slowly. They decided to add a few extra sites to speed it up.

Moreover, because the national and private healthcare systems differ from country to country, it adds further complexity and insecurity to a trial, the more countries it involves. To mitigate this risk, the clinical trials team has included only those countries in which they could have at least five sites. Thus, if a country had only three hospitals or clinics that could participate in the trial, this country would be deselected. She explains that in many ways, it has been what she terms 'a pragmatic trial design' where the team has assessed what would be possible within the timeframe they had and before the patent expired.[109]

The invoking of 'pragmatism', I would argue following Lambek (2010a), is a window to ethical practice, and the clinical trials officers' judgments are no exception. They are faced with weighing incommensurable elements against each other. Moreover, although the purpose of the aforementioned GCP guidelines is indeed to protect the humans participating in the trial as well as to ensure that the data collection is valid, complete and well-documented[110], the 'pragmatism' that Ellie describes also illustrates the space within the GCP guidelines for practical judgment, where the need for speed in the process is balanced against the risk of protocol mistakes and thus data validity, all of which can affect the treatment of 'subjects' as well as the company's revenue at a later stage. The speed of the process, because of the expiration conditions of the patent, whereas mistakes mean that results might not be significant enough, or might not be approved by the authorities if they are deemed too uncertain.

---

[109] Based on field notes from meeting with Clinical trials officer, Denmark, Autumn 2017.
[110] http://www.gcp-enhed.dk/en/whatisgcp/

Ellie's situation fits well into Lambek's (2010a) argument that instead of trying to locate ethics as a fixed object, we must pay attention to actions such as the establishment and recognition of criteria and the exercise of practical judgment (Lambek 2010a:11–12). We see how Ellie describes an ideal for the quality of the study: to conduct it in very few or even in one single site; but that the timeframe of the patent does not allow for this. Moreover, keeping a clinical trial going is also costly in terms of all the internal and contracted resources; continuing work over a prolonged period will add extra costs, and she has to be 'pragmatic'.

Within this situation, Ellie and her team have judged and deliberated among a number of potential choices. There are the choices to conduct the study within a very limited number of sites versus a very large number of sites and everything in between. The way in which Ellie describes these choices and weighs the different options against each other is an expression of her practical judgment of what is the right thing to do within the pragmatic context of this particular trial. Of course these choices have not been made by Ellie alone. They emerge from a process of recommendations from and conversations between the entire clinical trial team and the corporate governance bodies above them.

> Back in the canteen, I ask Ellie why they ended up with close to 60 trial sites when their initial judgment had been that the right balance between speed and risk of protocol deviations[111] or misunderstandings was 50 sites. She explains that in the USA, in order to approve a new drug on the market, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) requires a certain portion of the study to have been conducted in the US. There are no formal requirements for how big such a portion must be, but it needs to be somewhat significant, she explains. At the beginning, they had only two sites in the USA out of 50, and within the clinical trials team as well as within the internal governance bodies above them, this was not deemed enough to meet the FDA's demands, she explained. Normally, they would plan for 20% of the sites to be located in the USA in order to live up to the FDA's requirements. I ask her why it was so important to have the drug approved in the USA, and she replies that it is because the expected earnings in the American market for this particular drug would be considerably higher than on the European

---

[111] 'Protocol deviations' is the term used for actual detected deviations (such as a drug administered improperly or at the wrong time) and must be reported as part of trial documentation, as it may have an influence on the results. Here, I refer to all the potential protocol deviations (including non-detected ones) mentioned by Ellie, where a study nurse might have understood the protocol slightly wrong, may lack sufficient skills administering the protocol, etc.

market. Therefore, it was necessary to add extra sites in the USA to have the drug approved there. However, at the same time, there were challenges in recruiting patients in the USA, and they could thus not close a corresponding number of sites in the EU and maintain only 50 sites in total, because that would entail an undesired and costly prolongation of the study.

As seen in the above example, the criteria available for making the right decisions involve elements of (patent expiration) time, cost, potential protocol deviations, future approvals and future potential revenue. In this matrix of choices, little attention is paid to the 'trial subject'; presumably due to the fact that the trial adheres to GCP and that questions of safety and patient protection are covered, as argued earlier. With these evaluative criteria in mind, the choices that present themselves are to leave out the USA sites entirely because of low recruitment rates – an option that is rejected because of the potential future earnings from the American market and thus the need for FDA approval on this market. Another potential choice is to close some of the planned European sites when increasing the American sites and to maintain the 50 sites initially decided upon. This is also rejected because of the costs involved if the trial is prolonged, as this will shorten the time left of the patent. The choice of increasing the number of sites in the USA while maintaining the number in the EU is also available, and as it responds to the requirement to have a significant number of sites in the USA while not affecting the potential future earnings by prolonging the trial time (and shortening the patent time), this ultimately becomes the decision, although 50 trial sites were initially deemed to be the best number.

The practical judgment here is thus a judgment that transcends temporalities, as the potential and predicted future outcomes affect decision-making. In the potential case that the drug succeeds, Ferring wishes to be able to make use of the patent period for as long as possible. Moreover, if the trial should succeed, Ferring likewise wants to be able to get approval from the FDA because of the higher potential revenue in the USA than in other markets. Of course, these potential future outcomes are predicted based on past experiences, and the practical judgment thus takes place at this intersection between past and future. The clinical trials officers' choices are informed by various experience-based potentialities, and that is another reason why I define them as a community of practice. They are aware of the pragmatic factors that need to be considered within this community and act accordingly. As I have highlighted in this example, time, cost, data validity and potential future earnings were significant criteria for judging and deciding the course of action, while the 'subjects' involved in the trial were given less attention. I will not assess whether this was 'the right course of action'. It was the

course taken by this vocational community using their practical judgment. At the same time, clinical trials officers' understanding of their own purpose in the job is to provide new products to patients. Within this logic, then, for clinical trials officers, 'the patient' is equated with the end-user of the product, while the anonymous 'subjects' enrolled in the trials must compete with considerations around potential future earnings and speed. Furthermore, the Ferring Philosophy's focus patients is interpreted within this logic, and clinical trials officers equate the patients mentioned in the Ferring Philosophy with the future end-users for whom clinical trials officers work to make new treatments, as illustrated earlier in this chapter.

5.7.3. The Ferring Philosophy and its focus on the future patient

As previously mentioned, when analyzing the Ferring Philosophy, it too is imbued with the idea of the 'patient' as the end-user of existing products and not the subject participating in the trials for potential new products. As the first part of the Ferring Philosophy states:

> 'People come first at Ferring
>
> Because:
>
> Patients using our products and physicians prescribing them have a right to expect:
>
> - that we will only make available those products in which we have full confidence.
> - that we will offer the best possible products at the most reasonable cost.
> - that Ferring's employees will always display courtesy and respect, and act professionally.
>
> Ferring seeks the loyalty of these patients and physicians, and we are prepared to earn this loyalty anew every day'.

Thus, the Philosophy only refers to patients who use Ferring's products and to the physicians who prescribe products to these patients. Determining if the Philosophy or clinical trials officers' logics came first is a causality exercise that I will refrain from venturing into, but I find it noteworthy that the Ferring Philosophy expresses a similar orientation as clinical trials officers by highlighting the end-user patients and leaving out trial subjects. As mentioned in Chapter 2, I follow Kaptein and Schwartz' definition of a code of ethics as a:

'distinct and formal document containing a set of prescriptions developed by and for a company to guide the present and future behaviours on multiple issues of at least its managers and employees toward one another, the company, external stakeholders and/or society in general' (Kaptein and Schwartz 2008:113).

Moreover, if a code of ethics is indeed, as argued by Kaptein (2009:264), the first step in creating an 'ethical culture' (however defined by each individual company), the possible implications of leaving out trial subjects from the code of ethics may be that Ferring's 'ethical culture' does not entail explicitly prioritized considerations of trial subjects.

5.7.4. Practical judgment and the ethics of closing a trial[112]

So far, we have seen how clinical trials officers' judgment is based on a temporal and conceptual split between trial subjects and patients and how they weigh various elements against each other in practice.

The following ethnographic example intends to illustrate a different balancing act as well as the boundaries of this conceptual split between patient and subject. We shall see how ordinary ethical judgments take place in practice, and how risks and benefits of a trial are weighed against each other as well as the tipping points that change clinical trial officers' judgments. Within this section, I ask the reader to follow me into a meeting about an early Phase two trial.

> One of the clinical trial officers whom I have gotten to know and who has become a key informant and gatekeeper has invited me to join a meeting with a vague title about budget prioritizations. He forwarded me the meeting invitation in outlook last night, and I can see that everyone else invited to the meeting also only received the invitation at a late hour yesterday. At first, I am not entirely sure of the meeting's purpose and why he thought to invite me, but it quickly becomes clear that the purpose of the meeting is to discuss what the project manager in charge of the meeting terms 'an ethical question'. I arrive in the small conference room directly from another meeting, and eight persons are

---

[112] Please note that I do not provide any national demographics for the interview excerpts brought out in this section due to the recognizability of this particular meeting and its participants. However, the interviews that I draw on were conducted in Switzerland and in Denmark.

already sitting around the table. From the speaker device in the middle of the table, you can hear another four people who are in the process of joining the meeting remotely. Eric, the clinical trial officer in charge of the meeting, is acting as project manager for a number of development projects in the company. He is based in the corporate headquarters and is leading the projects from there. Eric is among the four people who have joined the meeting by phone, and he starts out by thanking everyone for attending with such short notice, adding that he hopes that everyone has received the email about the budget updates. There is nodding around the table, and people seem quite reluctant and displeased. At this moment, I am still unaware of the exact purpose of the meeting, but I notice the mood in the room, which is quite different from the cheerful tone that usually characterizes interaction in the office.

'As you know, there has been an overspending in 2017 that needs to be addressed', Eric says, explaining that there has been a prioritization for the 2018 budget. 'Almost all budgets have been shaved, and some projects don't get further funding for 2018', he says, followed by a silence in the room. 'But the projects will not be stopped – they will be put on hold', he continues. There are barely audible snorts coming from several of the people in the room, who look at each other, knowingly, with raised eyebrows and light shaking heads.

Eric, who is on the phone and therefore unaware of the looks that are being sent across the room by his colleagues, continues to talk out of the speaker device about the budget prioritization and how some budgets may get moved around if some of the trials that have been prioritized prove to be unsuccessful; but that for now, some of the projects have been halted and will not receive any funding in 2018. 'We need to remain flexible', he says, explaining that the projects might get continued in 2019 again if the funding is prioritized. Eric is project manager for one of these clinical trials that will be put on hold, and most of the clinical trial officers around the table have been working on this trial.

At first, I wonder why people seem so unhappy with the situation but during the following weeks, the budget prioritizations are the major topic of corridor gossip, and I realize that these prioritizations have affected the work of many staff in the Danish office. Some are unhappy with the prioritizations, because they find that their work and

efforts as well as company funds have been wasted; others are displeased because the prioritizations also involve budget cuts, and they will have to do more with less and work even faster. Yet others find it unprofessional and wrong to discontinue clinical trials that have been initiated because of the discomfort to which the patients have been exposed and the agreements that have been breached with the doctors leading these trials.

Back in the meeting room, Eric says: 'Then we need to discuss the ethical aspects of this and whether to stop it or not'. He asks for the team's views on the matter before taking it further up the organizational ladder to the final decision-making governance body. Until now, I have never heard anyone mention ethics explicitly, and I realize why my key informant thought it could be interesting for me to participate in this meeting. 'It's about the LL6032 trial', Eric says, referring to one of the ongoing clinical trials that he is managing. 'Is it ethical to keep putting patients on this if we are not going to develop it further? Or might it not be ethical to stop it just because of funding issues and because the data is not yet conclusive?' he asks and explains the dilemma:

The LL6032 trial is in an early stage of testing a new drug to treat a severe condition with high mortality. The trial design involves a rather invasive measurement of the blood pressure inside some of the organs of the patients, requiring hospitalization of these patients for a few days. The trial has had some difficulties recruiting the right kind of patients to participate, and the results of the efficacy of the drug from the first few patients that have been enrolled are far from promising. For these reasons and various others, the internal governance bodies overseeing Ferring's clinical trials have decided not to prioritize funding for this trial in the coming year, 2018. The governance body has asked for a recommendation from the clinical trial team about how to proceed, and this is the backdrop for the discussion taking place in the conference room where I am sitting. The dilemma, as Eric describes it, is that three patients have already been tested, and the plan was to test three more before evaluating whether the drug should be tested on further patients. Thus, only half of the planned patients have been tested so far, but knowing that the trial will not be continued in 2018 and possibly not even in 2019 due to the cost issue of producing a new batch of medicine as well as the uncertainty of what prioritizations might look like by then, the question is whether they should finish the trial as planned with the first six patients or whether to end the trial immediately after only

three patients. By ending it immediately, they will not obtain the data that they would have generated with the additional three patients, which means that the data from the first three patients is of very little use. However, enrolling another three patients in a trial that will not be continued in the following year and maybe never is also perhaps not the right thing to do, Eric explains.

After the meeting, I interviewed six of the meeting participants, and a process of weighing risks against benefits pervaded their judgments about how to handle this dilemma.

In an interview with Alfred, a clinical trial officer, he explained to me how he weighed the risks against the potential benefits of the trial when faced with this dilemma. He explains that the information that the clinical trials team would acquire from including another three patients, knowing that the trial had to stop, would not outweigh the risk to which they were exposing patients. I ask him to elaborate on how he has weighed risks and benefits to arrive at this conclusion about how to proceed. Alfred explains:

> 'Let me backtrack a bit (…) When I teach students, I usually use an example of a medical product that is very common to treat high blood pressure to illustrate this risk-benefit assessment. There are hundreds of millions of people using this medicine, and you know that each year, several hundred people die directly from having been given this medicine. It is crystal clear that their death is due to this medicine. But at the same time, you know that this medicine saves the lives of hundreds of thousands of people every year. And here, they have done this risk-benefit assessment and the authorities have decided that this medicine benefits much much more than if not using it. And now it is available on the market.'[113]

I ask Alfred what is the risk in this particular study that was discussed at the meeting, and he begins a detailed explanation of how the tests of blood pressure are made inside the patient, explaining that the risk involved is that a central artery could be punctured and that this type of examination in some cases outside of Ferring has caused severe complications and even death for patients in the past. However, he emphasizes that the risk is very small. But it is there, and it is potentially severe.

---

[113] Interview with Clinical trials officer, Autumn 2017.

'But, we have said that we can do this type of study and so we have said that it is okay to expose these patients to this small risk. But with the idea that if we had finalized the study, the risk here was so low, and the potential benefit was much higher and the benefit here should have been that we should have been able to make new medicine that could save the lives and help many patients in the future. So this was the risk-benefit assessment that was positive regarding conducting this trial.'

Alfred repeats that now that the trial is closing and as it is very unlikely that the trial will result in a treatment for patients, the benefits no longer outweigh the risks. He further underscores that the authorities approving the trial design and the IECs in the hospitals where the trial was conducted have carried out a similar risk-benefit analysis and decided that the study could be conducted, and he thus repeats the judgment that I outlined earlier in this chapter: if it is approved by the IECs, then the trial is ethically sound. If the trial had not been approved, they would not have been able to even start the trial, he explains[114].

In this light, the logic of weighing risks and benefits against each other that is expressed in Alfred's account corresponds to the guidelines for Good Clinical Practice outlined in section 5.2.4. However, what is interesting is how he understands the potentiality of the risk and the potentiality of the benefit. The concept of 'potentiality' is relevant here. Taussig, Hoeyer and Helreich (2013) observe that the term can have three meanings:

'The first denotes a hidden force determined to manifest itself – something that with or without intervention has its future built into it. The second refers to genuine plasticity – the capacity to transmute into something completely different. The third suggests a latent possibility imagined as an open choice, a quality perceived as available to human modification and direction through which people can work to propel an object or a subject to become something other than it is' (Taussig et al. 2013:4).

Within the clinical trial teams, the potentiality of the drug to succeed is viewed as the first type of potentiality: an inherent quality within a given compound that will reveal itself, or not, through

---

[114] As referred earlier, in the E6(R2) GCP guidelines' point 2.2., it is stated that 'Before a trial is initiated, foreseeable risks and inconveniences should be weighed against the anticipated benefit for the individual trial subject and society. A trial should be initiated and continued only if the anticipated benefits justify the risks'. https://www.ich.org/page/efficacy-guidelines

scientific testing in clinical trials. The potential risk, however, is much more connected to the third type and to a latent possibility that the doctor or nurse performing the test may puncture an artery in the patient. And these ways of understanding potentialities for risk or success are not unimportant. The potential risk becomes viewed in terms of human choice or human caused accidents and hereby becomes an issue to be considered, whereas the potential benefit bears within it an urgency to reveal and make available this benefit – if it is indeed there - for future patients.

> Back at the meeting, team members are discussing the details of producing a new batch of medicine and the costs associated with doing so, when one of the clinical trial officers attending the meeting by phone says: 'If I were the patient and if I were to decide if I should enter a trial with these future prospects, I would be reluctant. So that's why I'm in favour of stopping now'. People sitting around the table nod their assent.
> Then Helen, another clinical trial officer who is also present in the conference room, begins talking and says that one could argue that it is necessary to finish this part of the trial with the next three patients in order to demonstrate the use of the compound, if this means that other patients do not need to be tested in this rather invasive way the next time around. 'You could argue this case, but is it really like that?', she asks, whereupon she answers her own question by saying 'I am not sure if it is really the case'. She continues: 'We need to balance what we get out of it with what we expose the patients to', and she explains that they need to be aware of what they gain from including three more patients, knowing that the trial will be put on hold. In a more severe tone she minds the group of the risk involved with the trial, and that they had decided to conduct the trial despite this risk because it might contribute to developing a product for the patients. 'But now when there might not be a product, it looks a bit different', she says.

In an interview with Helen afterwards, she elaborates on her concerns. Helen would have been inclined to continue the trial with another three patients if the knowledge they could obtain from doing so could spare a new group of patients from having to go through similarly invasive testing in the future. Moreover, Ferring's research department is looking to develop a new version of the molecule in the

drug which could potentially help patients in the future.[115] And, although the drug that is being tested on the current group of patients would not be the same as the drug that would eventually potentially come out of the new molecule, in Helen's mind, it would justify continuing the trial of the current drug with the next three patients if the test could contribute to the development of a new molecule. As she says in the interview:

> 'You could say one thing, which was what I said at the meeting, and that is that we made this clinical trial with two purposes. One purpose was that we are going to develop medicine that can help some patients. And the second purpose was that we were conducting the trial and that it was important to have the first six patients because it could help our colleagues selecting the next molecule which could then maybe benefit some patients. But the entire time, the purpose was to support the development of medicine for patients. And the first purpose fell when the trial was paused. And then there was the second purpose - whether we could perhaps use these data to select a new molecule. And you could then maybe do something where you could say, 'Now we'll spare some patients from going through something with the next molecule that will come'. (…) But we were told that the data from the six patients was useful but that it was in no way essential for them [colleagues researching on the new molecule] to be able to continue their work. And then I think that the second purpose collapsed. And then I also think that the complexity of the study… It is not just taking a blood sample or a blood pressure. It is an examination that is connected to some degree of risk, and when the purpose with the trial had disappeared, it was my opinion that we should close the trial. Then we should not burden anymore patients with this.'[116]

For Helen, conducting a trial of this kind can be justified as long as there is a potential in sight for eventually developing a drug – even when that potential is tied to a different molecule than the one being tested here, which I consider to be a stage that is relatively far away from a finished product. Further, the legitimacy of exposing patients to a risk is derived from the potential future benefit that may be revealed through clinical testing. I find this difference between potentiality and actuality within her reasoning interesting, as the legitimacy for an *actual* trial with *actual* testing of 'subjects' is

---

[115] As mentioned earlier, drug development is a lengthy process, and before a molecule is developed into a drug that can be tested on animals and humans, there is the 'research' phase where new molecules are identified as potential 'candidates' to be developed further for a specific medical condition.
[116] Interview with Clinical trials officer, Autumn 2017.

sustained by an imaginary of a *potentially* successful treatment in the future. And when that successful treatment can no longer be imagined, but the potentiality of the risk is still present, the basis for legitimizing the trial no longer exists. As anthropologist Lynn M. Morgan writes, potentiality is also 'a discursive device that can be used to formulate, activate, or resist particular imagined futures' (Morgan 2013:22). And it is exactly this discursive device of potentiality, this imagined future drug (or lack thereof), and imagined future patients, that the clinical trial officers employ during the meeting and in the following interviews.

> Back at the meeting, Eric asks Tracy, a colleague on the phone from Ferring's research department who is involved in the early development of the new molecule, whether it would be helpful for their further work to have data from three extra patients. Tracy replies that the potential is there, but that the results from the three first patients are pointing in all directions and that enrolling another three patients might not be sufficient to reach any conclusive results.

In an interview I conducted with Tracy afterwards, she has similar views as Helen: that there has to be a product for a patient in sight, a potential benefit, in order to continue the trial, but that that product in sight can be as intangible as a new molecule.

> Tracy: 'To continue to move the trial forward, you have to continue to believe that you are doing that because you are going to benefit a patient. Or that you are at least… if you are not going to benefit them with that particular compound, that it will at least help you understand how to select the second generation compound so that you will eventually get to a stage where you will benefit the patient. So I guess that was sort of the ethical question we were trying to determine. Could we justify continuing the trial with the treatment of patients, given the fact that the first generation program was not going to be successful with that compound, but the purpose would be to inform a next generation program? So I think that was probably the key ethical issue to discuss.'
> Anna: 'And what was your position on it?'
> Tracy: 'My position was that we would not… That it was highly unlikely that we would get enough information out of the clinical trial in order to inform a second generation program. So I didn't think it was ethically, morally worth continuing. Or even from a financial or scientific perspective, because I just don't think there would have been

enough information. Of course on the other side of that, you have the ethical issue that you already treated some patients. So you already treated some and you already have some information and what you are going to say is that 'we did that but I'm not going to use that information for anything now really'. Because it's not enough information for you to know what to do with the information. So that's also the flipside of the argument.'

Anna: 'Why did you think that the other argument weighed more?'

Tracy: 'I think I based my opinion on how much we knew already. How much information and how much data we had been able to obtain from that first part of the trial and the few patients we had. And if you take that into consideration and look at what we had actually been able to generate, I think then I had to really consider what is the likelihood if we dose another 3,4,5 patients that within that dataset you would actually be able to have a very clear-cut conclusion. And I think for me, the likelihood was quite low.'[117]

The practice of drug development is generally characterized by a realist ontology where trials are conducted to discover the potential hidden – and inherent – within them. As shown in the ethnographic descriptions in this section, the epistemological assumption is that this potential can be uncovered by scientific testing, precise measurements and observations. However, the foundation for ethical judgment in these examples in particular and within the world of drug development in general is a space of imaginaries of a treatment that does not (and may never) exist (cf. Taussig et al. 2013:4). And when that imaginary dissolves, as Tracy describes, the legitimacy of the trial disappears.

At the meeting, Tracy and her colleagues' positions came to weigh heavily in the decision making of the group. If the data from the next three patients could have helped Tracy and her colleagues select the next molecule and, as Helen pointed out, perhaps save some patients from undergoing similar testing in the future, then a continuation of the trial with the next patients could have been accepted by the clinical trial team. However, when the information was not vital for Tracy and her colleagues and when the expectations for the conclusiveness of the results were likewise mediocre, the judgment of what would be the 'right course of action' changed. Thus, the decision included a number of factors that were weighed against each other. The tipping point, however, seemed to be whether or not there was a potential for a new product for patients.

---

[117] Interview with Clinical trials officer, Autumn 2017.

Thus, the process of judgment takes the same shape throughout the argumentation at the meeting: as long as there is a potential solution for patients in sight – even when that potential lies far out in the future and is as uncertain as a new, untested molecule – then the risk for the patients can be justified. As a clinical trial officer from the trial team explains in an interview after the meeting:

> 'We were all curious to see the results, because every new patient gave us more information, but we said that our curiosity cannot drive our decision if ultimately, we are not putting the drug on the market.'[118]

I find this notion of 'putting the drug on the market' noteworthy when in fact what is being discussed is whether the trial may inform the selection of a new molecule, which - I would say - is rather far from becoming a new drug on the market. Thus, it is the potential itself that is central. As anthropologist Kalindi Vora (2013) notes, the organizing metaphors through which we conceive our reality tie into the formation of social relationships and relationships of power (Vora 2013:100). In a study of surrogacy in India, Vora demonstrates how metaphors of the uterus as a machine that can be put to work, somehow separately from the woman carrying the child, paves the way for an understanding of surrogacy as morally sound, as well as they provide legal justification for detaching the surrogate mother from the unborn child. Within the context of clinical trials, the organizing metaphors of 'putting a drug on the market' and 'making medicine to help patients' likewise contribute to shaping the understanding of such trials as morally sound and even necessary.

As argued by Morgan (2013), certain notions of potentiality bear within them a necessity to help this potential realize itself (see also Taussig et al. 2013). Morgan offers an example from Catholic moral philosophy, where an understanding of the foetus as a human being with the potential to live paves the way for a political stance against abortion. The power of the foetus as a human being as an organizing metaphor is that understanding the foetus as human creates a commitment to protect this human being. Similarly, I would argue that the potential of being able to 'make medicine to help patients' and 'putting a drug on the market' creates a commitment to at least try to do so, hereby legitimizing the entire endeavour of clinical trials. However, as an organizing metaphor, this likewise creates an equivalent decision to cease trying when realizing that the potential is unlikely to realize itself. Thus, the organizing metaphor of potentiality is a driver for conducting clinical trials but also a driver for terminating them, as we have seen in this last ethnographic example in this chapter. Moreover, as the reader may have noticed, within these excerpts, the trial participants are not referred to as 'subjects'

---

[118] Interview with Clinical trials officer, Autumn 2017.

but as 'patients'. And consideration for the patient shifts from a focus on benefits accruing to the future, abstract patient to focusing on benefitting the current, concrete trial-participating patient.

> The meeting has lasted for the full hour that was planned. It is 15.33 Friday afternoon, and Eric starts to sum up. He concludes that the opinion of the project team is that it is not the right decision to continue with the next three patients and that he will communicate this view to the governance body above them, who will make the final decision. 'Sorry for the bad news', Eric says, 'I appreciate all the useful input. And on that note, I wish you all a very good weekend'. Everyone mumbles 'You too', and Eric hangs up the phone. People quickly exit the conference room without talking to each other, seeming to hurry to get to the fast approaching weekend.

5.8. Concluding remarks

As we have seen within this chapter, the understanding among clinical trials officers is that the patient is of outmost importance. Throughout this chapter, I have unfolded how this patient focus finds expression, and how in practice, the future patient gains priority over the real-time trial subject. Within clinical trials officers' aspirations to help patients as well as within the legal frameworks surrounding their work, I argued, is embedded a weighing of risks for the present 'trial subject' that are held up against the possible benefits of the future patient as well as for society, and this is where the concept of ordinary ethics has aided the analysis. By analyzing the taken-for-granted understandings within a vocational community of practice among clinical trials officers, that are also codified into laws and enacted in practical daily work, I moved closer to understanding their ethical orientations. As Lambek (2010a) argues, in order to understand the ethical aspects of human life, anthropologists must study practices and judgments as they unfold in ordinary, everyday situations. It is these kinds of situations that I have described in this chapter to illustrate the ordinary ethical practice of clinical trials officers.

However, 'ethics' does in fact also become explicit in situations when this ordinary flow of practice and agreement is breached (Lambek 2010a:2). For example, as described early in this chapter, I have heard numerous accounts of the medical experiments conducted on concentration camp inmates during the Second World War, and clinical trials officers make a concerted effort to distance themselves from these events in arguments for why legislation and the GCP guidelines are needed. Such situations, I would argue, only underscore Lambek's argument that the extraordinary is inevitably linked to the

ordinary, and that what is consciously defined as *un*-ethical can be understood only in relation to an ordinary, unnoticed backdrop of the ethical.

Thus, extraordinary moments, where actions are recognized as explicitly ethical or unethical, must be preceded by an ordinary ethics with common-sense criteria that can be breached. Although the ordinary and extraordinary are not easily separated, I have strived to outline the ordinary ethics as expressed in the criteria and judgments that are part of everyday work and which are undertaken as common-sensical actions without active deliberations about the ethical nature of these actions. I distinguish the extraordinary from the ordinary as moments where deliberations take place around issues explicitly stated as ethical dilemmas.

I ended this chapter with one such extraordinary moment, where clinical trial officers explicitly discussed an *ethical* dilemma and where some of their available choices were rejected precisely because they were assessed as *un*-ethical. The tipping point for the clinical trial team in this example, which distinguished this case from the ordinary focus on the future patient, was the sudden absence of a future patient that could be helped, as there was no longer a product in sight; the ethical dilemma was tied to the sudden loss of potentiality.

Within this chapter, I have begun to answer the second research question[119] by exploring how Ferring's ethics program is interpreted and enacted as it travels into the vocational community of practice among clinical trials officers. I have shown how clinical trials officers exercise practical, ethical judgments and how they tie the values and understandings of their vocational community to Ferring's ethics program. I demonstrated that the clinical trials officers' understandings of the ethics program are informed by the logics that reign within their vocational community and in the legislative frameworks that surround their work.

Returning to the definitions of corporate ethics programs brought out in Chapter 2, most scholars distinguish between compliance-oriented programs that focus more on detection and punishment of legal wrongdoings versus values-oriented programs more oriented towards creating a supportive environment for guiding employees' behaviour (Martineau et al. 2016; Paine 1994; Weaver and Treviño 1999). As argued in Chapter 4, Ferring's ethics program is a highly values-oriented program; perhaps even more so due to the Scandinavian national cultural heritage and the Global Ethics Office's

---

[119] 'How is Ferring's ethics program interpreted and enacted as it travels into different vocational communities and across levels in the organizational hierarchy?'

educational approach. However, despite previous research highlighting that a values-oriented approach is more likely to foster ethical reflection and conduct (Stansbury and Barry 2007; Weaver and Treviño 1999), I found that the efforts of the ethics program to stimulate ethical reflection among the clinical trials officers were dismissed as sheer 'common sense'; they considered that 'ethics' was taken care of by GCP and the legislative requirements for Independent Ethics Committees (IECs) to approve the clinical trials. They did not perceive themselves as in need of an ethics program, as they were ethical already.

Weaver and Treviño (1999) warn that the threats of punishment in compliance-oriented programs may be counterproductive, as employees will feel distrusted by this approach and may potentially rebel against these programs as a result. However, what I found is that a values-oriented program can also be counterproductive if the values it seeks to disseminate are perceived as superfluous or paternalistic. Among the clinical trials officers, the ethics program was disregarded; not because it was too compliance-based or too rigid, as Weaver and Treviño found, but because it was perceived to be redundant. The ethics was simply 'common sense'.

As argued by Stansbury and Barry (2007), ethics programs that rely on control mechanisms and more coercive measures may diminish employees' ability to tackle ethical questions, as these methods tend to remove employees' accountability because they separate their reflection on ethical issues from the execution of their daily work.

Similarly, the organizational environment seems to play a significant role for clinical trials officers, as the presence of the GCP guidelines, legislation and particularly the IECs seems to remove the ethical responsibility from clinical trials officers and delegate this responsibility to IECs. This resembles the separation of ethical reflection and daily work that Stansbury and Barry (2007) warned against.

Thus, the values-oriented ethics program is disregarded because of the aforementioned understanding that it is common sense and because there is already a strong compliance-oriented environment surrounding the work of clinical trials officers. Scholars have defined such environments as High Reliability Organizations (HRO), i.e. organizations working in fields where mistakes can have severe consequences and which therefore operate with strict procedures for ensuring compliance with processes and policies (Griffith 2015; Weick and Sutcliffe 2007). Examples of such organizations are nuclear power plants, hospitals or airports.

With their close attention to monitoring, following procedures and regimes for registering data, actions and decisions, the clinical trials officers also work in a high-reliability environment, and this contextual factor seems to contribute to how the ethics program is understood among clinical trials officers.

Moreover, their self-understanding of working to help patients is another contextual factor that affects their view of the ethics program.

Based on these insights, I would argue that in order to understand the workings of corporate ethics programs, we need to understand them in wider terms than either compliance-oriented or values-oriented. As outlined in Chapter 2, Martineau et al. (2016) have recently pointed out that ethics programs in organizations rarely bear characteristics of only one of these two ideal types. Martineau et al. have suggested that ethics programs should be defined according to the composition of various ethics *practices* (e.g. detection practices, training practices and structural practices). While this is an important nuance of the dichotomist conception of compliance-orientation versus values-orientation, the insights from this and the previous chapter indicate that this distinction is not sufficient. Two further nuances are needed to further specify the conceptualization of ethics programs.

First, as demonstrated in Chapter 4, Ferring's ethics program bore strong traits from Scandinavian national culture, and other scholars have found similar national cultural traits in ethics (and compliance) practices in previous studies (see e.g. Barmeyer and Davoine 2011; Helin and Sandström 2010; Nakhle and Davoine 2016). Therefore, I would argue that ethics programs should be understood as contextually contingent. Although what I found in the previous chapter was a national culture contingency, I deliberately do not phrase it as (national) culturally contingent, as national culture is not the only contextual parameter that may be relevant for how ethics programs are shaped.

Second, I would argue that the environment in which the ethics program operates needs to be taken into consideration when understanding such programs. In the case of clinical trials officers presented in this chapter, the organizational environment was highly compliance-oriented, which seemed to influence how the staff perceived the ethics program. Thus, if the scientific purpose of defining an ethics program is also to predict responses to this program, I would argue that such programs should be defined according to their values- or compliance-oriented ethics practices comprising these programs (cf. Martineau et al. 2016) *as well* as in terms of the characteristics of the organizational environment in which this practices are enacted. Although contextual elements are not strictly part of these practices themselves, and thus not part of the conceptualization of ethics programs, I would argue that the organizational context into which they are introduced needs to be systematically linked to such conceptualizations due to their importance for how programs may be received by those subjected to them. Thus, an ethics program may consist of both values- and compliance-oriented ethics practices, as

pointed out by Martineau et al. (2016). Moreover, these practices operate in an environment which most likely will comprise several characteristics but which may bear certain traits more strongly, as was the case among the clinical trials officers introduced in this chapter, where the characteristic of the organizational environment as highly compliance-oriented was particularly present.

Recalling Weaver and Treviño's definition of ethics programs as control systems, cited in Chapter 2, they write that ethics programs 'aim to create predictability in employee behaviour and correspondence between specific employee behaviours and more general organizational goals and expectations' (Weaver and Treviño 1999:317; for a similar definition, see Kaptein 2009), I suggest that this definition be enhanced by adding a tripartite conceptualization. The three elements of the definition of ethics programs would thus comprise:

(1) Ethics programs are:

Normative and contextually contingent control systems aimed at creating predictability in employee behaviour and a correspondence between specific employee behaviours and more general organizational goals and expectations (cf. Weaver and Treviño 1999).

(2) Ethics programs contain:

A combination of ethics practices[120] which are often characterized as being either predominantly values-oriented or predominantly compliance-oriented

(3) Ethics Programs work:

Differently depending on whether the organizational context into which they are introduced is predominantly compliance-oriented or predominantly values-oriented.

I will return to this definition in Chapter 9 and now turn to another vocational community of practice.

---

[120] As defined by Martineau et al. as 'any rule, method, procedure, process, management tool, structure, or institution that presents an essential teleological character aiming at increasing consciousness, reflection and ethical behavior in an organization, at the individual, collective and strategic levels' (Martineau et al. 2016:793).

6. The Ordinary Ethics of Pharmaceutical Marketing and Sales Officers

6.1. Introduction and a note on coding and ethnographic examples

In this chapter, I explore how Ferring's ethics program is interpreted and enacted as it travels into a vocational community of practice among marketing and sales officers. In following marketing and sales officers in their daily work, I will focus on how they establish criteria for judging right and wrong through their daily practice, as well as how Ferring's ethics program is interpreted according to the same criteria. Hereby, I continue explorations of the second research question[121]. We shall see that the judgments made by these marketing and sales officers articulate a moral economy based on reciprocal exchange with healthcare professionals, in which certain goods are deemed legitimate, and even desirable, while other goods are viewed as inappropriate for exchange. The chapter also demonstrates how marketing and sales officers make sense of Ferring's ethics program in light of this moral economy.

Before describing how the marketing and sales officers articulate their ordinary ethics, let me provide a brief note on the analytical process and how the ethnographic examples in this chapter were selected. I have drawn on a number of codes specifically related to the marketing and sales department, systematized as a code group around 'perceived ethical dilemmas in marketing and sales' and a code group around how to influence customers. However, a number of codes on which I have drawn in this chapter conflate with the ones used in the previous chapter. For example, the code group around 'working with the purpose of helping people' contains just as many coded excerpts from marketing and sales related situations and interviews as from those related to clinical trials. It is thus a commonly expressed theme among both clinical trials officers and marketing and sales officers although, as I will show in the following, it takes on different expressions. The same coincidence of themes among the two vocational communities occurs for the code group around 'regulators and regulatory circumstances defining work', as regulation also plays a central role for marketing and sales officers' experienced room for manoeuvring. The code group 'reciprocity, relationships and giving back to doctors' is a central

---

[121] 'How is Ferring's ethics program interpreted and enacted as it travels into different vocational communities and across levels in the organizational hierarchy?'.

theme which is particularly pronounced among marketing and sales officers.[122] The ethnographic examples presented in this chapter thus represent common themes that have been prevalent throughout the fieldwork among marketing and sales officers. They have been selected because of their illustrative capacities that are well-suited for the dissertation format. The first ethnographic example depicts the only event of its kind that I participated in during the fieldwork, which was an educational event for healthcare professionals sponsored by Ferring with promotional purposes. This event, while unique for my fieldwork, nevertheless encapsulates all the common themes that were found in the remainder of the fieldwork. Therefore, the event has been included in this chapter, as it offers a coherent introduction to the themes that are laid out in the chapter. As I strive to illustrate in this chapter, I have defined marketing and sales officers as a vocational community of practice, as they share daily work routines, and because they have common reference points in historical events that shape their understanding of their own work, similarly to the community of clinical trials officers. As community members, they further share the experience of being governed by increasingly tighter regulations; some of which will be outlined in this chapter.

The ethnographic examples to be presented in this chapter are best understood if the reader has some knowledge of the key emic concepts of the pharmaceutical industry as well as the key tools in pharmaceutical marketing and sales. I will therefore describe some of these concepts and tool before going on to discuss ordinary ethics among the marketing and sales officers.

6.2. Key concepts and activities in pharmaceutical marketing and sales

Pharmaceutical marketing and sales as a corporate function has the overall aim of increasing sales of pharmaceutical products. This work consists of a broad range of activities in which healthcare professionals (HCPs)[123] of many kinds are targeted, depending on the therapeutic area of the product that the marketing and sales function intends to sell. However, particularly two types of HCPs are targeted, known as *Key Opinion Leaders* and *Prescription Leaders*. As briefly mentioned in Chapter 3, the Key Opinion Leaders (in everyday language referred to as KOLs) are experts within their fields. They are highly respected within their communities and thus potentially effective 'ambassadors' for pharmaceutical companies. KOLs are often medical doctors with important journal publications and research projects on their CVs. Although they may never endorse a specific product, they may endorse

---

[122] Please find a list of the codes applied in this chapter and examples of coded material in Appendix 3 and 5.
[123] Healthcare professionals are e.g. nurses, therapists, general practitioners, specialized medical doctors, etc.

a specific compound or type of treatment. As the name implies, these doctors are assumed to 'lead opinions' of other medical doctors and to thus have a significant influential capacity.

The prescription leaders, on the other hand, are those who may look towards the KOLs for guidance on how to treat certain conditions. The prescription leaders are often general practitioners and thus the direct decision-makers on whether or not to prescribe a specific product to their patients (Lakoff 2005:198).

The tendency within regulation of pharmaceutical sales and marketing, to which I shall return later in this chapter, is to control and – in some cases – disclose relationships of exchange between pharmaceutical companies and HCPs so as to ensure that the companies do not apply any undue influence on a prescription leader to prescribe (or recommend) their product. However, the main reason why pharmaceutical companies target KOLs, as noted by Sismondo (2013), is not for the company to influence the KOLs to increase their prescription rates; rather, it is for the KOLs to influence other physicians to prescribe and to lead professional opinions in a direction beneficial for the company. If a company manages to engage the KOLs successfully, they will work as a kind of extension of the marketing department.

Among the tools applied in pharmaceutical marketing and sales, some of the most widespread activities are for sales representatives to visit general practitioners and clinics (prescription leaders) and to attend congresses and other types of marketing events.

Similar to other fields of science, an important element of career advancement for many specialized HCPs is to conduct research and publish scientific papers. However, similar to academia in general, public budgets for research are gradually diminishing, and universities as well as university hospitals are increasingly relying on external grants to fund their research. With this development in mind as well as the increasing regulation continuously limiting the spaces for interaction between HCPs and industry, to which I shall return later in this chapter, the pharmaceutical industry is moving away from more traditional marketing channels and are focusing more on establishing partnerships around research projects or solutions development with HCPs specialized in the companies' therapeutic areas of interest. Per definition, a partnership is about more or less equal parties collaborating on a project in which they have mutual interest. The notion of partnership is thus far away – at least by definition – from more traditional sales and marketing relationships where one party strives to influence the other. Nonetheless, the partnership is a central element of contemporary marketing practices.

One type of partnership between industry and HCPs are the so called 'Phase 4 trials' (also called 'investigator initiated trials' if they have been initiated by an HCP rather than by the company). As described in the previous chapter, a clinical trial has three phases before it can be approved by the authorities. The basic concept of a Phase 4 trial, therefore, is to conduct a trial once the drug has been approved and is already on the market. The purpose of these trials can be many. Sometimes, it is to test the compound on a more varied patient population than in the earlier trials[124], while on other occasions it can be to test one of the secondary endpoints that were measured in the original first three phases of the trial. But either way, most often, since these trials are not a legal requirement, they constitute an investment to increase sales of an existing drug; either by conducting a trial in a large hospital where HCPs hereby obtain experience (and grow a preference for) a specific drug or by providing a research opportunity to an influential KOL, who will subsequently publish the results and hereby help making the drug known.

Lastly, the pharmaceutical industry also largely supports KOLs and prescription leaders' participation in educational activities and conferences. These events are not sales events and are not arranged by the company, but are supported with grants; perhaps in an effort to increase the seeming independence of the event from the industry. These are educational events focused on e.g. one therapeutic area or on a specific condition. However, companies will focus on supporting or sponsoring events that have content relevant for their therapeutic areas, and from a marketing perspective, the goal is for the HCPs to better understand how to diagnose a certain condition, such that more patients will be diagnosed and subsequently be in need of treatment. All attending HCPs may not prescribe the donating company's drug, but the entire market will grow if more HCPs know about a certain condition. This chapter takes its point of departure in one such event.[125]

---

[124] As mentioned in the previous chapter, in most Phase 2 and 3 trials, more vulnerable patients are often excluded, as drug addiction or critical illness (beyond the condition that the drug intends to treat) may interfere with the results of the trial.

[125] This process of defining aspects of human life as treatable has come to be known as medicalization, which - according to sociologist Peter Conrad – is 'defining a problem in medical terms, usually as an illness or disorder, or using a medical intervention to treat it' (Conrad 2005:3). In an effort to narrow down one aspect of this concept, some scholars have called attention to pharmaceuticalization (cf. Bell and Figert 2012), which is 'the process by which social, behavioral or bodily conditions are treated, or deemed to be in need of treatment/intervention, with pharmaceuticals by doctors, patients, or both' (Abraham 2010:604). Thus, as Mulinari (2016) writes, whereas medicalization refers to the expansion of diagnosing and medical jurisdiction, pharmaceuticalization refers to 'the shaping of markets for drugs produced and sold by pharmaceutical companies' (Mulinari 2016:74).

6.3. Performance and practice – a window into the ordinary ethics of pharmaceutical marketing and sales

As an introduction to pharmaceutical marketing and sales (M&S) and a window into the ordinary ethics of M&S officers in Ferring, I invite the reader to follow me into an educational event with scientific content, sponsored by Ferring but not formally categorized as a marketing and sales activity, despite its, I dare say, obvious function as such. I ask the reader to pay attention to four themes that emerge in the field description and on which I will elaborate in the remainder of this chapter:

1. The way in which regulation of pharmaceutical M&S activities is experienced by the marketing and sales officers as much stricter than in the past. Later in the chapter, I outline current legislation and point to the way in which certain 'goods' are deemed appropriate for pharmaceutical companies to provide to HCPs while other goods are considered inappropriate. Moreover, I demonstrate how legislation is sometimes seen as contradictory to the Ferring Philosophy's statements about putting people first.

2. The company´s emphasis on the event as 'scientific' and non-luxurious. As I will elaborate later, this is a central feature of M&S officers' rationalization of their activities, and I use this in order to demonstrate the moral economy inherent in the judgments of pharmaceutical marketing and sales officers. Moreover, I demonstrate how marketing and sales officers distance themselves from Ferring's ethics program because of the criteria within this moral economy.

3. The exchange that seems to take place between the attending HCPs and the sponsoring company, a relationship which echoes some of the reciprocal gift exchange relationships described in classical anthropological theory.

4. The social bond and relationships that exist between HCPs and M&S officers attending the event, which I will underscore in order to elaborate the argument about reciprocal exchange. Moreover, I use this to point to the contradictory conviction among M&S officers that legislation has been tightened while in fact, valuable assets continue to be exchanged.

6.3.1. The educational event

I have been invited to participate in an educational event in central Europe that will be attended by a number of external HCPs and staff from Ferring's entities worldwide. At interviews and informal meetings before the event with some of the people involved in arranging it, I was told numerous times

that it is not Ferring's event. The event was described on several occasions as 'highly scientific' and, I was told, bears little resemblance to the former stereotypes of pharmaceutical events with champagne and oysters. My informants explain that the event is sponsored by a grant from Ferring, and they help a bit with logistics, but that Ferring has no influence whatsoever on the agenda, and the event is arranged entirely by a local university in the country where it takes place. From these conversations, I got the impression that Ferring would be rather invisible at this event. As will be described in the following, however, their presence was rather noticeable:

I arrived in the small Central European town late in the evening last night and now, it is 7 AM. I am meeting up with Janine from Ferring and Sheila from an external events company in charge of logistics related to the event, which will commence in a few hours. We take a taxi to the venue at the local university where the event will take place, and I help them carry suitcases and boxes full of printed agendas, name tags and other event-related materials into the venue.

I assist in preparing the room for the event by distributing note pads and setting up a work station for registration of participants. Janine is focused on every detail, making sure that everything looks straight and neat, and she instructs me how to place the notepads and pens nicely on the chairs. She explains that it is important for her that everything is in order. 'It's not a Ferring event, but it would be good if they remembered the event and thought of Ferring', she says with a smile.

We put all the name tags on a table. They are colour coded, so that it is possible to distinguish the various categories of attendees. All the blue name tags are Ferring representatives, and all the red ones are the presenters. I recognize the name of a Ferring employee from the non-commercial part of the company as one of the presenters, but her name tag is red, meaning that she has been categorized as a presenter and not as a Ferring staff member. My own name tag is blue, and all the doctors have black name tags.

As people start arriving, I notice that many who arrive together take a blue and a black name tag; i.e. that a doctor arrives together with a Ferring representative. In some cases, it seems that they know each other well; for example those ones who came all the way

from New Zealand, and I think to myself that it makes sense that you get to know each other when travelling such a long distance together. Other groups seem more formal with each other as they converse over the morning coffee, while for some, there is less interaction between doctors and Ferring representatives.

At the train station last night when I arrived, I had a small conversation with another passenger, as we were both uncertain about what train to take from the airport. Now, I see him in the crowd and go over to say, 'Hello', and we both laugh at the coincidence that we were going to the same event. I ask him if he is also from Ferring, and he nods and says 'Jaa jaa, Ferring' in a thick German accent and smiles. I notice that he is wearing a black name tag (i.e. he is a doctor) and realize that he must have misunderstood my question. However, there is no doubt that he is aware of Ferring's involvement in this event.

Later, an interviewee from marketing and sales explains to me that they have selected the doctors to attend this event based on sales data from different regions. The selected doctors have come from those regions where the sales of Ferring's drug to treat the condition being discussed at this event are low.

The first session starts, and the presenter is talking about the condition and how he managed to treat it with a specific compound. The compound he mentions and praises is the same as the active ingredient in one of Ferring's drugs, and I am surprised about how he mentions it so openly. I scribble in my notebook and think that I have encountered something unusual. As the day progresses, however, most of the other presentations also mention this compound in one form or another.

The next session is introduced by a Ferring representative, who explains that he had heard the next presenter at a conference not long ago and that he recommended to the university in charge of this event today that this person be invited to speak. This is one of the few sessions that is not focused on research results about the compound also found in Ferring's drug, but it still surprises me that the Ferring representative has made suggestions for the session, as it has been stressed in interviews beforehand that the event is planned entirely by the university and that Ferring has no influence on the agenda.

Some of the presenters fall within the category of the aforementioned KOLs and have collaborated extensively with Ferring on clinical trials and research projects in the past. On the lunch break, there is ample activity around the KOLs who have presented and several HCPs are queuing up to talk to them.

The HCP whom I had met on the airport train is standing alone, so I take the opportunity to go over and talk to him. I ask him how he got invited, and he explains that he has been invited by someone from Ferring. 'But he isn't here', he says and asks if I know if there is anyone from Austria there. I confirm that there is and start looking for an Austrian Ferring representative whom I had seen this morning together with another HCP. As I try to locate her in the crowd, the HCP says that he was wondering why he has not been contacted by them. It seems that he was expecting the Austrian Ferring representative to reach out to him.

I finally give up trying to find her, and after telling him, he laughs and says that it is all right, he doesn't need to be taken care of. Nevertheless, I get the impression that he would have actually liked to be contacted, having a natural conversation partner at the event, and I also see him standing alone in the following breaks.

I ask him why he came to this event, and he explains that he heard about a new product that Ferring has and wanted to hear more about it, but that it must have just been a relaunch of the existing product because it is really an old product that they are talking about at this event, he says and smiles.

Afterwards, while writing up my notes, I wonder if it was the Ferring sales representative who had introduced him to a new product during a visit and had suggested to him that he participate. I regret not having asked about this. Either way, his participation was driven by an interest in a new product, so – I would argue - although it may not be a Ferring event on paper, he was very much attending a Ferring event and not just a university event.

During the lunch break, we start talking about my research, and I explain to him why I am there, so that he is aware why I am asking him questions and what they will be used for. He, in turn, explains that in his country, every year medical doctors must collect 50

'points' in educational activities in order to maintain their prescription certification. [126] He explains that there are evening classes lasting a couple of hours, but that these only give 1 or perhaps 2 points. Participating at one of these educational events that we are both attending could give up to 8 points for a single event. I ask him if he earns points for this event, and he smiles and says that he will not, because he has already obtained all his points for this year.

Incidents like these made me curious about the relations between doctors and the pharmaceutical industry when doctors' prescription rights depend on points that can be earned by attending such industry sponsored events, with their obvious marketing emphasis, however subtle.

After our conversation, I make my way over to the lunch, and as Janine has emphasized to me several times before the event, it is far from the lavish image of pharmaceutical marketing departments serving champagne and sushi. There are some different, small not-great-not-bad sandwiches and a fruit salad where all the pieces, despite different colours, taste the same. At the far end of the room, there are big 10-liter self-serving containers for coffee and tea. No waiter service here.

Towards the end of the lunch break, I speak to Janine from Ferring, who asks me what I have gotten out of being here. I explain to her that I have found the event interesting because it is not formally a Ferring event, but that no participant seems to have any doubts about Ferring's involvement in it. I also explain that some people find relations between the industry and doctors problematic, and that I find it interesting to experience these relations from the inside. 'Sure, but you can see that we don't hang posters and roll ups everywhere, so it's not a marketing event', she replies. I tell her about the doctor whom I had spoken to and that he seemed to think that it was a Ferring event. Janine leans back in the chair, crosses her arms and in a tone of exasperation says that sometimes the doctors have trouble figuring it out, but this is *not* a Ferring event.

At first, I think that this is something she is saying for my sake because of my presence there as a researcher. But she repeats this statement several times. For example, one of the HCPs points out that it is very hot in the conference room, and Janine replies that it is

---

[126] This is a fairly common practice in many countries and is known as 'continued medical education'.

indeed not an ideal room, and had it been a Ferring event, it would have been held in another venue, again stressing to him that this is *not* a Ferring event.

She turns to me again and repeats that at these events, there is no luxury. 'But of course we take good care of people', she says, explaining that one of the KOLs with whom Ferring has worked for many years is currently recovering from a severe illness. He arrived at the hotel already at 10 AM, and in order to give him a chance to rest and not wait for the normal check-in at 2 PM, Ferring had booked the room for him from the night before. In general, she speaks with great care about these valued partners, and it is clear from her descriptions of past activities and events that they have a long-standing relationship.

Back in the conference room, the Ferring employee mentioned earlier, who introduced one of the speakers, is now moderating a session. Also on the agenda is an independent consultant who – I realize when I speak to her later - has written her PhD dissertation with Ferring and has worked in the company for several years before starting her own firm. There is also another researcher who recently defended her thesis. She ends her presentation with a slide giving Ferring's contact details and a 'Thank you' to Ferring, who has sponsored her research. In other words – yet another mention of the company.

During the next coffee break, I speak to two clinical trial officers who I know from Denmark and who are also attending the event. We speak a bit about my research, and one of them explains that before, when attending such events in her former work places, companies would always give doctors large gift baskets. Now the hospitality regulations have become stricter. 'Now, you are lucky if you get a cup of coffee', she says, offering a 'toast' with me with her mug of mediocre coffee taken from one of the large coffee containers.

After the event, I am invited for dinner with the KOLs who have been presenting, a few of the university staff and some of the Ferring employees involved in organizing the event. It is clear that they all know each other well and enjoy each other's company, and during the dinner, they are already brainstorming about the next event they will arrange around

this topic. Their enthusiasm gives me the impression that they are mutually interested in collaborating around such events. [127]

6.3.2. A few notes on the example

Several points can be drawn from my observations at this event. First, as explained earlier, the educational activities offered by the company were not formally categorized as 'corporate marketing activities' but nonetheless functioned as such. The fact that the education that was offered was centred on the functionalities of the very compound that was the active ingredient in a Ferring drug was certainly no coincidence. It makes the event work as a piece in the marketing puzzle. Thus, the company might offer the HCPs free participation and travel to such events, but it also has the power to decide what types of events they will sponsor as well as which HCPs are invited to the event. Moreover, even the mere existence of such events, the financial support for arranging them as well as the significant investment in hours spent by various Ferring employees who attend alongside the doctors suggests that such an investment is worthwhile. So why was this event not formally categorized as a marketing event? Why was a local university in charge of the program? And why was it repeatedly stressed to me that this event was 'highly scientific' and non-extravagant? The answer, I learned, is that legislative frameworks prohibit pharmaceutical companies from arranging such events for HCPs alone, and that they need a university partner to give the event legitimacy as educational.

Second, the event served as an exemplification of the aforementioned relationship with KOLs that pharmaceutical companies strive to establish and maintain. In the ethnographic example above, seen from a marketing perspective, the KOL engagement has been rather successful, as these KOLs function as spokespersons for the compound used in Ferring's products. However, this is not necessarily an expression of a questionable relationship with unscientific doctors. It is the expression of a targeted sponsoring of research that has led to a relationship of mutual appreciation, and the success (from a marketing perspective) of a long-standing relationship. Ferring has sponsored research projects led by this university (such as the newly graduated PhD from the university who had been sponsored by Ferring), which is why their research is focused on Ferring-relevant topics.

In short, if the event had been arranged in collaboration with KOLs who had conducted numerous trials sponsored by Ferring, the presentations at the event would have most come from these trials, and the agenda would thus automatically be Ferring-relevant. Hence, although the content is

---

[127] Based on fieldnotes from Autumn 2017. Please note that the countries mentioned in the example have been changed for the sake of anonymity.

educational and planned by a university on paper, the reality is that this university is a close partner for Ferring and that the agenda items reflect this partnership.

Third, besides the content of the educational event itself, a crucial benefit for the attending HCPs was the opportunity for them to interact with these KOLs; an opportunity that many took, as exemplified by the queues around the KOLs on the breaks, with HCPs waiting to speak with them. At the same time, as described earlier, by bringing KOLs together with prescription leaders, the intent and assumption was also that the KOLs would indeed lead the opinions of the prescription leaders in a direction desired by the company.

Lastly, the event was an opportunity for company representatives to build relationships with HCPs who had been singled out by marketing and sales departments as special targets within their countries. As exemplified by the HCP from the train station, who was looking for his Austrian compatriots, not all company representatives made use of this opportunity, but the majority of them arrived together, sat together and spoke with one another during the breaks. Further, as I will elaborate later in this chapter, the mere practice of company representatives accompanying doctors indicates that relationship-building is worth the effort.

Whether or not the various offerings work as intended, whether they indeed move opinions and increase prescriptions, is a question that goes beyond the scope of this dissertation. My focus here is on the marketing and sales officers within the company and not on the HCPs whom they seek to influence. However, I have various indications of how their efforts work. For example, after the event, I spoke to a marketing and sales officer who mentioned that she had had difficulties getting a sceptical HCP to try a given Ferring drug when she had visited him in his practice back home. At the conference, this same HCP had revealed to her that he had recently tried prescribing that exact drug to some of his patients, and situations like this indicate that the intended reciprocation from HCPs does indeed occur.

With the event in mind as an empirical backdrop, touching upon the themes that will be laid out in the remainder of this chapter, I will now delve into each theme more thoroughly. In order to contextualize the environment in which marketing and sales officers operate and which contributes to shaping the community of practice among marketing and sales officers, the first theme outlines the principles behind the regulatory framework for their operations.

6.4. Theme no 1: Regulatory frameworks

6.4.1. Distinguishing 'advertising' from 'inappropriate financial relationships'

For the past two decades, legislation on pharmaceutical marketing has developed significantly. In the European Union, the primary principle of the legislation on marketing of medicinal products is that companies must obtain a marketing authorization for any given product before being allowed to place this product on the EU market. This is stated in the EU directive[128] 2001/83/EC (Pilgerstorfer 2017:158). Companies can apply for this authorization via a decentralized procedure to a competent authority in an EU member state or via the centralized procedure to the European Medicines Agency (EMA).[129] When applying to the EMA, marketing authorization can be granted to all European Economic Area states at once.

Advertising practices take many forms beyond the more well-known sales visits to HCPs and free product samples provided by pharmaceutical companies. As can be seen in Article 86 of the directive 2001/83/EC, the European Commission has adopted a rather broad definition of 'advertising' that includes an array of practices, including the sponsorship of scientific events such as the one described earlier. According to this directive:

> 'advertising of medicinal products' shall include any form of door-to-door information, canvassing activity or inducement designed to promote the prescription, supply, sale or consumption of medicinal products; it shall include in particular:
> — the advertising of medicinal products to the general public,
> — advertising of medicinal products to persons qualified to prescribe or supply them,
> — visits by medical sales representatives to persons qualified to prescribe medicinal products,
> — the supply of samples,
> — the provision of inducements to prescribe or supply medicinal products by the gift, offer or promise of any benefit or bonus, whether in money or in kind, except when their intrinsic value is minimal,

---

[128] 2001/83/EC Directive - 2001/83/EC of The European Parliament and of the Council of 6 November 2001 on the Community code relating to medicinal products for human use, Article 6.
[129] Authorizations are granted under Regulation (EC) no 726/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 31 March 2004 laying down Community Procedures for the Authorisation and Supervision of Medicinal Products for Human and Veterinary Use and Establishing a European Medicines Agency.

> — sponsorship of promotional meetings attended by persons qualified to prescribe or supply medicinal products,
>
> — sponsorship of scientific congresses attended by persons qualified to prescribe or supply medicinal products and in particular payment of their travelling and accommodation expenses in connection therewith.'[130]

Thus, it is clear from the legislation that sponsorship of HCPs attendance in scientific congresses and the provision of benefits of other kinds is considered 'advertising', regardless of how such events might be labelled by the companies.

In the United States, which is one of the world's largest pharmaceutical markets, the federal anti-kickback statute has been in place since 1972, prohibiting any person from intentionally offering remuneration to a healthcare provider in exchange for referrals or recommendation of any product or service that is covered by a federal healthcare program (Conn and Vernaglia 2011). In 2010, in connection with the Affordable Care Act, also known as Obamacare, the United States Congress passed the Physician Payment Sunshine Act, most often simply referred to as 'the Sunshine Act'. This legislation requires pharmaceutical companies to collect and disclose information in a publicly available database about their payments to physicians and teaching hospitals (Sismondo 2013). The purpose of the Sunshine Act was to 'deter inappropriate financial relationships' between physicians and the pharmaceutical industry (Hwong et al. 2014:208). What is defined as potentially inappropriate relationships and thus covered by the Act reaches relatively far, and the Sunshine Act requires the disclosure of all 'payments or other transfers of value'.[131]

What is noteworthy is that the Sunshine Act defines as 'values' not only entertainment, honoraria, travel and gifts but also any kind of research collaborations, education, research grants and speaker fees for medical education programs. Thus, the Sunshine Act defines research relationships and speaker fees as values, similar but not equivalent to gifts and entertainment. Furthermore, the Anti-Kickback Statute in the USA is some of the most explicit legislation in the world that points directly at intentional exchanges of values for prescriptions, also known as bribery.

---

[130] Article 86 and 87 of 2001/83/EC.
[131] The Physician Payments Sunshine Act—Section 6002 of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA), https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/PLAW-111publ148/pdf/PLAW-111publ148.pdf

Besides governmentally enforced legislation, in many countries, the pharmaceutical industry is also governed by voluntary codes that are enforced by the industry's own self-regulation systems (Mulinari 2016:79). For example, countries such as Australia, Canada, the Netherlands, Italy and the United Kingdom all have self-regulation systems where regulation is decentralized and distributed among various actors other than the state (cf. Black 2001), whereas marketing activities in other countries, such as France and the USA, are regulated primarily by governmental regulatory agencies with very little or no delegation of regulatory responsibilities to industry organizations. Common to all regions is that the regulation of pharmaceutical marketing is increasing (Mulinari 2016; Zetterqvist and Mulinari 2013).

Although this is merely a brief introduction to this type of legislation, the logic behind it seems to be that relations between healthcare professionals and industry must be regulated and that potential conflicts of interest must be made transparent (cf. the Sunshine Act).

The mechanisms assumed within the notion of 'conflict of interest' is that an HCP might – willingly or unwillingly – come to build a preference for a drug if he or she is provided with certain benefits from a pharmaceutical company.

What is noteworthy within this legislation is how it categorizes a wide array of activities as 'advertising' and 'transfer of values', but nevertheless labels some of these values as appropriate and others as inappropriate.

Marketing tools such as scientific grants, conference participation and research participation are thus considered transfers of value between doctor and pharmaceutical company. However, companies are permitted to transfer such values to doctors as long as it is done within the framework of the legislation. At the same time, the transfer of other values such as travel and entertainment above a certain monetary cost and with non-scientific content, is prohibited.

6.4.2. Appropriate and inappropriate values

There are two perceived 'truths' at play within regulation of pharmaceutical marketing and sales, that I would like to emphasize and which are also, as I will demonstrate later, core to the ordinary ethics of marketing and sales officers in Ferring. The first truth is that a scientific grant, conference or research project is valuable to a physician and thus could lead to a conflict of interest. Therefore, it must be regulated and – in the case of the USA Sunshine Act - disclosed. The second 'truth' at play is that such

values are still appropriate for exchange, while others are not. Hence, Article 94 and 95 of the EU directive state:

> '1. Where medicinal products are being promoted to persons qualified to prescribe or supply them, no gifts, pecuniary advantages or benefits in kind may be supplied, offered or promised to such persons unless they are inexpensive and relevant to the practice of medicine or pharmacy.
>
> 2. Hospitality at sales promotion events shall always be strictly limited to their main purpose and must not be extended to persons other than health-care professionals.
>
> 3. Persons qualified to prescribe or supply medicinal products shall not solicit or accept any inducement prohibited under paragraph 1 or contrary to paragraph 2. 4. Existing measures or trade practices in Member States relating to prices, margins and discounts shall not be affected by paragraphs 1, 2 and 3.'[132]

As we learn from the first point, this legislation specifies that material and non-material goods (gifts, advantages and benefits) may only be provided by a pharmaceutical company to an HCP if they are relevant to the practice of medicine or pharmacy. Moreover, as the second point states, entertainment costs have to be related to a particular promotional event and must not be covered for persons other than the HCPs themselves. In article 95, it is further specified that it is indeed allowed to offer 'hospitality' for scientific or professional events:

> 'The provisions of Article 94(1) shall not prevent hospitality being offered, directly or indirectly, at events for purely professional and scientific purposes; such hospitality shall always be strictly limited to the main scientific objective of the event; it must not be extended to persons other than health-care professionals.'

Thus, only when the value that is exchanged between HCPs and pharmaceutical company is defined as 'professional' or 'scientific' and related to the HCP's practice of medicine, may this value be transferred. As Michael Lambek (2010b) writes, in order to exercise judgment – and in this case legal judgment – there must be criteria, and within these criteria lie the ethical. Usually, Lambek writes, these criteria are

---

[132] 2001/83/EC DIRECTIVE - 2001/83/EC OF the European Parliament and of the Council of 6 November 2001 on the Community code relating to medicinal products for human use, Article 94 and 95.

implicit, but they may also be available for conscious deliberation, as is the case of these legal frameworks.

Within these frameworks, then, exists a judgment about what constitutes a legitimate transfer of value and which kinds of values are inappropriate. From a generalized Western standpoint and with anti-corruption as a strong societal concept in mind, this classification may seem straightforward and almost common-sensical. However, as I will argue throughout this chapter, within this assessment of appropriate and inappropriate lies a strong ethical system of classification not much different from other cosmological systems of classification of the pure and the dangerous, the clean and the dirty, of morally proper acts and taboos (cf. Douglas 2003). Moreover, as Lambek writes, '[a]dhering to taboos is not just, or even primarily, restrictive; nor simply a response to orders' and '[f]ollowing a taboo means both articulating a prohibition in words and shaping one's daily acts to conform to it' (Lambek 2015a:64,66). Similarly, for marketing and sales officers, the legislative distinctions between appropriate and inappropriate ways of selling drugs are not only rules to comply with but also ethical frameworks towards which they aspire in daily practice.

One way to conceptualize these classifications when related to exchange between HCPs and industry is the notion of 'moral economy'; a concept central to social anthropology, and which has been applied by scholars striving to understand processes such as peasant rebellions, gift exchange and redistribution of material and non-material goods (cf. Thompson 1971, Firth 2005; Sahlins 1972; Scott 1985). Despite disagreements over the origin and correct usage of the term (cf. Carrier 2018; Götz 2015), generally, moral economy refers to the underlying values of an economic system, the principles that shape this system and which form the basis for evaluating the legitimacy of a given economic practice. As anthropologist Raymond Firth wrote already in the 1950s, conventions about exchange and the appropriateness of certain goods (material and non-material) to be exchanged or not is primarily a moral order, attached to a social group (Firth 2005:125, 143–44; See also Thompson 1971:79); a conceptualization repeated by other anthropologists through time (see e.g. Keane 2010:71; Sahlins 1972:198–99). Thus, the term 'moral economy' is non-normative and is not implicitly linked to an 'amoral economy' as its opposition. Rather, it refers to the conventions for exchange that are deemed appropriate within a given social group. Throughout this chapter, I will point towards the moral economy inherent not only in the legislative frameworks guiding the work of marketing and sales officers, but also the ways in which they deliberate about their actions.

In this section, my aim has not been to account in detail for the legislative frameworks worldwide governing pharmaceutical marketing. Rather, I have pointed to some examples from major markets in order to outline the formal evaluative criteria against which marketing and sales officers' actions are judged. Although regulation differs in both content and enforcement structures, a commonality among these regulatory efforts is the categorization of certain goods as acceptable and others as inappropriate for exchange with HCPs.

Moreover, as Lambek writes, 'The exercise of judgment is prospective (evaluating what to do, how to live), immediate (doing the right thing, drawing on what is at hand, jumping in), and retrospective (acknowledging what has been done for what it was and is)' (Lambek 2010b:43). The legislative frameworks outlined here are both prospective and retrospective. They have come into place in response to past events (scandals, bribery, abuse) but they are directed towards future actions (let it not happen again).

With a point of departure in this analytical divide, in the following, I will begin an outline of the ordinary ethics of marketing and sales officers in Ferring by highlighting their retrospective (negative) evaluations of past legislative frameworks and industry practices and their prospective and immediate legitimization of current practices.

6.5. Theme no. 2: Marketing and sales in the past and the quest for a scientific sales relation

As mentioned earlier, the entire reason why companies have sales and marketing functions is to increase their sales, and Ferring is no exception. However, as I will demonstrate in the following, the criteria derived from the legislative frameworks outlined in the previous section and the need for the sales relation to be 'scientific' and 'professional' is also emphasized by marketing and sales (M&S) officers in Ferring.

In this section, I will present four vignettes from my ethnographic material in order to provide empirical depth to the different shapes that the understanding of the 'scientific' and 'professional' relation take.

6.5.1.   From 'over the top' to a 'serious' sales relation

> Vivian: 'I have been long time in the industry. Back in the days, there were no rules, and in principle, you could buy the doctor – or at least you could make the most absurd travels. I have been sailing in yachts up and down in Miami and… It was over the top. But

that was the old times, and everybody did it. Now, luckily, a framework has been established for what you can and cannot do, and I think that this means that everyone is competing, first of all equally because there are also smaller firms that have good products and they can't compete on that level. Second of all, it also means that other things have become important. Ferring, for example, spends a lot of money on research and on projects so that we generate something useful. And I actually think that it has made our business more serious that they [the rules] have been established.[133]

Throughout the fieldwork, I have heard similar disapproving accounts of lavish travel arrangements in the past, and almost always these accounts have been accompanied by an appreciative comment similar to the one above about current practices. As the quote illustrates, Vivian distinguishes between the more 'serious' way of interacting with (and influencing) doctors by engaging them in research collaborations and the 'absurd' and 'over the top' activities of the past, where doctors were 'courted' using lavish travel arrangements. Thus, the 'origin myth' of marketing and sales officers contains a fall from grace on which they look back with disapproval, similar to that of clinical trials officers. This common historical reference point is part of the reason why I define M&S officers as a community. Vivian's comment about generating 'something useful' is of interest here in light of her work as an M&S officer. Her job, of course, is to ensure and increase Ferring's sales. Hence, it is noteworthy how she places emphasis on sales activities that are 'useful' beyond the isolated activity of making sales for Ferring but also in a wider scientific context. Moreover, Vivian's use of the word 'serious' indicates a retrospective judgment about the M&S practices of the past as inappropriate, and the current ones as appropriate. Sales activities today are 'serious' in the sense that the sales activity is directly tied to medical research. The 'unserious' counterpart in the luxurious travel arrangements is now a leftover from the 'over the top' past, when things were fast and loose. This quest for the sales relation to be 'serious' is also materialized in the focus of M&S strategies, the working tasks of M&S officers and even in the professional categorizations of these officers:

During an email correspondence with Frank, an M&S officer from Denmark, I notice that his title is different from other M&S officers and that it does not reflect the purpose of his job; namely to ensure and increase sales of one particular drug. Rather, his title is 'project manager', which hints less towards the sales purpose. In practice, his job also consists of tasks that could be categorized as project management, as he is in charge of managing the aforementioned Phase 4 trials that are often used as a

---

[133] Interview with Marketing and Sales officer, Denmark, Autumn 2017.

marketing tool. Thus, despite his organizational affiliation to the marketing and sales team, Frank's title reflects the aim of being, and being seen as, a project partner rather than a sales representative. However, the purpose of the relation is still to increase sales, as the budget for these activities is located in the Marketing and Sales Department, and there is no doubt, as argued earlier, that M&S officers engage in these activities with a clear expectation of making a sale of the firm's products. At the same time, the logic seems to be that the sales relationship is only 'serious' (i.e. appropriate) if the 'goods' that marketing and sales officers offer to HCPs in exchange for increased sales have some kind of scientific or medical character, i.e., that they are related to the partner's medical practice.

Thus, the ordinary ethics lies in the judgment that the mutual benefit should be based on an exchange of not just any goods but only of goods that are 'serious', 'scientific' and 'professional' and thus legitimate. At the same time, the effort to make (and keep) the sales relation scientific is also based on a conviction that this is simply the best way to increase sales, and that non-scientific sales activities are less efficient in contributing to such increase. Merely providing values non-related to medical practice, for example, is not only morally suspect; it is also considered less efficient. For example, in an interview with Carla, an M&S officer from Denmark, we discuss the fact that she is allowed to invite HCPs for dinner at the airport when travelling home with them from conferences or other events, such as the one I introduced in the beginning of this chapter. Carla explains that she is happy to pay for more simple dinners, but that she feels uncomfortable when HCPs sometimes expect her to pay for more extravagant meals. Moreover, in her rationalization about what type of dinner is appropriate for her to pay for as an M&S officer, Carla describes, similar to Vivian earlier, a retrospective judgment about the practices that took place in the past as inappropriate:

> Carla: '... I think it is fair that we pay [for the airport dinner] within the limits that have been set, and I think it's good that these limits exist – they haven't always been there. I have been in this industry for a long time and there have been situations – not here in Ferring but in another company – where I thought, 'Wow, I certainly understand why they are happy to go travelling with the pharma company', because there were... really no limits. And I think this is wrong, because when it gets to that, I can well imagine that some doctors use – and we have also seen this in the industry – use one product instead of another because they got some great travels and things like that... It has happened. But where we are now, I am absolutely certain that nobody is doing it like that anymore. If these doctors start using our product after a trip like this [an event with educational

content], then it is because they feel better prepared for it, better educated. And that's how it should be.

And I am also not going to visit general practitioners just because they want the free lunch that I bring for them. And that's also not how it is anymore. And if I run into one where I think to myself, 'Okay, now I have been here a few times and I just feel that he doesn't care about what I'm saying – he's just looking forward to the big sandwich.' Then I don't want to visit him anymore. It's not worth it. It gives us no sales. So it needs to be win-win; we won't just pay.'[134]

Carla's account is indicative of a general understanding among the marketing and sales officers about their work. She reiterates the distinction articulated by the legislative frameworks between the 'right' way to practice pharmaceutical marketing and sales, where the content of e.g. travel needs to be scientific and related to medical practice, and the 'wrong' M&S practices of the past, where there were 'no limits' to what companies were allowed to pay for. Carla thus operates with a similar logic as the legislative frameworks, where transfers of 'goods' in the shape of scientific conferences and education are appropriate and where other kinds of exchanges are not.

At the same time, Carla reiterates the expectation for the doctor to reciprocate when she explains that the sales visit needs to be 'win-win' and 'worth it'. When she talks about the past, she mentions that some HCPs have prescribed certain drugs because of the extravagant travels that they have received from pharmaceutical companies, and that she deems HCPs reciprocation of such kinds of 'goods' as wrong. Moreover, when talking about the present, she does not believe that the sandwich she brings on her sales visits will have the same effect. It would be illegitimate to compare a luxury trip to a sandwich, but nonetheless, the idea of a some kind of quid pro quo speaks very clearly of the expectation that the values she provides to the HCP should be reciprocated by this HCP in the form of increased prescriptions or at least an interest in trying out the product that she is there to sell.

Related to this wish for the HCP to be interested, or at least open to listening to her sales pitch, is another nuance that deserves mentioning; namely the desire that the HCP is genuine in the sales relation. She speaks with indignation about the HCP who does not care about what she is saying but just wants to get a free lunch, and I often encountered this quest for the relationship to be built on a

---

[134] Interview with marketing and sales officer, Denmark, Winter 2017.

mutual understanding and sincere interest in what the other party has to offer. Robert, a marketing and sales officer whom I interviewed at headquarters, described it as follows:

> Robert: 'The people that you are asking to speak on behalf of your products [often KOLs]. Are they doing it because they really believe in the products? Or is it because they want the honorarium that you are paying them to do it? Or because they are then looking to travel for that… We have a meeting coming up in Hong Kong… Are they doing it because they want to go to Hong Kong? Are they doing it because they really believe in the product? (…) And you know, where does pharma play in, what is the return on investment? So we are paying them to go speak on behalf of Ferring. If they really believe in the product, they are going to do it, because they want other people to know how beneficial it is. They will only do it if they get paid, they'll not do it if they don't get paid. But there's also… There has to be something in it for them, something above and beyond just getting the honorarium. So I think then you have to balance this versus this.. I would say another…'
> Anna: '[interrupting] Just a question, sorry. Why do you think it's important that they… Because if they do their work and say, 'This product is good', even if they don't believe in it? What difference does it make?'
> Robert: 'If they don't believe in it? Well because then you just feel like… 'Cause it's compromising if they are speaking on behalf of Ferring and they don't believe what they're saying, but they are doing it because they want the honorarium or they want these other things, I have a… Maybe it's a moral conflict, maybe not an ethical conflict that someone's promoting a product that they're not using'.[135]

As Robert describes it, he wants to promote his products and for this purpose often uses KOLs as speakers at events. However, the relationship needs to be more than a direct payment for a service – it should be genuine and based on a scientific conviction that Ferring's drug is actually superior. One reason for this, of course, is that a spokesperson who is convinced of the usefulness of the drug will be far more convincing to others. But there is also what Robert calls a moral conflict; that it just does not *feel* right to be paying a KOL for promoting something that he does not believe in. In other words, he finds it wrong for the company to pay for someone who just wants a free trip to Hong Kong, and this expresses a similar judgment, as outlined earlier, that the sales relation should be based on a genuine

---

[135] Interview with marketing and sales officer, Switzerland, Autumn 2017.

scientific interest and not mere exchange of travel and honoraria.

Returning to Lambek, he emphasizes that performative acts[136] are governed by, and constitutive of, criteria for right and wrong. As he writes:

> 'Performance draws on previously established criteria, or felicity conditions, in order to produce its effects. These effects can be understood as committing performers to one particular alternative or set of alternatives out of many, and these commitments in turn inform subsequent evaluations of practice, and thus practical judgment itself, but do not determine practice' (Lambek 2010b:39).

Lambek describes how the performance of a wedding ceremony, for example, instantiates the state of marriage and provides criteria against which the spouses' actions will be evaluated. The performance of the wedding ceremony does not in itself determine that the spouses remain 'faithful', but it entails that certain actions may be evaluated according to such classifications pertaining to the idea of a (monogamous) marriage. Likewise, I would argue that the HCP who accepts a sales representative's visit engages in a situation to which certain criteria are attached. One criteria, as illustrated by Carla's irritation about the HCP who accepted her paid lunch but not her efforts to convince him about her products, and in Robert's concerns about having a speaker who was not really interested in the product, is that the HCP should only accept to enter the sales relation if he or she is truly open to – at least the possibility – of reciprocating the values offered by the sales representative. The fact that the marketing and sales officers are appalled by HCPs who reject the premises of the sales relation, which are established by the sales visit, hints towards the evaluative criteria established in such sales situations.

6.5.2. People and product promotion comes first

The notion of 'win-win' is prevalent throughout the interviews, where marketing and sales officers variously highlight the benefits provided to HCPs and patients while simultaneously emphasizing that the company needs to be able to profit from these. Thus, similar to clinical trials officers, marketing and

---

[136] The notion of performative acts is strongly inspired by Austin's (1976) notion of performative utterances, where he argues that certain utterances are not merely an actor *saying* something but rather an actor *doing* something.

sales officers pay close attention to the benefit for patients and society, but at the same time - and unlike their colleagues working with clinical trials - they are equally focused on contributing directly to company profits. This this notion of the double win becomes visible when observing how marketing and sales officers react to Ferring's ethics program. For example:

> In an interview with Rose, a marketing and sales officer based in Switzerland, I asked her to describe when and how the Ferring Philosophy comes up in her daily work. She brings out an example of a patient assistance program (PAP), where certain patients with limited financial resources can receive treatment at reduced cost or free of charge. [137]

The nature of such programs is subject to debate within the scholarly literature, and some (including Rose) view them as a financial lifeline for patients with no economic means or insurance schemes to cover (often expensive) treatments. Others have criticized these programs for enrolling patients in expensive treatments and discouraging them from choosing cheaper generic alternatives, and for being tools to build markets and create demands that were not there from the outset (Choudhry et al. 2009; Howard 2014; Mulinari 2016). For Rose, a patient assistance program is a financial helping hand for patients in difficult situations, and the fact that Ferring establishes such programs is for her an example of how the company puts people (here, again understood as patients) first, as stated in the Ferring Philosophy:

> Rose: 'In Switzerland, fertility treatments are extremely expensive. And sometimes, you have patients that are diagnosed - mainly young women - that are diagnosed with cancer; breast cancer, mainly. And then at the age of 25, if they go to chemotherapy, they will lose their fertility. So what they can do is that they go through a stimulation, a hormonal stimulation and then they can freeze their eggs. However, you got the news that you got diagnosed with cancer and then you quickly have to decide if you want to go to this hormonal stimulation, and then you maybe also have to pay ten thousand Swiss francs for that. So there's a lot of difficult things to decide in a short time, and we have set up a program which is called [name of program], where we offer [name of drug] more or less – it's not for free because we are not allowed by law to give drugs for free to patients, but at a very low price. And there, people react and say that's really 'People come first', because there we... There are not so many cases – I think we have had 40

---

[137] Local regulation determines if it is allowed to provide products for free or if a minor cost should apply.

now in two years, luckily – but where we do something and we live up to the Philosophy, and that is really appreciated.'[138]

Following this logic, if a patient assistance program is perceived as a helping hand to patients, and as an expression of the Ferring Philosophy, then not allowing such programs would constitute a refusal to help patients. In an interview with Paul, a Chinese marketing and sales officer, he expresses precisely this logic. He tells me that for him, to be ethical is to benefit patients, and as is visible below, he further equates this notion of 'benefitting patients' with the establishment of a patient assistance program. Therefore, he is also left astonished when he suddenly receives 'pushback' from Ferring's Legal Department, who does not agree with his definition of being ethical:

> Paul: 'For example, I just talked about that we want to run a patient assistance program in China, because we have a product, [product name] – it's quite expensive compared with the Chinese medical system. And we want to let those kinds of relatively poor people get this product and some teaching. (…) This kind of program is kind of a charity foundation organization. And then for China, our government officers accepted, and lots of HCPs they liked it, and patients appreciated it, but it's questioned by our global legal people; they think this is not quite ethical. I don't know why.'
> Anna: 'And why did they think it was unethical?'
> Paul: 'Maybe they suspect that you leverage this program to promote your product and gain access.'
> Anna: 'But you do that, right?'
> Paul: '(laughing) But basically our job is to [do this].''[139]

As mentioned earlier, Lambek (2010b), following Austin (1976), points out that speech acts and action are illocutionary. They carry within them imperatives about what to do and what not to do. In this light, what is noteworthy in the quote above is firstly, how Paul reiterates the logic of 'win-win' outlined earlier when describing the double function of the patient assistance program as a kind of charity program on one side and a promotional activity on the other; and that he judges the program's merits based on this double win - for patients and for the company. Second, Paul also emphasizes this product promotion as being the core of his job function, and that the 'ethical' of helping patients that he

---

[138] Interview with marketing and sales officer, Switzerland, Autumn 2017.
[139] Interview with marketing and sales officer, China, Spring 2018.

describes earlier in the interview is hereby complementary to promoting products rather than contradictory of it. The act of helping patients, as understood by marketing and sales officers, thus also seems to be illocutionary and bear within it an imperative to also benefit the company – and vice versa. As Paul says, it is their job as marketing and sales officers to 'leverage' such patient assistance programs to promote Ferring's products.

Moreover, when I begin to mention Ferring's ethics program in my questions, Paul raises some concerns about the messages in this program, and these concerns, as demonstrated below, are similarly tied to his perception of the promotional purpose of marketing and sales officers. Paul elaborates:

> 'In the very early stage when I joined this company, at the end of 2011 or maybe 2012 or 2013, it's the first time that they [the Global Ethics Office] came here to have a workshop about the Ferring Philosophy. They gave us a lot of recommendations regarding how Ferring will recognize what is right, what is wrong. And of course that it's outside of legal. Lots of things are grey areas, not either illegal or legal - a lot of things are outside legal. For example, I remember it very clearly because they have an open wording… Saying that, as a Ferring person, you shouldn't influence the doctor's decision. You shouldn't (laughing), how to say it… You shouldn't influence the doctor to prescribe the drug based on their own understanding of your product. And this… Maybe it's not very accurate because I already forgot it. But it touched me… Gave me a lot of questions, because if you didn't want to be involved with doctors' decisions and their prescriptions, why does a company have marketing? Have a field force [i.e. sales representatives]? What's our basic function to do every day? So this is my preliminary question regarding… What does that mean, because if you say that if you influence their decision, it's unethical. How are you influencing them in an ethical way? It's totally different. 'You shouldn't influence them' - if you give this precondition, then the whole [marketing and sales] team should be deleted.'

As Paul mentions, this is some years earlier, and he might have forgotten the details of what was communicated by the Global Ethics Office. In my fieldwork, I have only experienced ethics officers communicating about such concrete matters on a few occasions and mostly during the dilemma cases that are discussed in the workshops. A warning not to influence HCPs is thus not a general message from the Global Ethics Office in every workshop. However, as Frenkel (2008) reminds us,

communication is not a one-way 'transfer'. Regardless of the message that was intended, this was the issue that concerned Paul.

Thus, as exemplified by the quote with Rose earlier, marketing and sales officers sometimes relate the ethics program and the message of 'People come first' to the dual purpose of helping HCPs and patients as well as acting to benefit the company. This win-win attitude is prevalent within the vocational community of marketing and sales practice. On other occasions, however, the messages disseminated by the ethics program are viewed as contradictory to this same work, as exemplified in Paul's quote above. But either way, the central points are (1) that the enactment of the purpose of putting 'people' first (here meant as HCPs and patients) is tied closely to the practices within the community of marketing and sales officers, and (2) that Ferring's ethics program is understood and appropriated in relation to these practices.

6.5.3. People come first – helping to improve HCP practices

As outlined earlier, Ferring's marketing and sales efforts revolve largely around HCP engagement and establishing fruitful collaborations that will benefit HCPs as well as the company. Moreover, as will be discussed in the following, a central driver for marketing and sales officers in their work is to create what they perceive as societal value and positive solutions for HCPs and patients.

In an interview with Matt, a marketing and sales officer from headquarters, he describes how he works to engage HCPs in collaboration around clinical trials, and how he is striving to understand the 'unmet needs' of the HCPs in order to make such collaboration valuable for them and, ultimately, to sell the product. Later in the same interview, Matt ties this notion of unmet needs to Ferring's ethics program, arguing that the idea of putting 'people' first requires understanding the needs and conditions of HCPs and an then creating solutions that will respond to these needs. Matt explains:

> 'I went to the [disease area] conference last year and the year before to learn and to meet people, and I got introduced by some of my R&D colleagues to these doctors; and to start to get how do these people think? How do they see a patient? What kinds of pressures are put on them? What are their unmet needs? And where could a compound or project like ours help them to be better doctors, basically? And if you can find that insight, at least that's my personal opinion, always: You don't do anything and you don't

try to sell a product only on the basis, that a publication says that this [drug] has 5% more efficacy. For me it's all about starting a discussion where they [HCPs] themselves convince themselves that this is a good compound for them and for their patients. (…) For me, it's more about asking questions than about telling. Selling is more about asking them than talking.'[140]

As Matt describes, it is not enough to simply argue that one compound is better than another or to refer to a publication with research results. Rather, marketing and sales officers must strive to understand the 'unmet needs' of these HCPs and through discussions, make the HCPs 'convince themselves' about the merits of the compound.

The notion of unmet needs and Matt's quest to help doctors become better doctors is noteworthy, as it is not only a way to sell the product but also a way for him and his colleagues to find meaning in their work. Later in the interview, he describes how addressing such 'unmet needs' is a priority for his team members who understand themselves to be contributing to something more than Ferring's financial bottom line:

'(…) There is a huge unmet need; there is a big interest to find ways to improve care. And I felt that this was driving the team and that this provided the overall perspective for us. So it was not only, I felt that the team, was not only looking at molecules and how can we make it effective and safe, I think we were thinking in broader terms. We can really – like I said - we can potentially change the standard of care in this area. But we won't be able to do it. It's the doctors in the end, so we have to work with them and give them the tools to make it happen. (…) So maybe we have to look at it a little bit differently, and that's why we tend to do market research where we go out, that's why I go out and try to understand the area and try to pick up on hot topics… Why is that a hot topic? Why is that so important to you?', [he asks an imaginary HCP].

Later on, Matt and I discuss Ferring's ethics program, and I ask him how he uses the Ferring philosophy in his everyday work. Matt refers back to these 'unmet needs' once more:

'For me what it means is that the people element… The word 'people' really has come to life, and I like to think that this is the biggest impact [of the Ferring Philosophy]. You've

[140] Interview with marketing and sales officer, Switzerland, Autumn 2017.

heard me talk a lot about people and the engagement with… Not trying to sell something but trying to get into collaborations, and trying to make things better. And from the unmet need perspective - for me that has to do with the 'people' perspective. 'People' are human beings that think, that might have different values than you have, the fact that people say different things or behave in a different way doesn't necessarily mean that they are better or worse, it's just different. And… So I think that the Philosophy, that's for me the meaning of the Philosophy to be respectful of that, and also to leverage that.'

Hereby, Matt ties the Ferring Philosophy and its focus on 'people' to the work he is doing to understand the conditions and needs of the HCPs; hereby reiterating the conviction, outlined earlier, that marketing and sales do indeed contribute positively to patients and physicians. For Matt, putting 'people' first means entering discussions and collaborations that will help HCPs realize the merits of Ferring's products, with the goal of helping to improve the standard of care and thus, ultimately, helping the patient. Moreover, as he points out, the company should also 'leverage' these insights; hinting towards the notion of win-win described earlier, where both the company and HCPs benefit from marketing and sales efforts.

This notion of helping patients and HCPs, the idea of what it means to help them as well as the importance of helping them, runs through my interviews with marketing and sales officers, across geographical boundaries and sometimes becomes almost imperative. These people are not just selling something; they are helping people, hence making marketing and sales are a form of ordinary ethical practice.

6.5.4. The moral imperative for marketing and sales activities

As I have hinted earlier, besides creating value for the individual doctors by supporting their career with educational events, publications or networking with KOLs, marketing and sales officers also maintain a strong focus on the value they can add for society more broadly. Of course, the presence of this theme in my interviews is also driven by arguments and health economic calculations developed as a central element of marketing efforts. Nonetheless, the ordinary ethics of this vocational community becomes visible, as the units of exchange they utilize are deemed not only ethically legitimate, but also obligating.

As Joan, a Chinese marketing and sales officer explains in an interview, some patients do not have access to the best treatment, because doctors are not always up to speed with the latest scientific developments and new treatment options. Therefore, she describes her interaction with doctors as educational, and her aim is to ensure that they have the latest knowledge, as many of these doctors still base their treatments on what they have learned in university many years ago, while treatment options have significantly improved since then:

> 'For those tier one cities or mega cities, the teaching hospitals are quite good. They are perfect, because they always keep the staff up to date about research and new publications. But for some Chinese… maybe for low tier cities, the doctors are quite busy, they are fully engaged. And they… How to say… If you ask them, 'Why do you do this?' They will say 'That's what my teachers told me.' They just think the treatment concept is set in stone and never changes. [The doctors assume that] because it *was* working, it *will* also work in the future. But the environment is changing. (…) So you have to educate them. That's quite good because I think that all the society can be benefitted from our efforts.'[141]

The notion of HCP education and the importance of ensuring this education for the benefit of patients as well as the importance of other activities that add societal value run through my observations and interviews across all the geographical locations, I visited during the project.
Of course, as mentioned earlier, this is also part of what one informant termed 'the value story', which is a narrative developed by marketing teams to increase sales, but this value story is somehow interwoven with how marketing and sales officers perceive themselves and their work. And it bears within it the same notion of mutual benefit and 'win-win' that I have discussed earlier, which legitimizes their sales endeavours.
Moreover, not unimportantly, marketing and sales officers take pride in perceiving their activities as creating societal value. In fact, when the argument is that it will benefit patients if doctors are educated with the latest knowledge, it creates what amounts to a moral obligation to educate the doctors.

> For example, on another occasion, a Danish marketing and sales officer explains to me that in some countries, people do not know that nocturia (frequent urination at night) is a condition that can be treated. She adds, in an indignant voice, that in some countries,

---

[141] Interview with marketing and sales officer, China, Spring 2018.

children are beaten for continuing to wet the bed at night, which is why it is of outmost importance to educate the HCPs to recognize that nocturia is a treatable condition.

With possible child beating in mind, it almost becomes imperative for a company like Ferring - that sells a drug that treats nocturia - to make this treatment known and available for HCPs to prescribe to patients. And hereby, sales endeavours also become ethical acts, and sometimes ethical imperatives. Returning to Lambek's (2010b) notion of speech and action as illocutionary, the descriptions of possible child beating or doctors with outdated knowledge somehow express an imperative to respond. The appropriate response to these pressing matters, according to M&S officers, is to educate HCPs and the general public about this condition and to ensure that HCPs are aware how it can be treated; an awareness that contributes to growing Ferring's market. Putting people first in this community thus means helping patients get treatment by performing marketing and sales activities.

6.5.5. Regulation getting in the way of helping people (and promoting products)

So far, I have demonstrated that to educate HCPs, i.e., giving them the latest product knowledge or entering into collaboration with them around new research, is equated with helping HCPs improve their practices and thus helping patients. With this premise in mind, in some cases, marketing and sales officers experience that their ability to help patients (by providing HCPs with disease- and product knowledge) is limited by the same external regulatory factors that were also experienced as a means of ensuring that the sales relation was kept 'scientific', as discussed earlier.

For example, a sales representative who visits a general practitioner is not permitted to make claims about the product beyond the description on the product label.[142] Thus, if a product is approved to be marketed for one condition but has been shown to be effective on another condition, the sales representative is only allowed to mention the condition for which the product has been approved. The purpose of these guidelines is well-intended: to avoid sales and marketing teams making claims about unproven efficacies; nonetheless, such regulations are sometimes experienced as an obstacle to helping patients.

---

[142] The reader may be familiar with the physical representation of the label, which is the little paper pamphlet placed within the packaging of a drug and which describes the content, usage and side effects of this drug.

During the fieldwork, I went with a sales representative on a few of her sales visits. During one visit, she was talking about a product used to purge the bowels, e.g. prior to a bowel examination. The HCP asked her if he could also use the product for severe constipation, but she immediately answered that this would be off-label usage.[143] Afterwards, I asked her about the incident, and she repeated that she answered that she is simply not allowed to say anything about it, because this is off-label use.

In interviews, I have encountered similar descriptions of inabilities to discuss certain topics, and sometimes these legal restrictions on what can be discussed by marketing and sales officers are perceived as a dilemma. As Fred, a marketing and sales officer whom I met at headquarters, describes:

Fred: 'For example, when I go back to [product name], our product for treatment of IBD [Inflammatory Bowel Disease] patients… So we have experience in many many years, a lot of clinical trials, a lot of data. We have… Based on this experience, we have guidelines and recommendations, but often these guidelines and recommendations and real world usage is not in line with our label[144] in [country name], for example. And for me, it's a dilemma that I cannot promote or communicate what a European guideline is telling because it's not reflecting the label in [country name]. You see what I mean? I have to use claims or communicate with claims that are no more up to date and no more aligned to the guidelines. But it will never change in the label, and the label is what it is and to change the label is often not possible and it would need many many resources we don't have. That's a bit of a dilemma. I would like to tell a doctor in a conversation, a dialogue how to implement our product based on the guidelines and based on the experience all over the world, but I can't. So this is a dilemma…'

Anna: 'These guidelines, are they Ferring guidelines?'

Fred: 'No, they are guidelines from the European Chron's and Colitis organization, so this is based on meta-analyses and reviews and from different publications. They have taken a lot of data from different treatments and made some recommendations, but the label

---

[143] 'Off-label usage' refers to when a product is used for something else than what it was approved for; i.e. something else than what is stated in the product label.

[144] The scope and instructions for usage and possible side effects of a product are stated in the label. The scope and instructions are based on the evidence from the clinical trial that led to approval of the product. Thus, the label only states what has been tested in a clinical trial, and if e.g. a split dose has been tested in the trial, then it is not allowed to recommend a single dose, as there is no clinical evidence for this usage. Marketing and sales officers are allowed to communicate only what is stated in the label.

is based, of course, only on the data done with [Ferring product name], and this data is often quite old and a long time ago and not reflecting anymore the daily practice...'

Anna: 'And what makes it a dilemma, you think?'

Fred: 'Why is it a dilemma?'

Anna: 'Yes...'

Fred: 'As I said, we are in a dialogue with a doctor, a prescriber, and we cannot recommend what everyone is doing all over Europe and what the guidelines are saying. We have to stick on our label and this is not the best treatment option for the patients... I think this is quite a huge dilemma.'

Anna: 'Ah okay, so... It's because the patient could be treated better if you could elaborate a bit better on how to use it, but you are not allowed because the label doesn't allow you?'

Fred: 'Exactly... I can give you an example. For a patient, for example, [product name] has to be taken 2-3 times per day. So the dose has to be split to 2-3 doses. If you are a patient and you can take the medication all at once; or you have to think to take the medication in the morning, lunch and the evening. That's an issue for this, for example. We cannot recommend to take [product name] once daily, but we know that [if you take it] once daily, the compliance is better and therefore also the outcome is better. But we have to stick to our communication that it has to be taken two-three times a day. So that's a pity...'

Anna: 'And the doctors don't necessarily know this?'

Fred: 'Doctors are still allowed to implement on their opinion, let's say... But still, if a doctor is asking us, we have to say that this is not in line with the label.'[145]

Thus, as Fred describes, the legislative framework sometimes prevents him from helping patients; in this case helping patients being more compliant with their treatment. Even though new studies have been conducted outside of Ferring since the drug came onto the market, showing that one dose actually leads to a better treatment outcome than the split dose, the marketing and sales officers are only allowed to market this drug with the split dose recommendations stated in the label. Changing the

---

[145] Interview, Marketing and sales officer, Switzerland, Autumn 2017.

label would require a new study to be conducted, and this would be a costly investment which – as Fred mentions in the beginning of the excerpt – is not going to be made anytime soon.[146]

As outlined earlier in this chapter, throughout the fieldwork, marketing and sales officers have described to me how they contribute to helping patients. This finding is in line with Martin's (2006) experiences from ethnographic interviews with pharmaceutical sales personnel who are subject to what she terms increasing vilification in media and general society, due to various scandals and criticism of the pharmaceutical industry. In an article on the history of the development of psychopharmacological drugs, Martin demonstrates how pharmaceutical sales personnel render their jobs meaningful and dignified by understanding themselves as contributing to helping patients (Martin 2006). A similar type of meaning-making is visible among sales and marketing officers in Ferring, as exemplified by the importance attached to educating doctors to be able to treat their patients better and Fred's desire to provide these doctors with the latest knowledge available, regardless of the content of the label. And thus, in some regards, the criteria against which the legislation is evaluated is based on one of the perceived purposes of the job; namely to help doctors and patients to the best treatment possible. As Kim, a marketing and sales officer, explains:

> 'I think the big dilemma that we face, and that's not just Ferring, it's the industry, it's that
> there are very strict regulatory requirements and demands on us. And now, with
> the proliferation of digital and communication, we feel… There is often a dilemma that:
> Well, this is important information to disseminate, to share. But you could be restricted
> by the regulatory environment or laws on sharing this information. And we don't often
> find… We feel that we don't often find the best vehicles to communicate. And yet we feel
> the importance to communicate. Not only to sell our products but for patient safety and
> providers to get the right information. And yet we can't! We are restricted by our
> regulatory environment or compliance environment. Now, the contradiction in all of this
> is of course that they are there to protect and so… We feel like we are doing the right
> thing, they feel they are doing the right thing, and yet we get nowhere. And so, the
> dilemma is how do we find that balance of being true to our mission of delivering

---

[146] This is itself a noteworthy observation, as Fred emphasizes the fact that regulation prevents him from communicating the ideal way to administer the drug, instead of reflecting on whether pharmaceutical companies should be obliged to make the investment to change the label when it is clearly outdated.

patients the right information and yet not violating laws and safety. So it's a constant battle. A constant battle.'[147]

Thus, in some instances, as discussed earlier, regulatory frameworks are experienced as a shield against the 'unprofessional', 'unscientific' or 'over the top' sales practices of the past. At the same time, marketing and sales officers experience a dissonance between the regulatory frameworks under which they work and their quest to help patients and create societal value. Their understanding of the regulatory frameworks is thus closely tied to their practices and legitimized or questioned with point of departure in these practices.

As argued by Lambek (2010b:55), what counts as the right thing to do is also a matter of sustaining commitment to a specific direction, a specific goal or a certain set of criteria. And if one has articulated a commitment to help patients, and helping patients entails providing them with knowledge about possible treatments and best ways to administer those treatments, then it follows that being restricted or prevented from providing such information prevents them from realizing their mission to help the patients. As Lambek writes (ibid.), not to follow through on what one has committed to is to some extent to engage in wrongdoing, and as exemplified in the quotes above, it is indeed described as wrongdoing when one is not allowed to provide certain information to patients and HCPs. Moreover, as I will turn to in the following, Ferring's ethics program is likewise explicitly understood and appropriated in light of this commitment to helping patients and to educating HCPs so that they can better help patients (with Ferring's products). When expectations about adhering to this commitment are not met, the ethics program is called into question.

6.6. Theme no. 3: Exchange of legitimate values and the importance of relationships

As mentioned earlier, one of the more common contemporary marketing and sales practices is to engage in collaborations with HCPs. Engagement with HCPs occurs because other kinds of marketing and sales activities have been restricted and because this sales strategy is seen an effective point of entry to HCPs. Moreover, such collaboration falls into the aforementioned category of 'scientific' relationships that are deemed appropriate.

---

[147] Interview with marketing and sales officer, Switzerland, Autumn 2017.

A research collaboration, e.g. around a Phase 4 study, is likely to be an attractive offer to a specialized HCP. And while it provides the HCP with an opportunity to research, publish the results of the research and advance knowledge within her field, it also establishes a relationship between the HCP and the marketing and sales officers in charge of managing the partnership. As marketing and sales officer Josh explains this to me in an interview:

> Josh: 'We want to invest more in these types of projects, because then it becomes... The projects that we do are always focused on our own products, so there we get an opportunity to speak about our products within the frame of the project. But it also means that you can pretty much walk in and out as you want, because then you have to go and follow up about the protocol, right, and then you have a talk with the nurse [while you are there], right. And you get access. And that is extremely important for us. And then you get a win-win situation, because the doctors are interested in conducting this research, so you move the discussion to another level, so that you engage him and you will probably be taken on-board because it is a cooperation all of a sudden. So we are pretty excited about this.'
>
> Anna: 'And is that... You mentioned before that there is a win in it for everyone, so is this what they [the doctors] get out of it?'
>
> Josh: 'Yes, exactly. We do this with some of them. We have some very big [product name] projects, and we are also going to run a [product name] project now where a publication will come out of it. And there are many of these doctors... It's important for them in their careers that they get published. (…) so there is something in it for everyone, right.'[148]

As Josh describes in the quote above, research collaboration is a 'win-win', because Ferring gets access to the clinics and the ability to freely contact the HCPs without the restrictions that usually apply for marketing and sales officers to visit hospitals and clinics. As he mentions, having more freedom of movement in the clinics allows for more opportunities to speak to nurses and doctors without having an appointment. At the same time, as he points out, the HCPs are interested in the collaboration because of the research and the publications that come out of it, and the HCPs treat the M&S officers as collaborative partners sharing a common goal rather than as sales representatives with their own (sales) goals.

---

[148] Interview with marketing and sales officer, Denmark, Autumn 2017.

As mentioned earlier, in this research project, I have focused on the sales and marketing officers rather than on the doctors at the other end of these partnerships. Therefore, I am not in a position to argue whether the HCPs' interest in collaborating is in fact as strong as described to me by the marketing and sales officers whom I interviewed during my fieldwork. However, with the aforementioned downsizing of public funding for research and the increased focus on external funding in mind, I find this assumption to be plausible. Moreover, I experienced it first-hand during the fieldwork when I went with an informant from marketing and sales to an event about the microbiome[149] that Ferring, along with other industry representatives, was attending, and where scientists explicitly stated their desire for industry funding.

From the perspective of a medical researcher seeking funding, it seems obvious why this researcher would be interested in obtaining funding for their own research. But why would such collaboration be attractive for pharmaceutical companies? What exactly do they get out it? These mechanisms, I will argue in the following, have been outlined many years ago by French anthropologist and sociologist Marcel Mauss.

6.6.1. The power of the gift

In his social scientific classic, *The Gift: Forms and Functions of Exchange in Archaic Societies* (2000) first published in 1924, Marcel Mauss describes the social processes around gifts and non-economic rational exchange. His analysis is based on ethnographic descriptions from various contexts but is focused on accounts from Polynesia, Melanesia and the Northwest Coast peoples in America and Canada. Mauss traces the social rules surrounding exchange and gift-giving, and he describes how the circulation of gifts, favours, and rituals takes an almost voluntary form and plays an important role in avoiding war and conflict between persons and groups (Mauss 2000:18). Moreover, the exchange not only takes place between individuals but also between families, clans and entire tribes. The purpose of gift exchange, Mauss argues, is not so much the redistribution of resources or exchange of goods but rather the creation and maintenance of social and political relationships (Heins, Unrau, and Avram 2018:128). And these relationships are forged through the gift, which means, according to Mauss, that any gift will carry with it an obligation for the receiver to reciprocate. The social force most widely covered by

---

[149] 'A microbiome is the community of micro-organisms living together in a particular habitat. Humans, animals and plants have their own unique microbiomes, but so do soils, oceans and even buildings.' https://microbiologysociety.org/blog/what-is-a-microbiome.html page accessed July 16th 2019.

Mauss, and which compels the receiver to reciprocate is the so-called '*hau*'; the spirit of the gift (a term which Mauss took from the Maori people of New Zealand).

A gift is not neutral, Mauss writes, as the giver gains power over the receiver through the gift, and the receiver(s) allow themselves to enter this relationship of debt by accepting the gift (Mauss 2000:24-25,61). Moreover, as Mauss writes, just as the gift compels the receiver to reciprocate, it also compels the receiver to receive the gift in the first place, as refusing any gift is itself a sign of war or animosity (Mauss 2000:26–27). Gift exchange thus expresses a social bond between the giver and the receiver rather than a one to one exchange. Moreover, unlike other types of commodity exchange, gift-giving is asynchronous. The counter gift is thus not expected immediately, nor does the exchange have a predefined currency (Heins et al. 2018:128).

Mauss traces these social mechanisms and obligations to give, receive and reciprocate from so-called primitive peoples, through Roman, Hindu, German and Chinese cultures, but I am quite sure that the reader will likewise recognize the urge to reciprocate that arises from having received a gift, a helping hand, an invitation or even a round of drinks in a bar from someone. Thus, the objects exchanged are never liberated completely from those who exchanged them and hereby, a social bond is created between giver and receiver (Mauss 2000:51).

As noted by Heins et al. (2018), Mauss' theory of the gift represents a distancing from dichotomist notions of gifts as either free will or obligation or either generosity or self-interest. Rather, gift exchange in Mauss' sense is a somehow unconscious mechanism which plays a central role in establishing, maintaining and restoring relationships (Heins et al. 2018:128).

In his article on pharmaceutical marketing in Buenos Aires, Andrew Lakoff (2005) describes how doctors receive 'gifts' in the shape of access to the latest knowledge within their field as well as through conferences and seminars provided by the pharmaceutical companies (Lakoff 2005:198,205). In this way, Lakoff shows how a relationship of loyalty is forged between doctors and industry.

The 'gifts' that pharmaceutical companies thus hope to have reciprocated by key opinion leaders come in the shape of scientific arguments for a specific type of treatment or compound and for prescription leaders in the shape of increased prescriptions of a particular product. Lakoff terms this 'gifts of access' to guarded resources (Lakoff 2005:197–98); the guarded resources held by the pharmaceutical companies take the form of scientific knowledge, whilst the guarded resources held by the doctors take the form of recommendations that can influence others and prescriptions to purchase or use the

product. As mentioned earlier, my ethnographic studies have been focused on the internal workings within the company and not on the doctors at the other end of the marketing relationship. However, using Lakoff's insights from Buenos Aires and his concept of 'gifts of access', together with Mauss' understanding of 'the gift', I would argue, that it is precisely such reciprocal relationships between doctors and pharmaceutical industry representatives that Ferring's marketing and sales personnel aim to forge with their offerings of research collaborations and educational events. At the same time, as mentioned, gift giving in Mauss' understanding is neither purely altruistic nor entirely calculated, and the relationships that I have witnessed being created seem to fall into this double-edged category. Of course, the activities are very much calculated, and there should be no doubt that Ferring's marketing and sales force are there to sell Ferring products, not to attend conferences or take doctors to lunch. This is, after all, what marketing and sales departments do in every firm. However, this commercial objective does not rule out placing great value on the social aspects of the relationships with potential clients, as touched upon in the ethnographic description of the event at the beginning of this chapter.

However, whereas Mauss referred mainly to non-economic exchange, the same mechanisms have been argued to be activated through economic exchange over time. In an effort to redefine the concept of moral economy, anthropologist James G. Carrier writes that 'people's interactions in their economic activities can generate obligation' (Carrier 2018:24). Carrier thus argues that the relationships that are forged are part of the things that are circulated in the economy. People may have begun their interactions for simple, utilitarian reasons, but an economic transaction will inevitably strengthen the relationship between the people involved in the exchange, and as a consequence, he writes, 'the relationship is not reducible to what is transacted' (Carrier 2018:25). Thus, Carrier's redefinition of the concept of moral economy focuses on the social obligation and relationships created through the exchange. He thus expands Mauss' argument about the social bonds forged through the gift to also include those forged through more formalized forms of exchange (e.g., money purchases).

Within the practices of marketing and sales officers outlined until now, the exchange that takes place can be placed on a continuum between Mauss' definition of gift exchange and Carrier's definition of economic exchange. Whereas the formalized research collaborations may resemble more closely the economic exchange mentioned by Carrier, where the company pays a researcher to conduct a certain research, the invitations to research events, like the one described earlier, more closely resemble Mauss' notion of the gift, in so far as there is no fixed prior agreement about what shape the reciprocation should take, and the exchange cannot be reciprocated in the same kind (i.e., the

marketing and sales officer will not be invited back to attend a conference). However, common to these practices, as pointed out by Carrier, is the fact that the social relations are forged through the exchange and become embedded in the act of exchange. Exchange that creates social bonds becomes exchange that is an expression of these same bonds.

In his conceptual paper, Carrier does not offer much empirical evidence to his argument about the social relation becoming part of the exchange, but the ethnographic examples I have presented nonetheless provide support for his claim. Thus, the relationship between Ferring and the KOLs who are presenting papers at the scientific event described earlier, as well as between Ferring and the professor in charge of planning the event, may have started as a more economic form of exchange where one party funded a research project and the other party carried out the research that they had been paid to do. However, it seemed clear to me that over the years and through numerous such relationships of exchange, the relationship has changed and become more than merely an exchange of goods.

For example, the fact that the professor who organized the event had set up an agenda so close to the interests of Ferring, I would argue, indicates that reciprocation has somehow also become part of the exchange. Moreover, the interaction between marketing and sales officers and the KOLs, exemplified by Janine's care for the KOL recently suffering from a severe illness, described at the beginning of this chapter, indicates that a social relation has become an intrinsic part of the exchange. This example further supports Mauss' definition of the nature of gift exchange (or, as Carrier would argue; any exchange) as neither purely altruistic nor entirely calculated (cf. Heins et al. 2018:128).

The functionality of the exchange that I have argued for here, and the relationship it forges between industry and physicians, is well-known to law-makers. It is hardly accidental that gift-giving, hospitality and the exchange of values, as well as the potential conflict of interest that these practices generate, comprise a main focus in recent regulation of pharmaceutical marketing and sales, as outlined earlier in this chapter.

Moreover, as Mauss and Carrier argue, a relationship is forged through the exchange, and the following section will highlight this relationship. By pointing towards dilemmas that emerge precisely because of the social relations between HCPs and marketing and sales officers, I will seek to give some empirical evidence to my claim that the social mechanisms of the gift that forge a bond and demand reciprocity

are present, even when the relationship is characterized by an exchange of more diffuse goods such as educational events and prescriptions.

Moreover, I will demonstrate the difficulties experienced by marketing and sales officers when their wish for the sales relation to remain 'professional' is challenged by the forces of the social bond that they have established with the HCPs.

6.7. Theme no. 4: Navigating the social bonds of marketing and sales relations

To illustrate the strength of the relationship that is forged, I invite the reader to observe a dilemma experienced by Michael, a Danish marketing and sales officer, in his interactions with HCPs. In an interview, I have asked him to describe a situation that was difficult in his work and how he handled it, and he points to a feeling of embarrassment when having to breach the expectations of the HCP:

> Michael: 'For example, when we were going home [from a conference], I am allowed to invite them for some food. It was evening at the airport when we were going home, before we flew. And one of them was this person with quite high quality standards. And there were no other options in the airport than sort of cafeteria-like places or something that is a seafood bar, and he had his eyes on that one.
>
> And I thought to myself, 'Okay, this can get out of hand, and I'm not allowed to do this', and I actually also don't want to do this because I think it's wrong. One aspect is that I am not allowed, but another aspect is that I also don't want the relation to be such that the pharmaceutical company just needs to pay up. So I went there to look and could see that you could get something that was within the budget. But then I noticed that he started looking at oysters and champagne and things like that... And then I said 'I just have to say that you know what the rules are – within this and this price level'. And then he was very straightforward and said, 'That's fine. If I want more, I'll pay for it myself.' And he did. But it's nice to travel with people who are so straightforward, where I don't have to sit and be the strict one and say, 'You're not allowed.' But you get used to it. It can just be a little...'
>
> Anna: 'And why is that? Is it because you are killing the mood or?'
>
> Michael: 'It's because they have the sense that they have a relation with *me*, although they are well aware that I am not personally the one who pays for it. And they have a feeling that it is *me* who says 'No', and indeed it is. In practice, it *is* me who says, 'No',

but in reality, it's not me, so there is a kind of a conflict between different interests, where you actually know them [the HCPs] really well and have visited them many times [on sales visits]. And I have been travelling with one of them several times. So it becomes a... It can become a mix of something private – or, it's not like I am private friends with them, but you still get to know them really well, right, and they tell you about their wives and children and... you get close to them. And then there is still this business element... that you have to make sure to maintain also. So that is a conflict'.[150]

As illustrated in the quote above, Michael experiences a dilemma, where he is so invested in the relationship with the HCP that it feels awkward having to 'be the strict one' and say 'No', when the relationship is formed as if it were him personally who was inviting them for dinner. Michael's remark about the individual, personal relationship that is established hereby underscores Mauss' argument that the objects exchanged between givers and receivers are never fully liberated from those who exchange them, and a social bond will thus inevitably be created by the exchange.

Let me return to Lambek's (2010b:45) point, that to engage in performative action is to commit more generally to the relevance of the criteria that this action underwrites and reproduces. Within the sales relation, these criteria become blurred because of the social force of the gift. Thus, the criteria for a personal relationship of reciprocal social exchange differ from the criteria of a 'professional' relationship. Within the sales relation, however, these spheres overlap and thus create the awkwardness described by Michael.

Further supporting Mauss' claim that one cannot easily escape the social bond that is forged through the gift, it is noteworthy how neither of the marketing and sales officers that I spoke to have mentioned strategies for releasing themselves from these social bonds and obligations. Rather, they have described strategies to mitigate situations that may be awkward because of a conflict of interests between the effort to forge a 'professional' sales relation and the demands of the social bond between themselves and the HCP as individuals.

This problem of navigating the relation with the HCPs and establishing a personal bond while still maintaining the 'business element', as Michael phrased it, and keeping it 'professional' as earlier introduced informants described it, is a general concern.

---

[150] Interview with marketing and sales officer, Denmark, Winter 2017.

Returning to the educational events mentioned earlier, one challenge is that sometimes, HCPs who have signed up for events do not attend. One strategy to mitigate this problem is to host these events in venues where the likelihood of the HCPs to remain and attend is higher.

> For example, during an interview with Christina, a marketing and sales officer, I ask her about the event that we both attended where doctors from various countries were accompanied by Ferring staff from these countries, as described earlier in this chapter. She explains that this constellation is not greatly appreciated by the compliance department, but that it is simply a necessity in order to ensure that the doctors do in fact attend the event and do not go elsewhere. In fact, she tells me, less interesting and less accessible locations for these events are often purposefully selected in order to ensure that sightseeing or other non-related activities are not too alluring.
>
> She explains that they have attendance sheets that need to be checked off every day, as I also witnessed in the event in which I participated, and that attendance is a requirement for the doctors to receive their diplomas that they have attended the conference. I ask her why they have this requirement, and she explains that this was due to general compliance rules for pharmaceutical sales and marketing, but also because they want to make sure that Ferring's sponsorship of these doctors' attendance is worthwhile. As she explains in an interview, local marketing and sales units around the world 'want to send them to these events, and they want to [do that] because first of all, they are sure that they [the doctors] stay there (…) and this means that they count on that the four doctors they have sent from Norway, for example, they will also return to Norway and work with what they have learnt [at the event]'[151].

Thus, the desire to ensure that the exchange will be 'scientific' is also tied to a desire to increase the likelihood that the exchange will also benefit the company. Moreover, in this case, the concern about maintaining a good relationship with the doctors is also present.

In the same interview, Christina tells me about an event a few years ago when some doctors from one country disappeared for most the conference. 'And this is a problem, because then they can't get their [attendance] diploma, but if they can't get this, then the relationship with them can be harmed', she says, explaining that HCPs often need their diplomas to get reimbursement for travel or to collect points for continued medical education. Thus, if they are denied their diplomas, it has a significant

---

[151] Interview with Marketing and sales officer, Denmark, Summer 2017.

impact, and the doctor in question may hereby be resentful towards Ferring for refusing this. In order to prevent these unpleasant situations, they make sure that there are Ferring employees from each country present to accompany and keep track of the doctors, as well as striving to have the events take place in less interesting locations.

Thus, as I have sought to demonstrate in this section, the social bonds mentioned by Mauss seems to be established in the relationships of exchange between HCPs and marketing and sales officers, regardless of the nature of the goods that are exchanged. This bond becomes particularly visible in the strategies that my informants have described to mitigate awkwardness in this relation. Thus, the tightness of the relation itself is not questioned, as it is an inherent part of the endeavour of engaging with HCPs, and instead, strategies to cope with the inevitable relationships are being cultivated.

6.8. Concluding remarks

Exploring the ordinary ethics among marketing and sales officers' vocational community of practice has provided an opportunity to compare the ways in which different communities interpret and enact Ferring's ethics program. While both the clinical trials and marketing and sales communities maintain the patient at the centre of their endeavours – as prescribed by the Ferring Philosophy – their respective understandings of the patient differ. Whereas clinical trials officers focus on the potential future patient for whom they work to develop new treatments, the marketing and sales officers orient themselves towards those patients who are currently or could currently be using Ferring's products. Their understandings of the Ferring Philosophy's statements around putting patients first are informed by this understanding of the patient. Moreover, the marketing and sales officers focus on the value they can create for HCPs while also benefitting the company, and Ferring's ethics program is inscribed into the logics of this dual win.

In the previous two chapters, I have explored the second research question in which I asked how Ferring's ethics program is interpreted and enacted as it travels into different vocational communities and across levels in the organizational hierarchy. Continuing the exploration of salient characteristics that guide interpretation and enactments of codes of ethics, I now turn to the communities lying within different groups in the organizational hierarchy.

7. *'People come first. But which people?'* Employee and Manager Voices

7.1. Introduction and a note on coding and ethnographic examples

As demonstrated in the previous two chapters, the first half of Ferring's code of ethics is focused on healthcare professionals (HCPs) and patients. This part of the code was interpreted and enacted in relation to vocational practices in the two communities under study. During the analytical process, another community repeatedly appeared in relation to the second part of Ferring's code of ethics, which is focused on employees[152]. Following this theme in the empirical material, in this chapter, I will demonstrate how Ferring's ethics program is also interpreted in relation to experiences of inequality between Ferring's general staff and those with formal or informal higher positions in the company. This insight underscores that vocational communities of practice should be conceptualized in broader terms to cover not only the specific industry or subject matter of vocational undertakings but also the hierarchical social positions of people within these communities. Similar to most examples brought out in previous chapters, the ethnographic examples that are introduced in this section represent themes that have reappeared many times. Further, many of the codes that I have drawn on in this chapter are part of the same code group as those from the previous two chapters, such as the code group 'Interpretations of the Global Ethics Office's approach'. However, in this chapter, I also particularly draw on the code group around 'The logics of Ferring as a privately owned family company'[153].

---

[152] The second part reads: 'Ferring expects that its employees will create value for the company and its stakeholders. Ferring employees, at all levels, have a right to expect from the company and their colleagues:
- respect, support and encouragement.
- a work environment that is safe, stimulating and rewarding.
- the freedom to make mistakes and to admit to them without fear of retribution.
- that the highest standards of integrity will be maintained at all times.
- that colleagues will never knowingly do anything to compromise their position as Ferring employees.
- that all who represent Ferring will do so in ways that generate respect for the company and its employees.
Ferring asks its employees to:
- Always do what is right, proper and ethical, and encourage your colleagues to do so.
- Speak out when you think that wrongs are being committed in Ferring's name.
- Be loyal, but only to that which is just, equitable, honourable and principled - and true to the Ferring philosophy.
No statement of principled behaviour can ever cover every situation, or deal with every contingency. It can only set the tone , making each individual responsible for applying that tone to his or her everyday practice. We strive to set that tone with five simple words:
People come first at Ferring'
[153] Please see a list of codes used in this chapter as well as examples of coded material in Appendix 4 and 5.

7.2. *Some* People come First at Ferring

One of the main criticisms of the Ferring Philosophy and its tagline 'People come first at Ferring' is that those 'people' are not the employees. However, this criticism finds different expressions depending on the position of the person voicing the criticism. Among employees, a prevalent perception and comment – both in interviews and in different social contexts during the fieldwork - is that '*some* people' come first.

In order to depict the nuances of the criticism that is voiced, it is necessary to return to the very nature of the company. As a family enterprise, Ferring Pharmaceuticals is led by the son of the founder, and - as mentioned in Chapter 4 - colloquially referred to as 'the owner' (although formally he is chairman of the board of directors). Within the company, a small number of centrally placed managers have built up a personal relation with the 'owner'.

It seems to be widely known who these people are, as their relationship with the owner is often the subject of conversations among staff with no such affiliations, but these individuals are often also recognizable by the way they title the owner. Within Ferring, most employees and managers refer to the owner as Mr. [lastname], and even in the Danish context, where terms of address remain rather informal, he is referred to as 'Mr.'- or with the slightly less formal full name version with first name and last name but leaving out the 'Mr.'. However, a number of individuals in higher positions refer to him only by his first name, hinting at a more personal relationship with the owner. These people – it is said – have far reaching privileges and are not subject to the same rules as other employees in the company. Some of my interlocutors even referred to these people as a 'protected species'. From the accounts that I have heard, it seems that these are a rather small group of people, but nonetheless, their existence seems to have an enormous impact. As we know from the literature on storytelling in organizations, the scale or truthfulness of a story does not determine how it spreads, and rumours and gossip may crystalize into myths if left unchallenged (Boje 2008:79).

It must be noted that I have not observed these claimed privileges first hand, and I am thus merely referring to the accounts that have been shared with me during fieldwork. Moreover, besides these people who are informally (but most often also formally) placed high up in the organizational hierarchy, employees also often criticize the senior managers with more formal roles and power in the company for the special privileges that they are said to enjoy.

In an interview with Mia, an employee from the Danish office, I tell her that I am interested in the Ferring philosophy. I do not get any further in my questions before she interrupts me:

Mia: 'I'll tell you how it is. At first, I was really annoyed with this philosophy that kept popping up [as a screensaver on my computer], so I took it off.[154] Now it actually reappeared [as a screensaver] on my new computer. And it's not like I disagree. I don't. But where I am and with what I have seen and experienced here in Ferring, then I think that there is so much bullshit in it, because in reality, that's not how it is. The Ferring Philosophy, but it's not like that, you know, people coming first. It depends on who you are.'

Anna: 'Could you give me an example of this?'

Mia: 'It's just this thing about the Ferring Philosophy and people come first, and we know very well that its patients, but it is actually also us. And that's where we sometimes think… Or some people sometimes think that this is maybe not exactly what it looks like when you are on the shop floor. (…) Maybe it's because I think that there is a big difference between whether you are this person or that person in the company, right? There are people who can allow themselves to do certain things, while others are not allowed to do anything.'[155]

As an example of these special privileges, Mia explains how corporate policies seem not to apply to certain people higher up in the organizational hierarchy.

'And that's where the Ferring Philosophy falls short. We respect it when everybody travels on economy class when the rules say that everyone should travel economy, but we also know that there are some people who never do', she says. She then goes on to describe how one of the experiences that proved this to her, where a senior manager joined a team for an important meeting with an external stakeholder overseas and where the entire team flew on economy class with a stopover, even though they were in charge of the presentation. Meanwhile, the senior manager was seated in business class on a direct flight, which was against the travel policy.

---

[154] The Ferring Philosophy was added as a screensaver on all employees' computers when it was introduced back in 2004 and remained a screensaver until halfway through this PhD project, when it disappeared as part of a new Windows update. 'Taking it off' thus refers to removing the Ferring Philosophy as a screensaver.
[155] Interview with employee, Denmark, Summer 2017.

Mia herself explains her indignation with the fact that she is Danish and refers to the prevalent egalitarianism within the Danish sociocultural context (cf. Chapter 4), and how she likes it when people are equal and follow the same rules.

While the country context can probably explain her preference for egalitarianism to a certain extent, and perhaps could explain the candidness with which she complains about these matters, it does not entirely explain why she interprets the Ferring Philosophy within the framework of her experience of managers who take certain liberties. And it certainly does not explain why this position is not unique to the Danish context.

Another explanation for Mia's dissatisfaction with the Ferring Philosophy, I would argue, is to be found in her position as an employee at the lower echelons. The fact that the Ferring Philosophy was introduced by the owner of the company is well-known, and as a corporate document, Ferring's code of ethics is strongly associated with higher management. Thus, when managers are observed to be contradicting the Ferring Philosophy, the code of ethics itself is interpreted in reference to this experience and thus deemed hypocritical. In short, the central question that is raised by employees is that if not even management can follow their own code of ethics, why should employees attach any importance to it?

However, what is noteworthy is how Mia inscribes the Ferring Philosophy into experiences of injustice that go beyond what is covered in the wording of the philosophy. The philosophy does not mention any right to be treated equally or any particular obligation for managers to comply with corporate travel policies. However, it does mention that 'the highest standards of integrity will be maintained at all times' and that employees at all levels can expect 'respect, support and encouragement' from the company and from their colleagues.[156] Such terms are rather ambiguous, and interpreting them thus depends on what each individual employee understands by terms such as 'respect' and 'integrity'. Returning to Brannen's (2004) concept of 'recontextualization' introduced in Chapter 4, she describes three levels of semantic meaning; the conceptual level, the narrative level and the discursive level. The first is rather abstract and refers to the meaning of core values and assumptions associated with certain objects or actions, while the second refers to meaning that is conveyed through value-laden stories with normative descriptions of good and bad. Finally, the discursive level refers to 'meaning that is generated figuratively by attaching values to words, and generally does so by appealing to the five senses' (Brannen 2004:602). Lack of semantic fit, Brannen writes, can occur at any of the three semantic levels, and she offers examples of lack of semantic fit at the conceptual level centred around

---

[156] Please see the Ferring Philosophy in Appendix 7.

notions such as 'bonus' or 'teamwork', where the signifier (the concept or word) is shared, but the signified (the meaning of the concept) is not.

Returning to Mia's indignation over the Ferring Philosophy, although this code of ethics and words such as 'integrity' and respect' and 'people come first' may not have been meant to signify equality between staff and managers, Mia attaches her understandings of the importance of equality as well as her experiences of inequality between employees and managers (signified) to the Ferring Philosophy (signifier).

While equality is a central trait in Danish national culture, as argued in Chapter 4, it is noteworthy that a similar criticism is also raised outside of Denmark, where the ethics program is also linked to observations of managers who do not abide by the same rules as regular employees.

Laila, a local ethics office counterpart outside of Denmark tells me about the difficulties she encounters when conducting the ethics workshop. She observes that most newcomers find the workshop valuable, but people who have been with the company for a few years are often more critical, claiming that it 'clashes' with their experiences. I have asked Laila to describe how people react to the workshops that she conducts:

> Laila: 'Sometimes, I have the feeling that people... But this is for people who have been here a few years. Usually, newcomers they are more... They listen more. They don't know the company, so they cannot criticize.'
>
> Anna: 'And what do they criticize? How do they say that it clashes?'
>
> Laila: They say... When you discuss the right thing to do [in the dilemma case discussions], then they say, 'Yes, in the fairy tale, this would be the right thing to do, but at the end, we are here to make money.' Or at the end, if it's someone who has a higher position, then... When we discuss for example a dilemma, it's about expenses[157], and someone from the direction [senior management] spends more money on for example having a dinner, and they spend a lot of money... And they put that on their expense

---

[157] Laila is referring to the following dilemma case which is sometimes discussed during the workshops: 'One of your senior level managers has just resigned after many years of loyal service. You give the manager permission to invite 8 staff members to enjoy an informal farewell dinner instead of having the standard farewell reception offered by the company. The manager takes the staff to the most exclusive restaurant in the city and enjoys many fine wines with the dinner. Should you approve this expense? What is your decision and why?'

report[158], and someone from Accounting sees it, and she is not sure if she should approve it or not. Then they [the participants at the workshop] say, 'Yes, in an ideal life you would challenge this person about his expense report, but in reality, do you really do that?''[159]

On a different occasion, I interviewed one of Laila's close colleagues, Sam, who explains to me that Laila meets pushback in the ethics workshops because certain managers are not perceived to be living up to the Ferring Philosophy:

> Sam: 'a lot of global leaders are sitting here. And if they are not demonstrating… Or they are demonstrating things that are not in line with the Ferring Philosophy, the power of that is huge. And it's a negative power, so that's not what you want to have, right? But then nothing happens to them. It's acceptable.'
> Anna: 'And what does she [Laila] encounter - why is it difficult?'
> Sam: 'Because employees then share and say, 'Well you tell me this, and we are having this nice reflection[160], but what I see in my department is this and this and this happening'. And that gets really… It's a tricky one.'[161]

As we see from Sam's quote above, he ascribes the difficulties that Laila meets to the fact that there are many senior managers in their office and that non-adherence to the Ferring Philosophy therefore has a stronger symbolic value than in other situations. Also, more of the senior managers, who are said to enjoy the privileges that come with these positions, are placed here, which could explain the pushback experienced by Laila in her ethics workshops. However, with similar accounts across the different national contexts – as exemplified by Mia's interview – this seems not to be the most satisfying explanation. Moreover, if we look to China, I found a similar criticism of the Ferring Philosophy here. For example, in an interview, I ask Chris, a Chinese employee, how he experiences that the Ferring Philosophy is used and comes up in his daily work.

---

[158] An expense report is when employees declare their work-related expenses to the Accounting Office in order to obtain a refund for travel- or work-related expenses from the company.
[159] Interview with employee, Autumn 2017.
[160] Part of the Ferring Philosophy workshop is to share reflections on a number of dilemma cases. It is this 'sharing' and 'reflection' that Sam refers to.
[161] Interview with middle-manager, Autumn 2017.

Chris: 'Well, in my experience, not very much. People talk about the Ferring Philosophy or something like that.. But sometimes we will say 'people come first', like in annual meetings, or our boss says what the Ferring Philosophy is, and that the number one rule is 'people come first' or something like that. But for me, what you say and what you are talking about in China is not important. It's about what you do. Sometimes people talk different but they do different.'(…)

Anna: 'So this 'people come first' thing, what does it mean to you? How would you…?'

Chris: 'Well, actually I know the text – the whole article about people come first, and I think the idea is very good. That you fully respect people, and when you respect people you'll put them in front of everything else. But you know, there's one thing that I heard from one colleague: People come first. But which people? Maybe the management people? But are you the management group? No… And I said, 'Okay, I get it'. (…) You can feel when someone respects you or not, and when they respect you, you can feel it. And no matter if he or she said 'people come first', does he or she actually respects you in the interaction? And there are a lot of people who actually don't live by these words… It makes no sense to me that they always say these things.'

Anna: 'And how do you see that they don't live by it? Just to understand…'

Chris: Well, they don't respect you, and you can feel it… And they say 'people come first' and I teach you one thing. First day in Ferring you learn that people come first, and then he began to act something that crossed the line. Then you can feel it: okay, this man doesn't live by the words.'[162]

Whereas informants in Denmark and at headquarters have named particular senior managers as problematic, often by name and title, Chris does no such thing. He keeps his references vague, also in the remainder of the interview, and it is therefore not exactly clear what manager or managers he is referring to. But either way, Chris emphasizes a similar dissonance between the Ferring Philosophy as a corporate code of ethics, promoted by management, while simultaneously experiencing members of that management not acting in concord with the philosophy.

Returning to Brannen's (2004) notion of semantic fit at the conceptual level of signification, employees in China and at headquarters share the tendency to inscribe the Ferring Philosophy into their experiences with managers who do not 'live by the words' as Chris puts it. Thus, the lack of semantic fit seems not to pertain only to any of the three geographical contexts or any of the vocational

[162] Interview with employee, China, Autumn 2018.

communities of practice outlined earlier, but also to the position of my interlocutors in the organizational hierarchy, regardless of country or vocational function. The signifier (the Ferring Philosophy) is thus - in some instances - interpreted within a semantic context related to communities among employees at the lower echelons of the hierarchy. Or to put it more simply: the lower-ranking employees – regardless of country or vocational community of practice - feel that their superiors do not take the ethical code seriously. Moreover, this criticism is also voiced even by employees with some managerial responsibilities. Hence, various middle managers point out hypocrisy among their own superiors higher up in the organization.

To sum up, for employees, it often seems that the 'people come first' tagline applies only to *some* people – i.e. (senior) management, while other rules apply to employees 'on the shop floor', as Mia put it. At first sight, such experiences seem to undermine the messages stated in the code of ethics, as exemplified in the quotes presented here. Employees often perceive the philosophy as hypocritical, as it is a senior management document at the same time as they experience that many (senior) managers violate it.

On the other hand, the fact that employees express such disappointment testifies that the ethics program has indeed established some expectations for a particular conduct. In their article on CSR as aspirational talk, Christensen et al. (2013) argue that although there may be a gap between the aspirations communicated by companies and their actual practices, articulating these aspirations in itself has transformative capacities precisely because such articulations may stimulate change.

In their article, Christensen et al. distinguish between two types of hypocrisy. Both types signify a disconnect between statements and action. The first type, 'hypocrisy as duplicity', occurs when an organization deliberately announces CSR ambitions to cover up illegitimate behaviour. This is distinguished from 'hypocrisy as aspiration', which is:

> 'when an organization, in order to stimulate action, incants a wished-for future, pretending that this future (or parts hereof) already exists. (...) In this shape, hypocrisy means to motivate an audience – including the sender itself – through the use of idealizations (...)' (Christensen et al. 2013:378).

I will refrain from determining whether there is an actual disconnect between certain managers' actions and the words of the Ferring Philosophy. Nevertheless, there is certainly a perceived disconnect, and the hypocrisy is real for those employees who experience it. And, as Christensen et al. (2013) write,

hypocrisy may lead to cynicism or to motivation. What I found in Ferring was more of a cynical attitude, and my interlocutors expressed indignation about the inequality they experienced. However, as mentioned earlier, this indignation also shows that the ethics program does indeed create change, as it instils in the employees certain expectations for good conduct, and the indignation thus lives alongside - and is a result of - positive expectations. Moreover, it should be noted that it is not the Global Ethics Office or ethics officers who are the targets of the criticism. The perceived disconnect is between the ethics program (as an organizational statement beyond the ethics officers who are in charge of communicating it) and the experienced conduct of certain managers. Thus, it is the experienced fact that *the company* has an ethics program and a code of ethics that expresses the view of putting people first, while at the same time *the company* legitimizes (by overlooking) managerial violations of this very ideal. As Christensen et al. (2013:379) write, organizations are not monoliths, and some organizational actors (such as the ethics officers) may sincerely aspire towards certain ideals, while other actors are less committed or may even (intentionally or unintentionally) work against the efforts of aspirational colleagues. This may likewise be the reason for this experienced disconnect between statements and action.

7.3. *Other* People Come First at Ferring

One of the main criticisms of the Ferring Philosophy and its tagline 'People come first at Ferring' is that those 'people' are not the employees. As shown in this chapter until now, among employees, the criticism is based on experiences of injustice and of managers not behaving according to the philosophy. On the other hand, when this criticism is voiced by managers, it is often said that employees misunderstand the message and incorrectly believe that the 'people' mentioned in the Ferring Philosophy are the employees themselves, as illustrated in the field excerpt below.

> During my first few months of the project, I conducted a number of pilot interviews with employees and managers in all the key functions of the business. My objective was to familiarize myself with the pharmaceutical industry in general and with Ferring as a company in particular. One of these managers had been participating in a project, under the internal corporate talent program, during the previous year together with the Global Ethics Office. The goal of the project was to suggest how ethics officers could improve their efforts. During our conversation, he asked me, 'What is the word that is missing from the Ferring Philosophy?'. I replied that I didn't know, and he answered 'Other.

Other people come first at Ferring'. He explained that employees tend to think that the 'people' are themselves and that 'people' therefore do not come first at Ferring when employees are refused a desired promotion, a project or a salary increase. But it is not about you, he emphasized, it is about people other than yourself, which is why the 'other', in his opinion, should be added to the Ferring Philosophy.[163].

Throughout the fieldwork, I have heard variations on the same theme – that it is in fact 'other' people who come first, and that employees should not mistake the wording as applying only to their individual situation. As a senior manager from headquarters explained in an interview, employees who are let go from the company sometimes interpret this as a sign that people in fact do not come first at Ferring.

'The most important in the Philosophy is the first five words and the last five words. People come first at Ferring (…) To me, the Ferring Philosophy is five words. But sometimes, people are asked to leave the company (…). But then they are saying that we are not living the Ferring Philosophy because they were asked to leave. But that is not the case. We are precisely living the Ferring Philosophy, because if you are not performing, I am doing a favour to all the other 6500 people working here. So it's not about one person, it's about all the people.'[164]

From a managerial perspective, the tagline of 'People come first' is sometimes experienced as challenging, as employees pull it out when they feel mistreated. What is noteworthy is that the more detailed content of the Ferring Philosophy is rarely brought out by managers nor by employees.

The Philosophy states that employees are expected to create value for the company, and laying off non-performers could thus be explained within the wording of the Philosophy, but this is rarely mentioned. One explanation for this may simply be that the tagline is easy to remember and lends itself more easily to such comments, which are presumably not meant as invitations to open a dialogue. Regardless the reason for this, it is noteworthy how the signifier (the Ferring Philosophy) is also interpreted within a semantic frame that seems to pertain to a community of managers, and a community of employees, respectively.

---

[163] Based on fieldnote from introductory interview with manager, Spring 2017.
[164] Interview with senior manager, Switzerland, Autumn 2017.

Thus again, interpretations and enactments of the code of ethics occur in reference to not just a national semantic framework but to multiple communities of practice, such as the communities of managers and employees.

7.4. Concluding remarks

Within this chapter, continuing explorations around research question 2[165], I have introduced yet another dimension of the communities into which Ferring's ethics program is inscribed. I have argued that, regardless of vocational community of practice or geographical location, the experiences of employees and managers respectively influence how, at least part of, the ethics program is perceived. By pointing to the importance of experienced disappointments among employees in the formal organizational hierarchy, I have highlighted once again that although national context is central for processes of signification, as argued in Chapter 4, other contexts may also gain relevance at different moments.

Thus, the vocational communities of practice relating to the subject matter of people's work that I highlighted in Chapters 5 and 6 are not the only communities that are salient for how an ethics program is interpreted and enacted. Rather, communities around being a manager or an employee also inform how Ferring's ethics program and especially how the code of ethics is interpreted. Employees often distance themselves from the ethics program precisely because of an experienced gap between the message of putting people first and their own experiences in the company. The communities of managers and the communities of employees are different from e.g. vocational communities of practice, in that 'employees' and 'managers' can be found across all business functions in Ferring and thus cover a wide range of daily working practices. However, despite not necessarily sharing the content of their work, these groups, respectively, still share experiences of being managers or of being employees. In order to highlight these different experiences among managers and employees, respectively, I will refer to these different groups as 'hierarchical communities'.

Similarly, in her study of identity and knowledge sharing in an Anglo-German automobile manufacturer, Moore (2012) demonstrates how managers and factory workers identify with their hierarchical position in the company and that different strategies for sharing (and withholding) knowledge exist within each of these groups. Although Moore focuses on identities, her insights underscore how communities are

---

[165] 'How is Ferring's ethics program interpreted and enacted as it travels into different vocational communities and across levels in the organizational hierarchy?'.

formed at different levels in the formal organizational hierarchy. Hereby, her insights shed light on an aspect that this dissertation has covered less thoroughly; namely on the identities of community members and the processes of identification of these groups in the company hierarchy. Moore shows that the communities among factory workers and managers, respectively, are defined not only by the organizational structure but also shaped by members' identification with their status in the hierarchy, as either shop-floor workers or managers. However, Moore demonstrates that factory workers and managers do not only identify with these hierarchical communities among managers and workers respectively, but that also national and ethnic identities play a role (Moore 2012:290). Hereby, she emphasizes the fluidity of identification with multiple identities, a configuration that corresponds to my conclusion that different communities gain importance at different moments.

In Chapter 4, I argued that the Ferring Philosophy and the ethics program around it exhibited traits of Scandinavian national cultures. However, we have seen here that the criticism introduced in this chapter is also raised in the Danish context – as exemplified by Mia's accounts introduced earlier. As previously mentioned, Brannen's (2004) model of semantic fit or lack thereof has been used largely to describe different country contexts. But the country-focus does not have the full explanatory power to account for how Ferring's code of ethics is interpreted. With Brannen's model and a country-focus in mind[166], there should be a semantic fit between the Ferring Philosophy and a Danish context. Yet the Ferring Philosophy was criticized in the Danish context as well. The reason for this, I have argued in this chapter, is that the philosophy is also inscribed into experiences pertaining to people's positions in the organizational hierarchy rather than only into national culture semantic frames.

Brannen's framework is thus in need of revision. I will return to this issue in Chapter 9 where I will discuss the usefulness and limits of Brannen's framework and propose how to adjust it according to the insights gained through my fieldwork. But first, I will turn to a longitudinal account of Ferring's ethics program and describe how it has changed during the course of this research.

---

[166] Brannen's (2004) model does not per se demand a national culture focus, but it is how the concept of recontextualization has most often been used – including by Brannen herself (see e.g. Gertsen and Zølner 2012b; Peltokorpi and Vaara 2012; Søderberg 2015).

8. Changes in Ferring's Ethics Program

8.1. Introduction

The following chapter aims to respond to research question 3, which asks how Ferring's ethics program changes over time. It takes a longitudinal perspective and presents the changes that have occurred since the beginning of the PhD project in early 2017 and discusses these changes in relation to the insights from previous chapters. Here, I show how the jurisdiction of the Global Ethics Office has been continuously limited throughout the project period by 1) the introduction of new business functions whose areas of focus overlap with the original function of the Global Ethics Office, 2) by new tasks and responsibilities that have been added but without adding equivalent staff resources to the Global Ethics Office; and 3) by the introduction of initiatives and guidelines that overlap and to some extent impinge on key elements of the ethics program.

The first part of the chapter outlines the changes that have taken place during my three years in the company, while the latter part of the chapter will discuss possible explanations for these changes, based on the insights into the ordinary ethics of different communities presented in previous chapters. The insights presented in this chapter are not based on the coding process, but rather on a historical reading of my field notes.

8.2. The nature of the changes

8.2.1.   Changes in the area of responsibility

As mentioned earlier, the Global Ethics Office was established in 2005, headed by a Danish manager and became a separate business unit in Denmark in 2010. The ethics program as it appears today was built during the first years of its existence. In late 2016, in connection with the retirement of the Danish manager as well as an ongoing effort to centralize global functions at corporate headquarters in Switzerland, the Global Ethics Office became headed by a new manager of North American origin. At that time, the Global Ethics Office consisted of this headquarters-based manager and his personal assistant, two employees and a part-time consultant residing in Denmark, and one employee in the US, all of whom worked 100% on Ferring's ethics program. When I commenced this PhD project in early 2017, I joined the Danish team of the Global Ethics Office.

In 2017, alongside most companies in the European Union, Ferring was starting to prepare for the implementation of the EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). This regulation received significant attention across sectors and countries in the EU due to its high rates for non-compliance fines, up to 20 million euros or 4% of a company's global revenue.

Not long after I joined the team, the Global Ethics Office was given the responsibility for GDPR and data privacy for the entire company, and the team was expanded with one person at the corporate headquarters. This person worked solely with data privacy issues and GDPR, but the scale of the task went way beyond the abilities of a single person. As a result, the two ethics officers from Denmark were drawn into the work, and the head of the Global Ethics Office obtained dual responsibility for data privacy and for the ethics program.[167]

Towards the end of 2017, another area of responsibility was added to the Global Ethics Office. It now became responsible for managing the company's activities on corporate social responsibility, and whereas one employee - who had now left the company - used to cover this area of work, no extra resources were added to the Global Ethics Office along with this task.

8.2.2. Reduction of jurisdiction

Besides the extra added work tasks, during the course of this research, the jurisdiction of the Global Ethics Office has simultaneously been diminished, as certain responsibilities have been taken over or been challenged by other business functions.

The first was the launch of the global compliance function in 2016, just before I started the PhD project. Until then, compliance officers had existed in different business units, but now, a central, global function was added to consolidate and steer the efforts. At first, the global compliance office consisted of merely two people. Nevertheless, the advent of this new function marked a central shift in the company.

As mentioned in Chapter 4, one of the key messages of the Global Ethics Office is to distinguish between ethics and compliance; to point towards the legal and moral ambiguities that emerge in everyday work situations and help employees become better at navigating situations where no clear rules apply. The Global Ethics Office also administered the 'Business Ethics and Conflict of Interest Policy', which took its point of departure in the Ferring Philosophy and focused on elements such as

---

[167] In 2017, the team was also expanded with an employee in Israel, who became in charge of driving local efforts in the country and thus had no global responsibilities. Therefore, I will not expand on the work of this person.

fraud, bribery and conflicts of interest. However, although this policy stated certain principles, one of the central themes in ethics office communications, as outlined in Chapter 4, was the fact that Ferring had chosen to have the Ferring Philosophy as a one page code of ethics so as to set the tone. In some of the first ethics workshops that I attended, it was emphasized that Ferring did not have a code of conduct similar to other companies. Instead, it had the Ferring Philosophy. The Philosophy was presented on a slide next to a picture of a large, old book with the text 'Principle-driven vs. Rules-based' in order to underscore the difference between the principle-based approach that Ferring had chosen and the much longer and more detailed codes of conduct that many other companies choose.

Then, in 2018, the new global compliance function launched a code of conduct. First, this code of conduct replaced and contained many of the same elements as the aforementioned policy on 'Business Ethics and Conflict of Interest' that used to be managed by the Global Ethics Office. Second, this changed the way that ethics officers had to convey their message, as the company now indeed had the code of conduct that ethics officers had long been positioning the Ferring Philosophy up against in their explicit emphasis of Ferring's focus on having an educational approach rather than a compliance approach, as described in Chapter 4.

Thus, not only did ethics officers have to change their communication; they also lost jurisdiction over a corporate policy (the Business Ethics and Conflict of Interest Policy), which now rests with the compliance function as a code of conduct. However, the Global Ethics Office and the global compliance function continued to be two separate business units.

Another area where the Global Ethics Office lost terrain during the course of this project was the status of the Ferring Philosophy as *the* corporate document stating the values and ethical principles for conduct in the company. As described in Chapter 4, in 2018, the Global Leadership Principles were introduced, and as a result, Ferring how had a second, global 'principle-driven' approach. Although the Leadership Principles responded to demands from human resources of making values and behaviours measurable in the performance management system, when observing the communication around these principles, they did more than just that.

In the train-the-trainer material developed by ethics officers, which was used to train new ethics workshop facilitators, the Ferring Philosophy had been introduced as a principle-based approach, and facilitators were encouraged to emphasize that the philosophy did not tell you *what* to do but instead focused on *how* to do it. Similarly, the Leadership Principles have been presented as a way for

managers and employees to understand *how* to work. As a global HR business partner explained to global colleagues in an online training course that I attended during the fieldwork in China:

> 'The mission sets a clear direction and guides the decisions we make. It gives us the direction and guides the decisions. It describes what we need to achieve. The Leadership Principles define the 'how'.... They describe the behaviours that we need to put in place in order to accomplish our mission.'[168]

Thus, not only was a competing set of principles for behaviour launched; it was also communicated in similar fashion and intended to address similar issues.

Moreover, along with the Leadership Principles came the launch of an obligatory global training concept around these Leadership Principles that was rolled out to all HR functions and all employees and managers globally. This occurred shortly after the Global Ethics Office had launched its own training course for managers, called 'Leading with integrity'. This course was soon discontinued.

Furthermore, after the roll out of the Leadership Principles, an ethics officer complained to me that she was getting some rejections from those she had invited to attend the Ferring Philosophy workshop, as people were confusing the two workshops. A related concern was voiced by the local ethics office counterparts in China who were struggling to fit two similar half-day workshops into the program for new employees alongside all their other orientation activities. And although this has not, to my knowledge, occurred in China yet, similar considerations presumably exist in other countries where one effort may be downplayed at the expense of the other. Although local human resources officers report to local management, they simultaneously have a reporting channel to the global human resources function. As mentioned in Chapter 4, the vast majority of local counterparts who assist the Global Ethics Officers – the 'ethics coordinators' – are human resources officers, but contrary to the global human resources department, these local staff members have not had formal reporting lines to the Global Ethics Office. Although this is not a question that I have explored in the present study, this unevenness in the reporting lines could potentially have favoured communication and training on the Leadership Principles, which is an HR concept, over the ethics program. One could surmise that local HR staff may be more inclined to comply with demands from those to whom they report directly. The result being a

---

[168] Transcript from recorded video conference training for human resources officers globally, attended from China in spring 2018.

general decline in the role of the Global Ethics Office.

The last major area where the jurisdiction of the Global Ethics Office has been diminished is the biannual global survey – the 'Risk Clarity Survey' – that the office had been conducting since 2011. The purpose of the survey was to map issues of concern, observed misconduct, knowledge of the whistle-blowing line and employees' comfort speaking up about their own and others' wrongdoings across all Ferring's entities worldwide. The latest risk clarity survey was conducted in 2015, and the next was planned to take place in 2017. However, towards the end of 2016, a new global survey was launched by the global human resources department. This 'engagement survey', as it was called, was designed to assess employees´ motivation, job satisfaction and well-being at work. As the survey was conducted at the end of 2016, the results were not published until 2017, during my first year of this study. Along with the results came a lengthy process of creating development plans and working with the results of this survey in each business unit. Together with their senior managers, the ethics officers decided to postpone the Risk Clarity Survey in order to allow for the results of the engagement survey to be utilized rather than introducing the Risk Clarity Survey right away. In 2018, however, the engagement survey, which was proclaimed to be a biannual endeavour, was repeated, and the Risk Clarity Survey was postponed once more. Again in 2019, the same situation arose. The engagement survey results were being utilized around the organization, and launching a second survey in the midst of this was again deemed inappropriate.

8.2.3. Changes in staff and responsibilities

Returning to 2017, where GDPR and data privacy had just been added to the portfolio of tasks of the Global Ethics Office, postponing the Risk Clarity Survey freed up a significant amount of time for the ethics officers, who instead took on more GDPR-related tasks. The change in priorities was reflected in their goals in the corporate performance management system, which now focused primarily on data privacy. The remaining tasks for the ethics officers were to conduct ethics workshops with new employees as well as to administer the corporate whistle-blowing line, but the invention of new ways to communicate their messages and the launching of new projects that used to characterize the Global Ethics Office[169] was discontinued.

---

[169] As I only commenced the project in 2017, I rely on people's accounts of how the company was structured and how the Global Ethics Office worked when describing events prior to this year.

Then, in 2018, one of the Danish ethics officers left the company. Her replacement was hired in Switzerland. This new employee had no ethics program-related responsibilities and obtained a portfolio working only on data privacy, which comprised a de facto reduction of ethics officers. A part-time employee as well as an intern were also hired at the Swiss global headquarters to work on tasks related to data privacy, but with no ethics program-related responsibilities.

Most recently, in mid-2019 after I completed the fieldwork on which previous chapters in this dissertation build, during a major organizational restructuring, the data privacy tasks and staff were moved to the global compliance department, and the Global Ethics Office was abolished and integrated into a larger group within the Global Human Resources organization under the name 'Values and Learning'. The head of the former Global Ethics Office became the head of this group and now shares responsibility for the entire global human resources area together with another manager. Moreover, the HR officers working with the Leadership Principles now report to this same former head of the Global Ethics Office, which opens up a potential to integrate the communication around the Ferring Philosophy and the Leadership Principles rather than having two competing values-based frameworks in two different business functions. On one hand, this can be viewed as the culmination of a series of events, finally leading to the subordination of the Global Ethics Office under Global Human Resources and its abolition as an independent entity. On the other hand, these events can be viewed as a strengthening of the ethics function, as it will now have a stronger network with direct reporting lines to ethics officers within the global human resources organization. Only time will tell which of these descriptions is the most useful way to view the situation. In any case, the Global Ethics Office is no longer an independent administrative entity or business function.

8.3. Ethics office changes and ordinary ethics

To what extent the changes outlined here are due to the ordinary ethics of different (vocational) communities, as outlined in chapters 4-7, is beyond the scope and abilities of this project. However, in the following, I will offer some considerations that point in this direction.

8.3.1. The lack of operationalizability

The most direct challenge to the Global Ethics Office's approach was the one voiced by human resources officers outlined in Chapter 4. Here I highlighted how human resources officers found the

ethics program to be too ambiguous and difficult to operationalize into the frameworks of accountability that they find particularly important. I also demonstrated how this criticism of the ethics program materialized into two new and competing values programs. The direct competitor to the ethics program was the Global Leadership Principles, which - as mentioned in the previous section - had significant organizational capacity behind them and were rolled out globally, backed by resources and senior management support that I have not experienced for the ethics program. During several months in 2018, videos were released on Ferring's intranet with various senior managers who talked about the importance of these principles, and workshops were held around the globe for all employees.

Further, adherence to the Leadership Principles and to the Ferring Philosophy has been made part of the annual performance assessments, and this change inhabits the logic of accountability that human resources officers found was lacking in the ethics program. When communicating about the Leadership Principles, as demonstrated in Chapter 4, human resources officers highlighted that the Ferring Philosophy was a 'high level' document and that the Leadership Principles were a more operational tool. Given the resources that have been put into launching the Leadership Principles globally compared with the reduction of the Global Ethics Office, both in terms of jurisdiction and resources, I find it plausible that the (lack of) recontextualization within HR outlined in Chapter 4, the criticism raised by HR officers as well as the Leadership Principles that were introduced in response to this criticism, all contributed to the marginalization of the ethics program.

8.3.2. The (lack of) importance attached to the ethics program

As outlined in Chapter 5, the understanding of the ethics program among clinical trials officers is largely that it is indeed important to have such a program for the sake of 'others', while they themselves did not feel it was necessary for their own work. 'Ethics', they believed was already inherent in their daily work by virtue of legislative frameworks and by the fact that their work aimed to create new treatments to help patients. They were ethical already.

Clinical trials officers comprise a large community within Ferring, and one of the reasons for the changes to the ethics program may thus also be that a significant proportion of managers and staff, for whom the program is intended, do not attach particular importance to the program, and believe that the program is 'common sense' and therefore not for them. If the relevance of an ethics program is questioned, or in any case if its relevance is not felt among managers and employees, there is less of a critical mass to support the program.

Previous research on corporate social responsibility has emphasized the crucial role played by employees in ensuring that CSR programs are integrated and prioritized in an organization (see e.g. Bolton, Kim, and O'Gorman 2011; Collier and Esteban 2007). It seems fair to assume that the same would be the case with an ethics program. With this premise in mind, if an ethics program is not assigned particular importance among employees and managers, then the level of integration and prioritization will most likely decrease. I would therefore speculate that a reason why the jurisdiction of the global ethics office has decreased and some of their central areas of work have been overtaken might lie with a lack of internal organizational support from managers and employees. Demonstrating this lack of support has not been the scope of this organizational ethnography, as questions of 'why' and the implied causality within such questions lend themselves less willingly to ethnographic research, and I am thus merely offering some preliminary suggestions on this issue. Nevertheless, such questions could benefit from being explored further.

8.3.3. Experiencing inequality could undermine the ethics program

The third reason that could have played a role in explaining why the Global Ethics Office has been continuously downsized is linked to employees' experiences from their particular communities within the organizational hierarchy. As outlined in Chapter 7, these communities cut across countries and job functions, and staff members are taken aback by the contradictions they have experienced between the idealistic Ferring Philosophy of putting people first and their experiences that 'some people' with certain positions in the organizational hierarchy are in fact those who come first, in the sense that they can violate the ethical guidelines with impunity.

The employees' experience of inequality related to those in managerial positions or with (perceived) ties to the owner, and the experienced liberties that these privileged individuals are said to enjoy, without repercussions or sanctions, make employees question the ethics program and in particular the Ferring Philosophy. As described in the previous chapter, this is particularly due to the fact that the Ferring Philosophy was formulated by the owner himself, and when he or any of his acquaintances (real or perceived) are experienced as not living up to the philosophy, the program is deemed hypocritical. However, as discussed in the previous chapter, the experience of hypocrisy could potentially also spur more positive outcomes or efforts toward reform (cf. Christensen et al. 2013).

8.3.4. Ordinary ethics and national cultures

I would also like to emphasize the possible impact of national cultures on the limited jurisdiction of the Global Ethics Office. Within this dissertation, I have emphasized the importance of vocational communities of practice and questioned the widespread focus on national cultures as the most salient *per se*. However, this does not mean that I reject the possible simultaneous importance of national cultures, as such a claim would entail rejecting many previous studies that demonstrate the significance of national culture differences in organizational life. Furthermore, within this study, I did not find national culture to be unimportant. Indeed, the way in which the ethics program has been designed has strong Scandinavian national culture traits, with its focus on complexity, ambiguity and empowerment of employees to make the right decisions by themselves. If anything, the ethics program shows a degree of trust in employees to make the right decisions; and Scandinavian countries are known for their high levels of general and personal trust. Yet it is exactly these traits that are challenged by human resources officers at headquarters and in the Chinese subsidiary. Thus, national culture does seem to play a role in why the ethics program of this multinational corporation has changed, as it is the Scandinavian heritage of the program which is the centre of the criticism voiced by human resources officers. Moreover, the Scandinavian manager of the Global Ethics Office who designed it has been replaced by a headquarters-based North American citizen, and this change in leadership and composition of staff and tasks may also play a role for how the Global Ethics Office changes in the future.

8.3.5. Concluding remarks

I have outlined the changes that have occurred in the ethics program since I commenced this study. Why the ethics program has changed over the course of three years of research surely has many answers, and I am certain that much has happened behind closed doors in conversations and negotiations of which I have not been a part during this study. Thus, what I have offered here is a longitudinal perspective on organizational changes related to Ferring's ethics program and a few suggestions for the possible explanations behind these changes. Based on my research and the suggestions presented in this chapter, I would argue that the ordinary ethics of different vocational communities and communities within the organizational hierarchy ('managers' and 'employees', respectively) plays a considerable part in how (and why) the ethics program has changed.

9. Discussion

This dissertation set out to explore how a business ethics program was interpreted and recontextualized as it travelled in a multinational and multi-vocational business context. Explorations were conducted through a longitudinal ethnographic study within the multinational and multi-vocational biopharmaceutical company, Ferring Pharmaceuticals.

I started out this dissertation reviewing previous research on ethics programs, ethical decision-making and cross-cultural management in order to assess the state of existing knowledge within these fields. Throughout the dissertation, I have drawn upon a number of theoretical concepts to frame and inform the analysis; all of which helped me understand the empirics in a new way, and some of which were also challenged by the empirics. In the following, I will discuss the insights presented in the previous chapters and how they contribute to answering the research questions and to expanding existing knowledge discussed in Chapter 2. I will pay particular attention to how the theoretical concepts discussed in earlier chapters have contributed to this study as well as what might be the boundaries of these concepts and how they could be further developed.

This dissertation contributes mainly to two streams of research. First, in terms of organizational ethnography, it offers a longitudinal ethnographic study and a contextually sensitive, deep understanding of how social actors within a complex organization interpret and enact a corporate ethics program. In showing how a global ethics program is interpreted across business units and different vocational communities of practice, this study enters into a tradition of how various kinds of global programs make their entry into complex organizations, and what happens to these programs when different actors, each with their own agendas and convictions, encounter them.

The second stream of research to which this dissertation contributes is business ethics studies. The vast majority of business ethics research is quantitatively based and follows normative research designs. While this previous research certainly has its merits, with my ethnographic approach and focus on ethics as practice, this study provides more contextualized and experience-near insights; we learn not just what a business ethics program contains, but also what it does and how it is remoulded as it travels through the organization.

Furthermore, perhaps due to the vulnerability of the pharmaceutical industry towards exposure of development processes and yet unpatented products, social science researchers rarely gain access to study within this industry. Therefore, the present PhD study also represents a significant empirical contribution in that it offers insights from a three-year engagement in a sector that could seem like an obvious choice for business ethics studies but to which researchers rarely gain access.

In the following, I will elaborate on these contributions as they relate to the research questions.

9.1. Research Question 1

What material shape has the management idea of 'business ethics' taken in Ferring Pharmaceuticals and how is this idea interpreted and recontextualized as it travels to business units abroad?

Within this study, I have conceptualized business ethics as a travelling management idea similar to other managerial trends that travel, gain footing, widespread recognition and materializations within businesses worldwide (Czarniawska and Sevón 2005a). I did this to underscore the different forms that 'business ethics' may take on in different organizations and to emphasize that the ethics program under study represents merely one form of this management idea within one company.

In order to answer the first research question, I explored the particular instantiation of the management idea of 'business ethics' in Ferring Pharmaceuticals. I further asked how this management idea (materialized in the ethics program) was interpreted and recontextualized as it travelled to business units abroad.

This first research question was addressed in Chapter 4, where I analyzed the components and characteristics of Ferring's ethics program and highlighted the visibility of the Scandinavian heritage in how the program was designed, as well as the difficulties that arose when it was introduced into other national cultural contexts. The subsequent chapters shed new light on these insights by also demonstrating the salience of other contexts than national ones for how the ethics program was interpreted and enacted.

In the following, I will discuss how these insights and this dissertation in its entirety contributes to developing the theoretical concept of recontextualization. Moreover, within Ferring, the management idea of business ethics has taken the shape of an ethics program, and insights from my ethnographic study can contribute to refining the scholarly definition of what an ethics program is. These contributions will be discussed in the following.

9.1.1. Travel and recontextualization of a management idea

In Chapter 2, I explored how the concept of recontextualization had been applied in previous literature to show that firm offerings of many kinds – including management ideas – not only travel and take various shapes within various companies; they also travel and take on *new* shapes within different parts of the same company. Drawing on this insight, in Chapter 4, I sought to understand what happened when the management idea of 'business ethics', Ferring's ethics program, travelled from the Global Ethics Office in Denmark to Ferring's headquarter in Switzerland and to a subsidiary in China.

Based on previous literature presented in Chapter 2 (see e.g. Aggerholm et al. 2012; D'Iribarne 2012; Gertsen and Zølner 2012b; Primecz et al. 2011; Søderberg 2015), I had expected to find local adaptations and recontextualizations of the program, but in both field sites outside Denmark, I found instead that entirely new, competing values programs were developed and that they were developed due to a very similar criticism of Ferring's ethics program. Among the human resources officers in Switzerland and China, the ethics program was experienced as 'high level', too ambiguous and lacking what they called 'operationalizability'. Human resources officers were unsure how to put the ethics program into practice, what it should look like when put into practice and found it difficult to assess what behaviors would reflect that it was being followed or not. In short, in the Chinese subsidiary as well as at headquarters, HR officers sought more concrete definitions of preferred behaviours and sought to render these behaviours accountable. As a result, at headquarters as well as in the Chinese subsidiary, HR officers developed alternative and competing programs containing precisely these features of accountability.

Thus, returning to the first research question, which asks how the management idea is interpreted and recontextualized as this idea travels to business units abroad, the answer is, surprisingly, that the expected recontextualization does not occur.

9.1.2. An inter-dimensional model of recontextualization

As mentioned earlier, recontextualization as a concept highlights the importance of the historical, political and cultural context of the receivers of firm offerings, and many scholars engaging with the concept – including Brannen herself – focus on national cultural differences between senders and receivers of such offerings (Brannen 2004; see also e.g. Gertsen and Zølner 2012a; Peltokorpi and Vaara 2012; Søderberg 2015). However, as cited earlier, recontextualization is 'the transformation of the meaning of firm´s offerings (e.g., technologies, work practices and products) as they are uprooted from one cultural environment and transplanted to another' (Brannen et al. 1999:118), and although

Brannen developed the recontextualization concept in order to understand aspects of 'transnational transfer' (Brannen 2004:604), the concept could also be relevant for exploring recontextualizations into various other communities besides national ones.

However, in Brannen's description of the concept, she assumes that firm offerings are recontextualized into *a* (singular) new cultural environment. As she writes, 'recontextualization is the process by which the consumer or transferee makes sense of the product, practice, or service transferred from abroad into his or her own culture' (Brannen 2004:605). Thus, the concept of recontextualization operates with a singular concept of culture, as also reflected in Brannen's model, inserted in Figure 2 below. As the model shows, the new cultural context, for Brannen, is a singular context, and although the lines in the circle that illustrate this context are dotted, this new cultural context is described as 'one' and somewhat stable. As Brannen writes: 'the concept of recontextualization allows us to track such shifts in meanings attached to objects and processes as they move from one culture to another' (Brannen 2004:604).

Figure 2 - Recontextualization of Firm Assets[170]

Recontextualization of Firm Assets
New cultural context

S_1: Initial semiosis
S_2: Ongoing semiosis
S_3: Reflexive semiosis

---
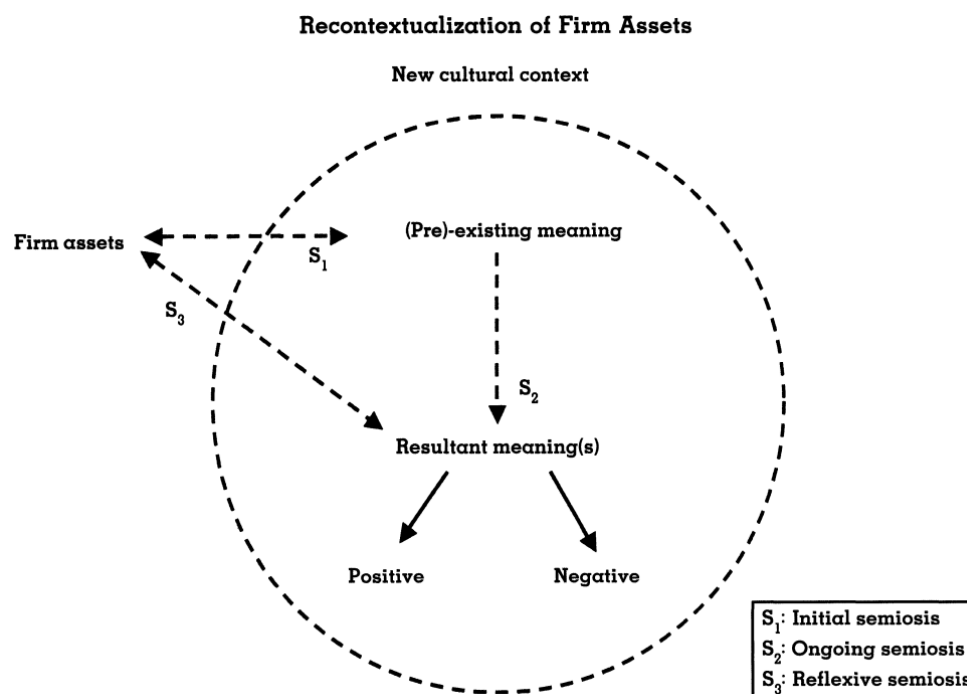
[170] This figure is inserted from (Brannen 2004:604).

In my study, I have highlighted the importance of the various communities in which people participate, and I have focused on national and vocational communities as well as hierarchical organizational groupings. I would therefore argue that the concept of recontextualization should be adjusted such that firm offerings can become recontextualized (or not) into various, simultaneously present contextual *dimensions* that people engage in at different moments. These dimensions are neither stable nor separate units. Rather, they are layers of the social reality that gain relevance in different situations similar to those layers defined within institutional theory, where the literature on professions highlights the importance of different, simultaneously co-existing institutional logics pertaining to these professions and their environment for how actors behave and perceive themselves (Goodrick and Reay 2011; Reay et al. 2017; Smets et al. 2015).

While I have explored three of these simultaneously present dimensions in this dissertation (national, vocational and hierarchical) the number of dimensions certainly does not end here. I have focused on those three dimensions that came out of my particular study, but one could envision more micro groupings based upon specific educational backgrounds, gender, age, previous work experiences and familial relationships, or more macro groupings such as national business systems (Maurice and Sorge 2000; Whitley 2007), each of which could play a specific role in the way firm offerings (such as an ethics program) are recontextualized.

Previous quantitative research has indicated the impact of educational background and gender on perceptions of business ethics (Ermasova, Wagner, and Nguyen 2017; McCabe, Ingram, and Dato-on 2006; Wang and Calvano 2015). Similarly, Matten and Moon (2008) argue that differences in approaches to corporate social responsibility can be explained by differences in institutional contexts such as political systems, financial systems and labour systems, and to me it seems likely that national business systems, as macro layers of the social realities into which codes of ethics are introduced, might also become relevant for how an ethics program is interpreted and enacted.

Besides assuming that firm assets are introduced from one, singular context into another, Brannen's concept of recontextualization further assumes a degree of stability within the 'sending' and 'receiving' contexts, which then - to varying degrees 'fit' together semantically. What I found in this study is that the dimensions that gain relevance at different moments are more fluid and simultaneous than the '*(Pre)-existing*' meaning that Brannen's concept of recontextualization suggests, cf. her illustration in Figure 2.

This present dissertation has shown that firm assets – in my case an ethics program – are introduced into, and made sense of within various dimensions simultaneously. And contrary to Brannen's model, which assumes stability within contexts, I have shown how practical judgment is ongoing and happens – and sometimes shifts - in daily, continuous practice.

Figure 3 - An inter-dimensional model of recontextualization
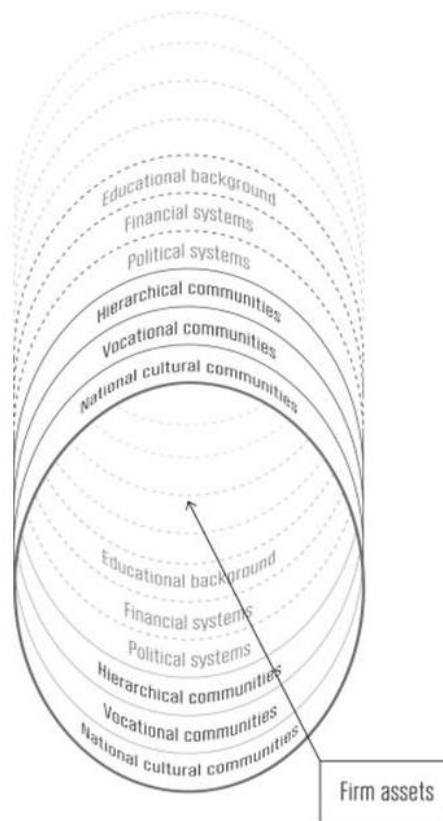
Thus, I propose to build on the insightful work of Brannen and develop an inter-dimensional model of recontextualization, where firm assets move between multiple dimensions of the new contexts into which they are introduced. I deliberately term it *inter*-dimensional, as I do not perceive the dimensions as separate units but rather as interrelated and co-existing, as illustrated in the layered structure of the model in Figure 3. Furthermore, it is important to note that the firm asset itself is informed by a system of signification, as also argued by Brannen (2004). Moreover, in a forthcoming book chapter about cross-cultural management and cultural identity, Brannen (2020) argues that a person's identity in organizational settings is determined not only by their national or ethnic belonging but also by e.g. careers and job roles. With this in mind, I am fairly certain that Brannen would welcome my nuancing of her model of recontextualization.

In Chapter 2, I introduced definitions of corporate ethics programs made by Weaver and Treviño (1999) and Martineau et al. (2016), and in Chapter 5, I developed these definitions into a tripartite conceptualization of ethics programs by adding two further nuances: namely that they are contextually contingent and (despite the fact that ethics programs often contain elements of both orientations), that the compliance-orientation or values-orientation that characterizes most of the ethics practices within such programs work differently depending on the orientation of the organizational context into which the program is introduced. However, based on insights from the subsequent chapters 6 and 7, some adjustments to this definition are necessary.

Throughout chapters 4-7, I have demonstrated how Ferring's ethics program is interpreted and enacted differently among different vocational and hierarchical communities, and I highlighted the simultaneous ways in which these communities moved in and out of relevance in relation to the ethics program. Because of the importance of different communities that I have demonstrated in this dissertation, I would add a third nuance to the conceptualization of ethics programs that could be highly relevant for companies seeking to ensure adherence to such programs; namely the operational level of the ethics program.

Most companies described in previous research seem to operate corporate level ethics programs with one-size, broadly targeted ethics practices (such as ethics training, codes of ethics and whistle-blowing procedures) for the entire organization (see e.g. Helin and Sandström 2008, 2010; Jensen et al. 2015; Kaptein 2009). However, similarly to arguments made for establishing ethics practices that are sensitive to national cultural differences (see e.g. Chang 2012), I would argue that it is also crucial to consider ethics program orientations with different vocational foci.

Within Ferring, the ethics program operates on a corporate level with one set of ethics practices for the entire organization, but as we saw in chapters 5 and 6, clinical trials officers and marketing and sales officers have different understandings of the core message of putting 'people' first.
I can only speculate as to whether the understandings of the ethics program would have been different had Ferring chosen more vocationally targeted ethics practices for different functional groups. Nevertheless, the insights from my fieldwork indicate that the level on which the program operates needs to be accounted for when defining (and for companies when designing) an ethics program. As highlighted in Chapter 5 and illustrated in Figure 4 , ethics programs may consist of both values- and

compliance oriented ethics practices, and these practices are introduced at different levels and into environments that are most often characterized by being either largely compliance- oriented or largely values-oriented. Of course, as also emphasized in Chapter 5, organizational contexts normally contain both compliance-oriented and values- oriented characteristics, but as was the case with the clinical trials officers, who operated in a highly regulated environment, each context may bear one trait more strongly. Hence, although Figure 4 below shows the organizational contexts separately, in practice, organizations will contain elements of both.

Figure 4 - Levels of ethics programs in context

Levels of ethics program orientations	Organizational context for the ethics programs	
Compliance- and/or values- oriented ethics practices → Corporate level / National levels / Vocational levels	Compliance-oriented context	Values-oriented Context
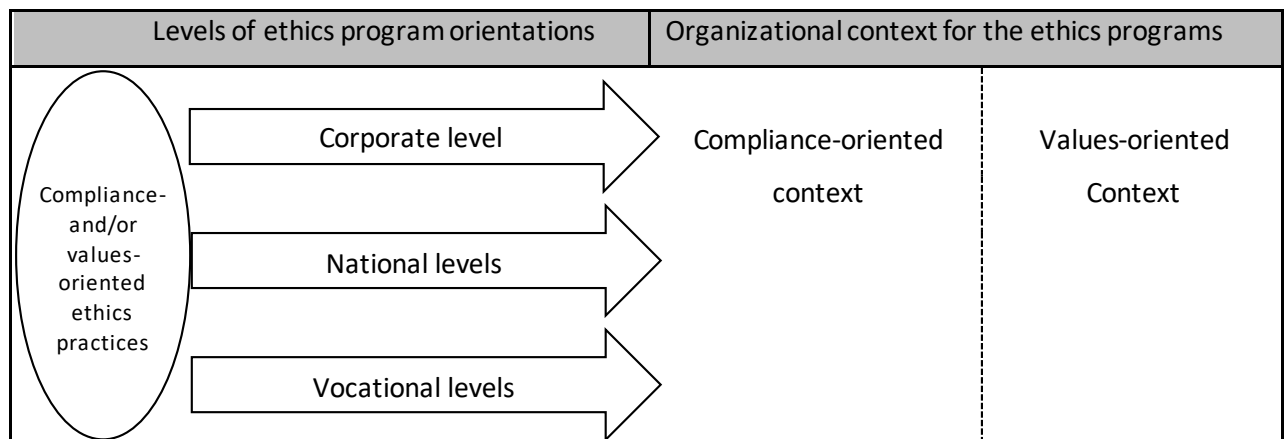
Thus, I would further develop the three component conceptualization of ethics programs introduced in Chapter 5 as follows:

(1) Ethics programs are:
Normative and contextually contingent control systems aimed at creating predictability in employee behaviour and a correspondence between specific employee behaviours and more general organizational goals and expectations (cf. Weaver and Treviño 1999).

(2) Ethics programs contain:
A combination of ethics practices[171] which are often characterized as being either predominantly values-oriented or predominantly compliance-oriented and which are directed towards different levels of the organization, such as the corporate level, national levels or vocational levels.

---

[171] As defined by Martineau et al. as 'any rule, method, procedure, process, management tool, structure, or institution that presents an essential teleological character aiming at increasing consciousness, reflection and ethical behavior in an organization, at the individual, collective and strategic levels' (Martineau et al. 2016:793).

Ethics Programs work:

Differently depending on whether the organizational context into which they are introduced is predominantly compliance-oriented or predominantly values-oriented.

Returning to the first research question, I showed that the management idea of business ethics in Ferring has taken the shape of an ethics program characterized by values and approaches typical for Scandinavian national cultural contexts, and this study has served to develop a more contextually sensitive definition of such ethics programs that can be operationalized into research questions and further empirical inquiry.

9.2. Research question 2

How is Ferring's ethics program interpreted and enacted as it travels into different vocational communities and across levels in the organizational hierarchy?

The second research question is focused on interpretations and enactments of the ethics program within different vocational communities. As such, I will first discuss the concept of the multi-vocational company. I then discuss the notion of business ethics as practice and in particular the theoretical concept of 'ordinary ethics' and how it contributed to addressing this second research question.

9.2.1. The multi-vocational company

In Chapter 2, I pointed out the tendency within cross-cultural management to conflate the concept of 'culture' with 'national culture'. I therefore emphasized how previous research had focused on the impact of national cultures on ethical orientations (see e.g. Bageac et al. 2011; Choi et al. 2010; Preble and Reichel 1988; Scholtens and Dam 2007; Sims 2006; Tsalikis et al. 2008). Based on previous studies, I expected national belonging to be salient for how Ferring's ethics program was interpreted by employees in different national settings, and I had originally designed this study according to this expectation by selecting two global locations outside of Denmark. My intention was to explore local interpretations and recontextualizations of the Scandinavian/Danish-oriented ethics program. As outlined in the previous section, although I found national culture aspects to indeed be salient for both the design of the ethics program in Denmark and for how it was received abroad, I was surprised to also find that national culture explanations could not fully account for what I had observed. When Ferring's

ethics program was subjected to the same criticism in both China and Switzerland, I found myself having to look beyond the purely national culture aspects to understand what was going on. And I realized that employees' vocational affiliations and their place in the organizational hierarchy also affected how they received the ethics program.

In Chapter 2 of this dissertation, I proposed to conceptualize internal firm diversity in ways other than the dominant notion of whether or not companies were multinational. As I argued, multi-nationality is also to a large degree an emic term that companies use to define their internal structures and which is often reflected in companies' own organograms (cf. Moore 2015b). In addition to this conceptualization, I proposed to understand internal firm diversity also in terms of vocational diversity and the degree to which multiple vocational communities exist and are salient within a company. My study of Ferring Pharmaceuticals has enabled me to develop a more empirically founded understanding of this construct, as Ferring is a multi-vocational company. It contains a high number of salient business functions, such as research and development of new products, internal manufacturing of products, marketing and sales of these products as well as various corporate support functions. In this dissertation, I have highlighted the importance of these vocational communities for how Ferring's ethics program is interpreted and enacted. However, I would assume multi-vocationality to also be central for the understanding and enactment of other types of organizational concepts, assets and processes, similar to the salience of various multi-national company traits, which has been demonstrated widely (cf. Bartlett and Ghoshal 1989; Harzing 2000). Therefore, in the following, I will spend a moment reflecting on how the multi-vocational company could be conceptualized for further studies. My goal here is to highlight the need for sensitivity to other structural aspects of firm-diversity besides the sheer number and distribution of subsidiaries in different countries.

The multi-vocational company is a company that, similarly to Ferring Pharmaceuticals, is characterized by having not only a high number of internal business functions and vocational areas but also by these functions being central for the company's activities.
The opposite end of this spectrum would be the mono-vocational company containing very few vocational areas and internal business functions. Of course, I daresay, no companies – except perhaps for individual consultants and other one-person enterprises are purely mono-vocational; and perhaps not even then, as this one person manages all roles as sales manager, accounting officer, research analyst etc. at once. However, I would argue that it is still beneficial to reflect on the degree to which a company is multi- or mono vocational, as it seems to be an indicator for internal diversity, regardless of

whether or not the company is operating in one country or several. I thus view the multi- and the mono-vocational company as two (extreme) ends of a continuum on which companies will often be closer to one end than the other.

Of course, companies might be more mono-vocational in terms of internal entities and processes but still have a great variety of professionals and educational levels represented; for example, a consultancy company could operate without doing research, product development or manufacturing, but still offering services such as architecture, environmental engineering solutions or management consulting. Thus, the notion of the multi-vocational or mono-vocational company is not a 1:1 empirical representation but rather an ideal type and an analytical lens with which to understand internal firm diversity. Furthermore, multi-vocational traits may also be connected to the size and industry of the company. For example, other companies with more multi-vocational traits would be larger companies in the automotive or tech industry that develop and produce hardware, software and various maintenance services. Companies with more mono-vocational traits would be, for example, logistics companies, management consulting firms and other such service companies. These latter companies can function without the need for major research, development and production of products. Again, I would like to stress that I have chosen to use the term 'vocational' rather than 'professional', as these companies may be composed of different professional groups, as was the case with the vocational communities presented in this study.

Further, while I make no claims or attempts to be able to determine whether vocational communities or national cultural communities are the most salient for how a business ethics program is understood, nor for which kind of vocational community should be studied; as my research has shown, the importance of vocational communities should not be overlooked.

9.2.2. Business ethics as practice

In Chapter 2 I declared that I would follow previous calls to explore business ethics as practice (Painter-Morland 2008) rather than view 'ethics' as something that surfaces in specific (crisis) situations. As mentioned, within her extensive book on the topic, Painter-Morland (2008) introduces the idea of conceptualizing business ethics as practice, and in an elaborated argument, she outlines the current state of ethics management in organizations and points to its limitations. Painter-Morland draws on various theoretical traditions, as well as on cases from public media and previous research to argue that

the main limitation of current ethics programs is their dissociation from everyday business practice. However, as argued in Chapter 2, while her thoughts are intriguing and she draws on a number of theoretical sources, her study lacks the kind of empirical case material which could add depth to her claims. This dissertation offers one such empirical case.

Within this dissertation, I have demonstrated how an ethics program, and particularly its code of ethics, was interpreted and enacted differently by different vocational communities. My study thus provides empirical support for Painter-Morland's (2008) problematization of the dissociation of ethics from everyday business practice. In Ferring, as argued earlier, the ethics program operated on a corporate level with the same one-size program for all and thus did not speak directly to the particularities of everyday work. This dissociation of the ethics program from the daily work of e.g. clinical trials officers and marketing and sales officers may explain the different understandings and enactments of the ethics program within these staff groups.

Further, as mentioned in Chapter 2, Painter-Morland (2008) criticized the underlying assumption among many business ethics scholars and practitioners that individuals in organizations are rational agents capable of operationalizing rational protocols for ethical conduct. I share this critique of the literature. Further, as I demonstrated in Chapter 4, Ferring's ethics program did not correspond to this image of practitioners with rigid definitions of ethical protocols, as their ethics program was highly values-oriented, focused on moral education and making an effort to highlight that employees should not be seeking out definitive prescriptions for right and wrong. Thus, my empirical examination of Painter-Morland's critique has provided a nuance to the descriptions of ethics programs and highlighted an empirical example of a company that strives to take a less compliance-oriented approach.

Painter-Morland (2008) also argued that organizational actors' ethical orientations are shaped by the tacit knowledge that emerges over time through multiple interactions with multiple other actors. The reason why Painter-Morland does not offer any empirical examples to support this claim may be because tacit knowledge is by definition unnoticed, unarticulated and thus difficult to grasp empirically. In this dissertation, however, I have attempted to capture people's taken for granted, unnoticed and immanent ethical orientations by exploring practices, everyday interactions and ordinary judgments. By introducing the concept of ordinary ethics, I have thus not only contributed with an empirical substantiation and refinement of Painter-Morland's ideas about ethics as practice. I have also

introduced a theoretical concept which unfolds what ethics in practice consists of as well as how it can be explored.

9.2.3. Ethical decision-making and ethics as ordinary

In Chapter 2, I highlighted how the literature on ethical decision-making has demonstrated the importance of context for how the ethical is defined. My PhD study has confirmed the importance of context on different levels. First, it has highlighted the importance of whether the organizational context into which an ethics program is introduced bears compliance-oriented or integrity-oriented traits. Second, my study has highlighted the importance of vocational and hierarchical contexts, and in highlighting the intersection of ordinary ethics within such contexts and a business ethics program, I argued that business ethics does indeed lie within ordinary practices.

Whereas most studies within comparative business ethics are based on surveys, by exploring these matters ethnographically, I found more contexts with an impact on people's ethical orientations than I had initially anticipated. Likewise, most comparative ethical decision-making studies focus on national contexts, but if these contexts are defined as central to explore from the outset, the researcher may overlook the possible salience of other contexts. Thus, although studies of ethical decision-making emphasize the importance of (national) context, the actual research designs chosen within previous research have tended to limit the definitions of which contexts may be important. In my study, with its ethnographic, inductive focus, I have sought to mitigate this empirical downside.

As I pointed out in Chapter 2, another blind spot within ethical decision-making studies is that they only cover areas and decision-making situations that have been defined as ethically salient by the researcher. These studies demarcate and distinguish ethical decisions and practices from other 'ordinary' decisions and practices, as if some decisions were *a priori* outside of the realm of the ethical. In an attempt to attend to contextual and circumstantial conditions while simultaneously avoiding normative definitions of the ethical, I drew on Lambek's notion of ordinary ethics. By calling attention to everyday judgment and practice, the concept of ordinary ethics has aided the analysis and helped show how decision-making of all kinds is always inherently ethical, as our judgments, and the criteria against which we deem things appropriate (or not), are always embedded in our understandings and practices of right and wrong.

Hereby, the notion of ordinary ethics and the insights from this study thus expand and complement the literature on ethical decision-making by defining the ethical as immanent and emergent rather than isolating it from the outset.

The concept of ordinary ethics does not assume the existence of any universal ethical questions nor any universal ways to handle these, and the limitation of the concept, therefore, is that it can be subject to accusations of ethical relativism. If all practices are ordinary ethics, one might ask, then 'does anything go'? However, the point of departure for ordinary ethics is that there is indeed a right course of action and a right way of striving towards 'the good' for each individual. But the definitions, of what this 'good' and what this 'right' course of action consists of, differ. And, I would argue, exploring business ethics as practice entails investigating the content of these definitions.

Understanding ethics as ordinary and inherent in everyday action has two primary implications. First, it expands the ways in which business ethics, including ethical decision-making, should be studied and demands that more scholars engage in ethnographic research which is sensitive to people's own experiences and understandings of right and wrong. By bringing perspectives from the ethical turn in anthropology into the study of business ethics, and by listening to the critique that researchers should refrain from infusing their studies with their own conceptions of 'the good' (cf. Fassin 2014; Laidlaw 2002; Mahmood 2012), I hope to encourage scholars engaged with ethical decision-making studies to broaden their scope of analysis. Moreover, I hope that these scholars will also find relevance in asking questions about the ethical that are to a lesser extent coloured by their own or claimed 'universal' definitions of what is ethical and what is not. Rather than defining certain situations as ethical from the outset and studying how people respond to these, then categorizing their choices as ethical or unethical, I have sought to demonstrate that it is equally compelling to explore what it is that makes choices seem right or wrong, ethical or unethical, from the point of view of our interlocutors in the field.

The second implication of understanding business ethics as ordinary and inherent in everyday action lies in its practical possibilities for how companies may design their ethics programs. I will turn to these implications in the following.

9.2.4. Practical implications: phronetic ethics programs

As Lambek writes (2010a:14, 2015b:14), following Aristotle, ethics is a dimension of action rather than (only) an aspect of thought, and *phronesis*, or practical wisdom, is developed over time by actors who engage in virtuous action. Drawing on Lambek's 'ordinary ethics' concept, understandings of 'the good' are thus 'phronetic' and developed through practice. And this has practical implications for how companies may go about designing their ethics programs so that they focus on developing such practical wisdom among employees.

In a paper about two insurance company call-centers, Nyberg (2008) shows how phronesis is developed among call-center employees who discuss the ethical questions that emerge in their daily work, and how they hereby develop a practical wisdom about how to solve such questions. As he writes, 'Successful ethical learning occurs in the contingent practical situations that emerge in the workplace. That is why it is in the situations that ethical socialization and training must occur, to make sure that a more ethical community emerges from past practices' (Nyberg 2008:596).

Although Nyberg refers to more spontaneous discussions that emerge among the group of call-center employees, I find that this point is also relevant for developing the practices of ethics programs. Most ethics programs already contain some degree of ethics training (cf. Kaptein 2015), which could resemble such 'ethical socialization' called for by Nyberg. However, as was the case in Ferring, this training was offered to new employees, and Ferring's ethics program did not contain any further mandatory training elements or other structured approaches to ensure that continuous discussions take place around the dilemmas that employees and managers meet in their daily practice. Moreover, similar to most ethics programs, Ferring's ethics program is designed at the corporate level rather than for vocational levels, cf. Figure 4 introduced earlier, which further detaches the program from the practical everyday activities of employees and managers. While Ferring made efforts to introduce an ethics workshop for managers, this was discontinued with the introduction of the new Leadership Principles training.

Building on insights from my organizational ethnography, it could be recommendable to design 'phronetic' ethics programs to contain more ongoing, practical training concepts that facilitate continuous deliberations about dilemmas as they are experienced in people's daily work. This is a proposal to broaden, deepen and extend ethics program designs down to the everyday, and out into the various communities and sub-groups which comprise most contemporary organizations. Furthermore, this dissertation has highlighted the diverging and context-dependent notions of right and wrong among different communities, and it could therefore be valuable for companies to consider in

more detail if certain topics or activities should be defined as ethically salient for the company and given special attention as part of the ethics program.

9.3. Research question 3

How does Ferring's ethics program change over time?

Here, I will not repeat the descriptions from Chapter 8 about how the program changes, but only briefly mention the possible explanations for why these changes came about. Firstly, a large staff group within the company, the clinical trials officers, seemed to consider the ethics program to be common-sensical and thus redundant, due to a conviction that they were already focusing on the ethical questions that the program was addressing. Secondly, human resources officers with an expansive organizational reach and a high impact on which corporate messages get pushed found the ethics program to be difficult to operationalize. They therefore introduced new, competing values programs, one of which (the Leadership Principles) is a corporate program with a high priority and resources for a global 'roll-out', hereby challenging the existing ethics program. Thirdly, employees at the lower echelons tended to view the ethics program and its phrase of 'People come first' in terms of their experiences of unfairness and inequality, and as a result, saw the ethics program as hypocritical.

As mentioned in Chapter 8, although there are certainly more elements that have impacted the changes in Ferring's ethics program during the three years of this study, I would argue that the elements mentioned above have contributed to the changes that have occurred during the course of this research. And insights into the differences between various communities of practice have been brought about by the concept of ordinary ethics.

The concept of ordinary ethics certainly has its limitations. It does not explain, for example, how these communities have formed and why they sometimes might even be more important than national culture. One explanation is offered by international business scholar Dan V Caprar (2011), who writes that within international business studies, host country nationals (HCNs) are often assumed to identify and be identified with a somewhat stereotyped image of the local national culture and within MNCs, HCNs are often assumed to behave in ways interchangeable with the rest of the population in the host country. However, as Caprar demonstrates in his study, over time and within the MNC context, these HCNs often align themselves more with the MNCs than with the image of the national culture in the

host country. Caprar terms such employees 'foreign locals' due to their national belonging paired with a strong identification with the MNC. Similarly, as mentioned in Chapter 4, Moore (2005) defines such individuals as members of a Transnational Capitalist Society who likewise identify with both global and local communities. Although the present study has not focused on identification, I found among my informants similar communities that transcended national borders. These vocational communities are likewise formed continuously, and the ethical orientations of the communities are shaping and reshaped by the practices within these communities over time. In order to understand more about the conditions for the existence of such communities, it may be relevant in the future to pair the concept of ordinary ethics with studies of identities and identification.

10. Conclusion

Within previous studies reviewed in Chapter 2, I found a dominant normative focus on the 'effectiveness' of ethics programs, which was measured according to the researcher's definitions of effectiveness. However, previous research on these matters was inconclusive. I suggested that this might be due to the fact that researchers have largely approached the empirical phenomenon of 'implementation' of ethics programs quantitatively and considered such programs to be static and measurable units. I proposed that it might provide new and deeper understandings if researchers explored and followed the processes of introducing such programs into complex organizations and the many ways in which managers and employees engage with such 'traveling' programs.
Scholars (e.g. Babri et al. 2019; Helin and Sandström 2007) have pointed out that we know little about what kinds of challenges arise when trying to introduce elements of ethics programs into complex organizations and what kinds of different actors engage with these programs and how; and that there is a dearth of qualitative, longitudinal research exploring such crucial issues.
The ethnographic research I have conducted represents one such qualitative, longitudinal study focused on the challenges that arise and the many ways in which actors interpret and enact an ethics program, as it travels within a complex organization.

Within this study, I found that the ethics program was inscribed into a number of overlapping communities, such as national cultural communities, vocational communities and hierarchical communities, and that none of the outlined community affiliations could alone explain completely how informants interpreted and enacted the ethics program. The messiness of real life is not easily confined into clear categories, and this may be one reason why previous quantitative research on the 'effectiveness' of ethics programs has shown to be inconclusive. Moreover, the inconclusiveness may also be due to the fact that multiple notions of 'effectiveness' or 'right' and 'wrong' exist among scholars as well as among organizational actors, as exemplified in Chapter 4 about ethics officers and human resources officers and in chapters 5 and 6 about clinical trials officers and marketing and sales officers. Thus, the goals toward which organizational actors work or the criteria they (or the researcher) employ to assess these may be quite different, and this may be the case even *within* the national cultural communities that are so often taken as the primary unit of comparison within comparative business ethics studies.

The ethnographic method showed itself to be an invaluable way to explore business ethics in practice as well as to understand the variations in how different vocational communities interpreted and enacted Ferring's ethics program. Moreover, the industrial PhD scheme has facilitated a rare access within the field of study. Due to my status as an employee in the company, I have had access to Ferring for the entire three-year project period and was able to obtain a longitudinal perspective on their ethics program. I also gained relatively unhindered access to people and contexts to an extent quite rare for organizational ethnographers, and this privileged access has made possible the rich ethnographic material that forms the basis of this dissertation. The obvious challenge with the industrial PhD scheme, as described in Chapter 3, has been the need to balance my formal employment in the company with my role as an independent researcher. Here I have strived to remain reflexive about the significance of my roles throughout the research.

As mentioned in Chapter 3, due to these open doors that I experienced in Ferring, the research could have been designed differently, e.g. with more explorations of only one location or only one vocational group. This approach would have provided an even deeper understanding of ethics in practice within a narrower group of people. However, this strategy would have prevented the analysis across countries and business functions that this dissertation has provided. Conversely, the research could also have been designed to encompass more vocational groups and more countries. This could have facilitated a more extensive exploration of the significance of vocational communities, but it would have been costly in terms of depth of the study.

Within anthropology, spending one year in the field is no noteworthy achievement and many anthropologists – especially those studying geographically delimited communities - return to the same fields throughout their career. The conditions of studying corporate contexts are fairly different from the freedom experienced by more classical anthropologists for whom buying a plane ticket and settling down on the town square or at the local eatery are the basic steps to get 'back' in the field. Given corporate turn-over rates affecting the availability of central gatekeepers in our fields, as well as processes of legal review of research agreements, returning to a corporate context to conduct further studies is a slightly more complicated matter. Especially when one's primary field site (in my case, the Global Ethics Office) has been absorbed into another organizational structure. However, to expand the insights from this present study as well as to understand the boundaries of these insights, it could be beneficial to conduct further, more in-depth research focused only on one country or only on one vocational community. Moreover, as I will elaborate in the following, it could be highly beneficial to explore the themes of this dissertation within other methodological traditions.

10.1. Suggestions for future research

While this study contributes with significant empirical and theoretical insights, ample opportunities remain for further inquiry into the issues raised within this dissertation. The issue of vocational communities and their significance for various organizational agendas and practices is a fascinating avenue that could benefit from further research; both qualitative and quantitative. This dissertation has contributed with an in-depth ethnographic perspective, and while further qualitative research could explore the understanding and enactments of various firm offerings among different vocational groups, it would also be immensely valuable to see more quantitative research that sought to determine the relative importance of vocational communities and national cultures, respectively, as the ethnographic methodology does not offer empirical backing for such inquiries. In this dissertation, we saw that neither national culture nor vocational community - nor any other community for that matter - is necessarily always the most salient. It would therefore be interesting to further explore the conditions, boundaries and interconnectedness of various communities and at what moments each of these becomes most salient, and to establish a dialogue around this area within these different research traditions.

Due to the longitudinal research design, this dissertation also offers insights into how a corporate ethics program has changed. Although the ethnographic research design has not sought to determine any correlations between factors and outcomes, these insights still raise questions about the significance of the ordinary ethics of vocational communities and the role they may have played in the changes in Ferring's ethics program during the course of the PhD project. It would therefore be valuable to further explore questions of how and why the materializations of 'business ethics' as a management idea change.

Lastly, another line of inquiry for future endeavors is to continue explorations of ethics as ordinary and inherent in everyday action. It would be interesting to see a research agenda on 'ethics as practice' similar to the extensive work on strategy as practice mentioned in Chapter 2. As mentioned, past calls for an ethics as practice approach have remained rather theoretical (cf. Painter-Morland 2008), and it could be valuable to see more empirical studies exploring ethics as a practical endeavor, defined by the actors under study rather than by the researcher. An understanding of business ethics will be possible only if we also understand the people practicing ethics in their ordinary, everyday lives.

Bibliography

Abbott, Andrew. 1988. *The System of Professions: An Essay on the Division of Expert Labor*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Abraham, John. 2010. "Pharmaceuticalization of Society in Context: Theoretical, Empirical and Health Dimensions." *Sociology* 44(4):603–22.

Adler, Patricia A. and Peter Adler. 1987. "Complete Membership." Pp. 68–84 in *Membership Roles in Field Research*, edited by P. A. Adler and P. Adler. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, Inc.

Aggerholm, Helle Kryger, Birte Asmuß, and Christa Thomsen. 2012. "The Role of Recontextualization in the Multivocal, Ambiguous Process of Strategizing." *Journal of Management Inquiry* 21(4):413–28.

Aguinis, Herman and Ante Glavas. 2012. "What We Know and Don't Know About Corporate Social Responsibility: A Review and Research Agenda." *Journal of Management* 38(4):932–68.

Alvesson, Mats. 1994. "Talking in Organizations: Managing Identity and Impressions in an Advertising Agency." *Organization Studies* 15(4):535–63.

Alvesson, Mats. 2009. "At-Home Ethnography: Struggling with Closeness and Closure." Pp. 156–74 in *Organizational Ethnography: Studying the Complexities of Everyday Life*, edited by S. Ybema, D. Yanow, H. Wels, and F. Kamsteeg. London: Sage Publications.

Alvesson, Mats and Dan Kärreman. 2011. *Qualitative Research and Theory Development: Mystery as Method*. London: Sage Publications.

Alvesson, Mats and Kaj Sköldberg. 2000. *Reflexive Methodology: New Vistas for Qualitative Research*. London: Sage Publications.

Amis, John M. and Michael L. Silk. 2008. "The Philosophy and Politics of Quality in Qualitative Organizational Research." *Organizational Research Methods* 11(3):456–80.

Anteby, Michel. 2013. "PERSPECTIVE — Relaxing the Taboo on Telling Our Own Stories: Upholding Professional Distance and Personal Involvement." *Organization Science* 24(4):1277–90.

Appadurai, Arjun. 1990. "Disjuncture and Difference in the Global Cultural Economy." *Theory, Culture & Society* 7:295–310.

Arnaud, Anke. 2010. "Conceptualizing and Measuring Ethical Work Climate Development and Validation of the Ethical Climate Index." *Business & Society* 49(2):345–58.

Austin, John L. 1976. *How to Do Things with Words: The William James Lectures Delivered at Harvard University in 1955*. 2. ed. edited by M. Sbisa and J. O. Urmson. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Babri, Maira, Bruce Davidson, and Sven Helin. 2019. "An Updated Inquiry into the Study of Corporate Codes of Ethics: 2005-2016." *Journal of Business Ethics*.

Bageac, Daniel, Olivier Furrer, and Emmanuelle Reynaud. 2011. "Management Students' Attitudes Toward Business Ethics: A Comparison Between France and Romania." *Journal of Business Ethics* 98(3):391–406.

Bansal, Pratima and Kevin Corley. 2012. "From the Editors: Publishing in 'AMJ' - Part 7: What's Different about Qualitative Research?" *The Academy of Management Journal* 55(3):509–13.

Barmeyer, C. I. and E. Davoine. 2011. "The Intercultural Challenges in the Transfer of Codes of Conduct from the US to Europe." Pp. 53–63 in *Cross-Cultural Management in Practice: Culture and Negotiated Meanings*, edited by H. Primecz, L. Romani, and S. A. Sackmann. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.

Bartlett, Christopher A. and Sumantra Ghoshal. 1989. *Managing across Borders: The Transnational Solution*. London: Hutchinson.

Bechara, John and Andrew H. Van de Ven. 2011. "Triangulating Philosophies of Science to Understand Complex Organizational and Managerial Problems." Pp. 343–64 in *Philosophy and Organization Theory*, edited by H. Tsoukas and R. Chia. Bingley: Emerald Group Publishing Limited.

Beech, Nic, Paul Hibbert, Robert MacIntosh, and Peter McInnes. 2009. "'But I Thought We Were Friends?' Life Cycles and Research Relationships." in *Organizational Ethnography: Studying the Complexity of Everyday Life*, edited by Y. Sierk, D. Yanow, H. Wels, and F. Kamsteeg. London: Sage Publications Ltd.

Bell, Emma. 1999. "The Negotiation of a Working Role in Organizational Ethnography." *International Journal of Social Research Methodology* 2(1):17–37.

Bell, Susan E. and Anne E. Figert. 2012. "Medicalization and Pharmaceuticalization at the Intersections: Looking Backward, Sideways and Forward." *Social Science & Medicine* 75(5):775–83.

Berger, Peter L. and Thomas Luckmann. 1991. *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge*. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books Ltd.

Bernard, H. Russell. 2011. *Research Methods in Anthropology: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*. 5. ed. Plymouth: Altamira Press.

Bird, Allan and Mark E. Mendenhall. 2016. "From Cross-Cultural Management to Global Leadership: Evolution and Adaptation." *Journal of World Business* 51(1):115–26.

Black, Julia. 2001. "Decentring Regulation: Understanding the Role of Regulation and Self-Regulation in a 'Post-Regulatory' World." *Current Legal Problems* 54(1):103–46.

Blasco, Maribel, Liv Egholm Feldt, and Michael Jakobsen. 2012. "If Only Cultural Chameleons Could Fly Too: A Critical Discussion of the Concept of Cultural Intelligence." *International Journal of Cross Cultural Management* 12(2):229–45.

Boje, David. 2008. "Types of Collective Memory in Storytelling Organizations." Pp. 75–96 in *Storytelling Organizations*. London: Sage Publications Ltd.

Bolak, Hale C. 1996. "Studying One's Own in the Middle East: Negotiating Gender and Self-Other Dynamics in the Field." *Qualitative Sociology* 19(1):107–30.

Bolton, Sharon C., Rebecca Chung-hee Kim, and Kevin D. O'Gorman. 2011. "Corporate Social Responsibility as a Dynamic Internal Organizational Process: A Case Study." *Journal of Business Ethics* 101(1):61–74.

Bondy, Krista, Dirk Matten, and Jeremy Moon. 2006. "MNC Codes of Conduct: CSR or Corporate Governance?" *International Centre for Corporate Social Responsibility Research Paper Series* 40:1–35.

Boo, Fred Hy and Hian Chye Koh. 2001. "The Influence of Organizational and Code-Supporting Variables on the Effectiveness of a Code of Ethics." *Teaching Business Ethics* 5:357–73.

Bourdieu, Pierre. 1977. *Outline of a Theory of Practice*. 3rd ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Brannan, M., M. Rowe, and F. Worthington. 2012. "Editorial for the Journal of Organizational Ethnography." *Journal of Organizational Ethnography* 1(1):5–14.

Brannen, Mary Yoko. 2004. "When Mickey Loses Face: Recontextualization, Semantic Fit, and the Semiotics of Foreignness." *The Academy of Management Review* 29(4):593–616.

Brannen, Mary Yoko. 2011. "Using Multiple Case Studies to Generalize from Ethnographic Research." Pp. 124–45 in *Rethinking the case study in international business and management research*, edited by R. Marschan-Piekkari and C. Welch. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.

Brannen, Mary Yoko. 2020. "Cross-Cultural Management & Cultural Identity: Past Perspectives and Present Prerequisites." in *The SAGE handbook of Contemporary Cross-Cultural Management*, edited by D. V Caprar, J. S. Osland, L. Romani, and B. Szkudlarek. Sage Publications.

Brannen, Mary Yoko, Jeffrey K. Liker, and Mark W. Fruin. 1999. "Recontextualization and Factory-to-Factory Knowledge Transfer from Japan to the United States: The Case of NSK." Pp. 117–53 in *Remade in America: Transplanting and Transforming Japanese Management Systems*, edited by J. K. Liker, P. S. Adler, and M. W. Fruin. New York & Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Brannen, Mary Yoko and David C. Thomas. 2010. "Bicultural Individuals in Organizations: Implications and Opportunity." *International Journal of Cross Cultural Management* 10(1):5–16.

Brannick, Teresa and David Coghlan. 2007. "In Defense of Being 'Native': The Case for Insider Academic Research." *Organizational Research Methods* 10(1):59–74.

Brinkmann, Svend and Steinar Kvale. 2015. *InterViews: Learning the Craft of Qualitative Research Interviewing*. 3. ed. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

Briody, Elizabeth K. and Tracy Meerwarth Pester. 2014. "The Coming of Age of Anthropological Practice and Ethics." *Journal of Business Anthropology* 1(1):11–37.

Brown, Andrew D. 2015. "Identities and Identity Work in Organizations." *International Journal of Management Reviews* 17(1):20–40.

Brown, Michael E., Linda K. Treviño, and David A. Harrison. 2005. "Ethical Leadership: A Social Learning Perspective for Construct Development and Testing." *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes* 97(2):117–34.

Bubandt, Nils. 2009. "Interview with an Ancestor. Spirits as Informants and the Politics of Posession in North Maluku." *Ethnography* 10(3):291–316.

Burrell, Jenna. 2017. "The Fieldsite as a Network." in *The Routledge companion to digital ethnography*. Routledge Handbooks Online.

Caprar, Dan V. 2011. "Foreign Locals: A Cautionary Tale on the Culture of MNC Local Employees." *Journal of International Business Studies* 42(5):608–28.

Carlson, Robert V., Kenneth M. Boyd, and David J. Webb. 2004. "The Revision of the Declaration of Helsinki: Past, Present and Future." *British Journal of Clinical Pharmacology* 57(6):695–713.

Carrier, James G. 2018. "Moral Economy: What's in a Name." *Anthropological Theory* 18(1):18–35.

Carroll, Archie B. 1991. "The Pyramid of Corporate Social Responsibility: Toward the Moral Management of Organizational Stakeholders." *Business Horizons* 34(4):39–48.

Carroll, Archie B. 1999. "Corporate Social Responsibility Evolution of a Definitional Construct." *Business & Society* 38(3):268–95.

Carroll, Archie B. and Kareem M. Shabana. 2010. "The Business Case for Corporate Social Responsibility: A Review of Concepts, Research and Practice." *International Journal of Management Reviews* 12(1):85–105.

Cefkin, Melissa. 2012. "Close Encounters: Anthropologists in the Corporate Arena." *Journal of Business Anthropology* 1(1):91–117.

Chang, Christina Ling-Hsing. 2012. "How to Build an Appropriate Information Ethics Code for Enterprises in Chinese Cultural Society." *Computers in Human Behavior* 28(2):420–33.

Chen, Chao-Chuan and Yueh-Ting Lee. 2008. *Leadership and Management in China: Philosophies, Theories, and Practices*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Chia, Robert and Andreas Rasche. 2010. "Epistemological Alternatives for Researching Strategy as Practice: Building and Dwelling Worldviews." Pp. 44–57 in *Cambridge Handbook of Strategy as Practice*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Choi, Chong Ju, Sae Won Kim, and Jai Beom Kim. 2010. "Globalizing Business Ethics Research and the Ethical Need to Include the Bottom-of-the-Pyramid Countries: Redefining the Global Triad as Business Systems and Institutions." *Journal of Business Ethics* 94(2):299–307.

Choudhry, Niteesh K., Joy L. Lee, Jessica Agnew-Blais, Colleen Corcoran, and William H. Shrank. 2009. "Market Watch - Drug Company-Sponsored Patient Assistance Programs: A Viable Safety Net?" *Health Affairs* 28(3):827–34.

Christensen, Lars Thøger, Mette Morsing, and Ole Thyssen. 2013. "CSR as Aspirational Talk." *Organization* 20(3):372–93.

Clarke, Victoria, Virginia Braun, and Nikki Hayfield. 2015. "Thematic Analysis." Pp. 222–48 in *Qualitative psychology: A practical guide to research methods*, edited by J. A. Smith. Los Angeles: Sage Publications.

Collier, Jane and Rafael Esteban. 2007. "Corporate Social Responsibility and Employee Commitment." *Business Ethics: A European Review* 16(1):19–33.

Conn, Lawrence and Lawrence Vernaglia. 2011. "Shining the Light on Physician-Pharmaceutical and Medical Device Industry Financial Relationships." *Journal of Vascular Surgery* 54(3):22S-25S.

Conrad, Peter. 2005. "The Shifting Engines of Medicalization." *Journal of Health and Social Behavior* 46:3–14.

Cornelissen, Joep and Henri Schildt. 2015. "Sensemaking in Strategy as Practice: A Phenomenon or a Perspective?" Pp. 345–64 in *Cambridge Handbook of Strategy as Practice*, edited by D. Golsorkhi, D. Seidl, E. Vaara, and L. Rouleau. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Court, Deborah and Randa Abbas. 2013. "Whose Interview Is Is, Anyway? Methodological and Ethical Challenges of Insider-Outsider Research, Multiple Languages, and Dual-Researcher Cooperation." *Qualitative Inquiry* 19(6):480–88.

Craft, Jana L. 2013. "A Review of the Empirical Ethical Decision-Making Literature: 2004–2011." *Journal of Business Ethics* 117(2):221–59.

Cui, Ke. 2015. "The Insider–Outsider Role of a Chinese Researcher Doing Fieldwork in China: The Implications of Cultural Context." *Qualitative Social Work* 14(3):356–69.

Cunliffe, Ann L. and Geetha Karunanayake. 2013. "Working Within Hyphen- Spaces in Ethnographic Research: Implications for Research Identities and Practice." *Organizational Research Methods* 16(3):364–92.

Czarniawska, Barbara. 1998. *A Narrative Approach to Organization Studies*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

Czarniawska, Barbara. 2003. "Social Constructionism and Organization Studies." Pp. 128–39 in *Debating organization: point-counterpoint in organization studies*, edited by R. Westwood and S. Clegg. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.

Czarniawska, Barbara. 2007. *Shadowing and Other Techniques for Doing Fieldwork in Modern Societies*. Frederiksberg: Copenhagen Business School Press.

Czarniawska, Barbara and Bernward Joerges. 1996. "Travel of Ideas." Pp. 13–48 in *Translating organizational change*, edited by B. Czarniawska-Joerges and G. Sevon. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter.

Czarniawska, Barbara and Guje Sevón. 2005a. *Global Ideas: How Ideas, Objects and Practices Travel in the Global Economy*. Malmoe: Liber.

Czarniawska, Barbara and Guje Sevón. 2005b. "Translation Is a Vehicle, Imitation Its Motor, and Fashion Sits at the Wheel." Pp. 7–12 in *Global ideas: How ideas, objects and practices travel in the global economy*, edited by B. Czarniawska and G. Sevón. Malmoe: Liber.

D'Iribarne, Philippe. 2012. "Cultural Translation of Corporate Values." Pp. 125–36 in *Global Collaboration: Intercultural Experiences and Learning*, edited by M. C. Gertsen, A.-M. Søderberg, and M. Zølner. London: Palgrave Macmillan UK.

Dahlsrud, Alexander. 2008. "How Corporate Social Responsibility Is Defined: An Analysis of 37 Definitions." *Corporate Social Responsibility and Environmental Management* 15(1):1–13.

Damsholt, Tine. 2015. "'Hand of King and Voice of People': Grundtvig on Democracy and the Responsibility of the Self." Pp. 151–68 in *Building the Nation: N.F.S. Grundtvig and Danish National Identity*, edited by J. A. Hall, O. Korsgaard, and O. K. Pedersen. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press.

Darwin, Kate L. R. 2013. "Conduct of Clinical Trials: Good Clinical Practice." Pp. 155–88 in *The textbook of pharmaceutical medicine*, edited by J. P. Griffin, J. Posner, and G. R. Barker. Belfast: Wiley-Blackwell.

DeGama, Nadia, Sara R. S. T. A. Elias, and Amanda Peticca-Harris. 2019. "The Good Academic: Re-Imagining Good Research in Organization and Management." *Qualitative Research in Organizations and Management: An International Journal* 14(1):2–9.

Denzin, Norman K. and Yvonna S. Lincoln. 2018. "Introduction." Pp. 1–26 in *The SAGE handbook of qualitative research*, edited by N. K. Denzin and Y. S. Lincoln. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications Inc.

DeWalt, Musante and Kathleen DeWalt. 2002. *Participant Observation: A Guide for Fieldworkers*. Oxford: AltaMira Press.

Douglas, Mary. 1987. *How Institutions Think*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Douglas, Mary. 2003. *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of Concepts of Pollution and Taboo*. London & New York: Taylor and Francis.

Duberley, Joanne, Phil Johnson, and Catherine Cassell. 2017. "Philosophies Underpinning Qualitative Research." Pp. 15–34 in *Qualitative Organizational Research: Core Methods and Current Challenges*, edited by G. Symon and C. Cassell. London: Sage Publications, Inc.

Eckhardt, Giana M. 2004. "The Role of Culture in Conducting Trustworthy and Credible Qualitative Business Research in China." in *Handbook of Qualitative Research Methods for International Business*, edited by R. Marschan-Piekkari and C. Welch. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.

Ellis, Carolyn. 2007. "Telling Secrets, Revealing Lives: Relational Ethics in Research With Intimate Others." *Qualitative Inquiry* 13(1):3–29.

Ergun, Ayça and Aykan Erdemir. 2010. "Negotiating Insider and Outsider Identities in the Field: 'Insider' in a Foreign Land; 'Outsider' in One's Own Land." *Field Methods* 22(1):16–38.

Ermasova, Natalia, Stephen Wagner, and Lam Dang Nguyen. 2017. "The Impact of Education, Diversity, Professional Development and Age on Personal Business Ethics of Business Students in Russia." *Journal of Management Development* 36(3):410–26.

Erwin, Patrick. 2011. "Corporate Codes of Conduct: The Effects of Code Content and Quality on Ethical Performance." *Journal of Business Ethics* 99(4):535–48.

Ezzamel, M. and Hugh C. Willmott. 2010. "Strategy and Strategizing: A Post-Structuralist Perspective." Pp. 75–109 in *The Globalization of Strategy Research: Advances in Strategic Management v. 27*, edited by J. C. Baum and J. Lampel. United Kingdom: Emerald Group Publishing Ltd.

Ezzamel, Mahmoud and Hugh Willmott. 2008. "Strategy as Discourse in a Global Retailer: A Supplement to Rationalist and Interpretive Accounts." *Organization Studies* 29(2):191–217.

Fassin, Didier. 2014. "The Ethical Turn in Anthropology." *Hau: Journal of Ethnographic Theory* 4(1):429–35.

Faubion, James D. and George E. Marcus. 2008. "Constructionism in Anthropology." Pp. 67–84 in *Handbook of constructionist research*, edited by J. A. Holstein and J. F. Gubrium. New York: The Guilford Press.

Fenton, Christopher and Ann Langley. 2011. "Strategy as Practice and the Narrative Turn." *Organization Studies* 32(9):1171–96.

Filatotchev, Igor and Günter K. Stahl. 2015. "Towards Transnational CSR: Corporate Social Responsibility Approaches and Governance Solutions for Multinational Corporations." *Organizational Dynamics* 44(2):121–29.

Firth, Raymond. 2005. "The Social Framework of Economic Organization." Pp. 122–54 in *Elements of Social Organization*. London and New York: Routledge.

Fitzsimmons, Stacey R., Christof Miska, and Günter K. Stahl. 2011. "Multicultural Employees." *Organizational Dynamics* 40(3):199–206.

Flyvbjerg, Bent. 2001. *Making Social Science Matter: Why Social Inquiry Fails and How It Can Succeed Again*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Ford, Robert C. and Woodrow D. Richardson. 1994. "Ethical Decision Making: A Review of the Empirical Literature." *Journal of Business Ethics* 13(3):205–21.

Frenkel, Michal. 2008. "The Multinational Corporation as a Third Space: Rethinking International Management Discourse on Knowledge Transfer through Homi Bhabha." *The Academy of Management Review* 33(4):924–42.

Fusch, Patricia I. and Lawrence R. Ness. 2015. "Are We There yet? Data Saturation in Qualitative Research." *Qualitative Report* 20(9):1408–16.

Gallenga, Ghislaine. 2016. "The Anthropology of Business Ethics: Worth Thinking About!" *Journal of Business Anthropology* (Special Issue 3: Business Ethics):7–19.

Gertsen, Martine Cardel and Mette Zølner. 2012a. "Reception and Recontextualization of Corporate Values in Subsidiaries." Pp. 137–50 in *Global Collaboration: Intercultural Experiences and Learning*, edited by M. C. Gertsen, A.-M. Søderberg, and M. Zølner. London: Palgrave Macmillan UK.

Gertsen, Martine Cardel and Mette Zølner. 2012b. "Recontextualization of the Corporate Values of a Danish MNC in a Subsidiary in Bangalore." *Group & Organization Management* 37(1):101–32.

Gilmore, Sarah and Kate Kenny. 2015. "Work-Worlds Colliding: Self-Reflexivity, Power and Emotion in Organizational Ethnography." *Human Relations* 68(1):55–78.

Gioia, Dennis A. and Kumar Chittipeddi. 1991. "Sensemaking and Sensegiving in Strategic Change Initiation." *Strategic Management Journal* 12(6):433–48.

Gioia, Dennis A., Kevin G. Corley, and Aimee L. Hamilton. 2012. "Seeking Qualitative Rigor in Inductive Research: Notes on the Gioia Methodology." *Organizational Research Methods* 16(1):15–31.

Goffman, Erving. 1990. *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*. London: Penguin Books.

Golsorkhi, Damon, Linda Rouleau, David Seidl, and Eero Vaara. 2010. "Introduction: What Is Strategy as Practice?" Pp. 1–20 in *Cambridge Handbook of Strategy as Practice*, edited by D. Golsorkhi, L. Rouleau, D. Seidl, and E. Vaara. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Goodrick, Elizabeth and Trish Reay. 2011. "Constellations of Institutional Logics: Changes in the Professional Work of Pharmacists." *Work and Occupations* 38(3):372–416.

Gosovic, Anna Kirkebæk Johansson. 2017. "Codes of Ethics within Multinational Corporations – Review of an Emerging Qualitative Field of Research." in *43rd Annual Conference in the European International Business Academy*. Milan, Italy.

Gosovic, Anna Kirkebæk Johansson. 2018. "Social Identities in the Field: How Fluctuating Fieldworker Identities Shape Our Research." *Journal of Organizational Ethnography* 7(2):186–98.

Gosovic, Anna Kirkebæk Johansson. 2019. "Gifts, Reciprocity and Ethically Sound Ethnographic Research: A Reflexive Framework." *Journal of Organizational Ethnography (Early Cite)*.

Gosovic, Anna Kirkebæk Johansson and Anne-Marie Søderberg. 2020. "Developing Responsible Global Leaders in a Multinational High Reliability Organization." in *Responsible Global Leadership: Dilemmas, Paradoxes and Opportunities*, edited by G. K. Stahl, M. E. Mendenhall, and M. Zilinskaite. Routledge.

Götz, Norbert. 2015. "'Moral Economy': Its Conceptual History and Analytical Prospects." *Journal of Global Ethics* 11(2):147–62.

Gregersen, Birgitte. 2017. "Role of Universities for Inclusive Development and Social Innovation: Experiences from Denmark." Pp. 369–85 in *Universities, Inclusive Development and Social Innovation: An International Perspective*, edited by C. Brundenius, B. Göransson, and J. M. Carvalho de Mello. Cham: Springer International Publishing.

Griffith, John R. 2015. "Understanding High-Reliability Organizations: Are Baldrige Recipients Models?" *Journal of Healthcare Management* 60(1):44–62.

Gupta, Akhil and James Ferguson. 1992. "Beyond 'Culture': Space, Identity, and the Politics of Difference." *Cultural Anthropology* 7(1):6–23.

Gurney, Joan Neff. 1985. "Not One of the Guys: The Female Researcher in a Male-Dominated Setting." *Qualitative Sociology* 8(1):42–62.

Gusterson, Hugh. 1997. "Studying Up Revisited." *PoLAR: Political and Legal Anthropology Review* 20(1):114–19.

Guthey, Eric and Mette Morsing. 2014. "CSR and the Mediated Emergence of Strategic Ambiguity." *Journal of Business Ethics* 120(4):555–69.

Hanek, Kathrin J., Fiona Lee, and Mary Yoko Brannen. 2014. "Individual Differences Among Global/Multicultural Individuals." *International Studies of Management & Organization* 44(2):75–89.

Hannerz, Ulf. 1992. *Cultural Complexity: Studies in the Social Organization of Meaning*. New York: Columbia Press.

Hanson, Kirk O. and Stephan Rothlin. 2010. "Taking Your Code to China." *Journal of International Business Ethics* 3(1):69–80.

Hardy, Cynthia, Nelson Phillips, and Stewart Clegg. 2001. "Reflexivity in Organization and Management Theory: A Study of the Production of the Research 'Subject.'" *Human Relations* 54(5):531–60.

Harzing, Anne-Wil. 2000. "An Empirical Analysis and Extension of the Bartlett and Ghoshal Typology of Multinational Companies." *Journal of International Business Studies* 31(1):101–20.

Head, Emma. 2009. "The Ethics and Implications of Paying Participants in Qualitative Research." *International Journal of Social Research Methodology* 12(4):335–44.

Heins, Volker M., Christine Unrau, and Kristine Avram. 2018. "Gift-Giving and Reciprocity in Global Society: Introducing Marcel Mauss in International Studies." *Journal of International Political Theory* 14(2):126–44.

Helin, Sven and Maira Babri. 2015. "Travelling with a Code of Ethics: A Contextual Study of a Swedish MNC Auditing a Chinese Supplier." *Journal of Cleaner Production* 107:41–53.

Helin, Sven and Johan Sandström. 2007. "An Inquiry into the Study of Corporate Codes of Ethics." *Journal of Business Ethics* 75(3):253–71.

Helin, Sven and Johan Sandström. 2008. "Codes, Ethics and Cross-Cultural Differences: Stories from the Implementation of a Corporate Code of Ethics in a MNC Subsidiary." *Journal of Business Ethics* 82(2):281–91.

Helin, Sven and Johan Sandström. 2010. "Resisting a Corporate Code of Ethics and the Reinforcement of Management Control." *Organization Studies* 31(5):583–604.

Henderson, Verne E. 1982. "The Ethical Side of Enterprise." *Sloan Management Review* 23(3):37–47.

Hennink, M. M., B. N. Kaiser, and V. C. Marconi. 2017. "Code Saturation Versus Meaning Saturation: How Many Interviews Are Enough?" *Qualitative Health Research* 27(4):591–608.

Hine, Christine. 2017. "From Virtual Ethnography to the Embedded, Embodied, Everyday Internet." Pp. 21–28 in *The Routledge Companion to Digital Ethnography*, edited by L. Hjorth, H. Horst, A. Galloway, and G. Bell. Routledge Handbooks Online.

Hofstede, Geert. 2001. *Culture's Consequences: Comparing Values, Behaviors, Institutions, and Organizations across Nations*. 2. ed. London: Sage Publications.

Hoivik, Heidi von Weltzien. 2007. "East Meets West: Tacit Messages about Business Ethics in Stories Told by Chinese Managers." *Journal of Business Ethics* 74(4):457–69.

Horvath, Christopher J. and Mark N. Milton. 2009. "The TeGenero Incident and the Duff Report Conclusions: A Series of Unfortunate Events or an Avoidable Event?" *Toxicologic Pathology* 37:372–83.

House, Robert J., Paul J. Hanges, Mansour Javidan, Peter W. Dorfman, and Vipin Gupta. 2004. *Culture, Leadership, and Organizations: The GLOBE Study of 62 Societies*. London: Sage Publications.

Howard, David H. 2014. "Perspective: Drug Companies' Patient-Assistance Programs - Helping Patients or Profits?" *The New England Journal of Medicine* 371(2):97–99.

Hrenyk, Jordyn, Mike Szymanski, Anirban Kar, and Stacey R. Fitzsimmons. 2016. "Understanding Multicultural Individuals as Ethical Global Leaders." Pp. 57–78 in *Advances in Global Leadership*, edited by J. Osland, M. Li, and M. E. Mendenhall. Bingley: Emerald Group Publishing.

Huhtala, Mari, Maiju Kangas, Muel Kaptein, and Taru Feldt. 2018. "The Shortened Corporate Ethical Virtues Scale: Measurement Invariance and Mean Differences across Two Occupational Groups." *Business Ethics: A European Review* 27(3):238–47.

Humphrey, Caroline. 2012. "Dilemmas in Doing Insider Research in Professional Education." *Qualitative Social Work* 12(5):572–86.

Hwong, Alison R., Noor Qaragholi, Daniel Carpenter, Steven Joffe, Eric G. Campbell, and Lisa Soleymani Lehmann. 2014. "A Systematic Review of State and Manufacturer Physician Payment Disclosure Websites: Implications for Implementation of the Sunshine Act." *The Journal of Law, Medicine & Ethics* 42(2):208–19.

Iversen, Martin Jes and Steen Andersen. 2008. "Creating Nordic Capitalism: The Business History of a Competitive Periphery." Pp. 265–334 in *Creating Nordic capitalism: The business history of a competitive periphery*, edited by S. Fellman, M. J. Iversen, H. Sjögren, and L. Thue. Hampshire & New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Järventie-Thesleff, Rita, Minna Logemann, Rebecca Piekkari, and Janne Tienari. 2016. "Roles and Identity Work in 'at-Home' Ethnography." *Journal of Organizational Ethnography* 5(3):235–57.

Jarzabkowski, Paula, Julia Balogun, and David Seidl. 2007. "Strategizing: The Challenges of a Practice Perspective." *Human Relations* 60(1):5–27.

Jenkins, Richard. 2008. *Social Identity*. 3. ed. London: Routledge.

Jensen, T., J. Sandstrom, and S. Helin. 2009. "Corporate Codes of Ethics and the Bending of Moral Space." *Organization* 16(4):529–45.

Jensen, Tommy, Johan Sandström, and Sven Helin. 2015. "One Code to Rule Them All." *Business and Professional Ethics Journal* 34(2):259–90.

Johnson, Gerry, Leif Melin, and Richard Whittington. 2003. "Micro Strategy and Strategizing: Towards an Activity-Based View." *Journal of Management Studies* 40(1):3–22.

Jones, Thomas M. 1991. "Ethical Decision Making by Individuals in Organizations: An Issue-Contingent Model." *The Academy of Management Review* 16(2):366–95.

Kangas, Maiju, Taru Feldt, Mari Huhtala, and Johanna Rantanen. 2014. "The Corporate Ethical Virtues Scale: Factorial Invariance Across Organizational Samples." *Journal of Business Ethics* 124(1):161–71.

Kaptein, Muel. 2008a. "Developing a Measure of Unethical Behavior in the Workplace: A Stakeholder Perspective." *Journal of Management* 34(5):978–1008.

Kaptein, Muel. 2008b. "Developing and Testing a Measure for the Ethical Culture of Organizations: The Corporate Ethical Virtues Model." *Journal of Organizational Behavior* 29(7):923–47.

Kaptein, Muel. 2009. "Ethics Programs and Ethical Culture: A Next Step in Unraveling Their Multi-Faceted Relationship." *Journal of Business Ethics* 89(2):261–81.

Kaptein, Muel. 2015. "The Effectiveness of Ethics Programs: The Role of Scope, Composition, and Sequence." *Journal of Business Ethics* 132(2):415–31.

Kaptein, Muel and Mark S. Schwartz. 2008. "The Effectiveness of Business Codes: A Critical Examination of Existing Studies and the Development of an Integrated Research Model." *Journal of Business Ethics* 77(2):111–27.

Kaptein, Muel and Johan Wempe. 1998. "Twelve Gordian Knots When Developing an Organizational Code of Ethics." *Journal of Business Ethics* 17(8):853–69.

Karra, Neri and Nelson Phillips. 2008. "Researching 'Back Home': International Management Research as Autoethnography." *Organizational Research Methods* 11(3):541–61.

Keane, Webb. 2010. "Minds, Surfaces, and Reasons in the Anthropology of Ethics." Pp. 64–83 in *Ordinary Ethics: Anthropology, Language, and Action*, edited by M. Lambek. New York: Fordham University.

Kish-Gephart, Jennifer J., David A. Harrison, and Linda Klebe Treviño. 2010. "Bad Apples, Bad Cases, and Bad Barrels: Meta-Analytic Evidence about Sources of Unethical Decisions at Work." *Journal of Applied Psychology* 95(1):1–31.

Knights, David and Glenn Morgan. 1991. "Corporate Strategy, Organizations, and Subjectivity: A Critique." *Organisation Studies* 12(2):251–73.

Koning, Juliette and Can-seng Ooi. 2013. "Awkward Encounters and Ethnography." *Qualitative Research in Organizations and Management: An International Journal* 8(1):16–32.

Koopman, Paul L., Deanne N. Den Hartog, and Edvard Konrad. 1999. "National Culture and Leadership Profiles in Europe: Some Results From the GLOBE Study." *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology* 8(4):503–20.

Korsgaard, Ove. 2006. "The Danish Way to Establish the Nation in the Hearts of the People." Pp. 133–58 in *National Identity and the varieties of capitalism. The Danish experience*, edited by J. Campbell, L. Hall, and O. K. Pedersen. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press.

Korsgaard, Ove and Susanne Wiborg. 2006. "Grundtvig - the Key to Danish Edication?" *Scandinavian Journal of Educational Research* 50(3):361–82.

Kouritzin, Sandra. 2002. "The 'Half-Baked' Concept of 'Raw' Data in Ethnographic Observation." *Canadian Journal of Education* 27(1):119–38.

Kramer, Hugh E. 1975. "The Philosophical Foundation of Management Rediscovered." *Management International Review* 15(2/3):47–54.

Krause-Jensen, Jakob. 2010. *Flexible Firm: The Design of Culture at Bang & Olufsen*. New York: Berghan Books.

Kuntz, J. R., Detelin Elenkov, and Anna Nabirukhina. 2009. "Characterizing Ethical Cases: A Cross-Cultural Investigation of Individual Differences, Organisational Climate, and Leadership on Ethical Decision-Making." *Journal of Business Ethics* 113(2):317–31.

Kusow, Abdi M. 2003. "Beyond Indigenous Authenticity: Reflections on the Insider/Outsider Debate in Immigration Research." *Symbolic Interaction* 26(4):591–99.

Kvale, Steinar. 2009. *InterView: Introduktion Til et Håndværk*. 2. edited by S. Brinkmann. Copenhagen: Hans Reitzel.

De La Ville, Valérie-Inès and Eléonore Mounoud. 2015. "A Narrative Approach to Strategy as Practice: Strategy-Making from Texts and Narratives." Pp. 249–64 in *Cambridge Handbook of Strategy as Practice*, edited by D. Golsorkhi, L. Rouleau, D. Seidl, and E. Vaara. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Laidlaw, James. 2002. "For an Anthropology of Ethics and Freedom." *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 8(2):311–32.

Lakoff, Andrew. 2005. "The Private Life of Numbers: Pharmaceutical Marketing in Post-Welfare Argentina." Pp. 194–213 in *Global Assemblages: Technology, Politics, and Ethics as Anthropological Problems*, edited by O. Aihwa and S. J. Collier. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.

Lambek, Michael. 2010a. "Introduction." Pp. 1–36 in *Ordinary ethics : anthropology, language, and action*, edited by M. Lambek. New York: Fordham University Press.

Lambek, Michael. 2010b. "Toward an Ethics of the Act." Pp. 39–63 in *Ordinary ethics: anthropology, language, and action*, edited by M. Lambek. New York: Fordham University Press.

Lambek, Michael. 2015a. "Taboo as Cultural Practice among Malagasy Speakers." Pp. 59–85 in *The ethical condition : essays on action, person, and value*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Lambek, Michael. 2015b. "The Ethical Condition." Pp. 1–39 in *The ethical condition: essays on action, person, and value*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Lambek, Michael. 2018. "On the Immanence of Ethics." Pp. 137–54 in *Moral engines: exploring the ethical drives in human life*, edited by C. Mattingly, R. Dyring, M. Louw, and T. S. Wentzer. New York & Oxford.

Lane, Henry W., Martha L. Maznevski, Joseph J. DiStefano, and Joerg Dietz. 2014. "Competing with Integrity in International Business: Personal Integrity." Pp. 217–53 in *International Management Behavior: Global and Sustainable Leadership*, edited by H. W. Lane, M. L. Maznevski, J. J. DiStefano, and J. Dietz. PrOquest Ebook: John Wiley & Sons, Incorporated.

Lave, Jean and Etienne Wenger. 1991. *Situated Learning: Legitimate Peripheral Participation*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Lehnert, Kevin, Jana Craft, Nitish Singh, and Yung-Hwal Park. 2016. "The Human Experience of Ethics: A Review of a Decade of Qualitative Ethical Decision-Making Research." *Business Ethics: A European Review* 25(4):498–537.

Lehnert, Kevin, Yung-Hwal Park, and Nitish Singh. 2015. "Research Note and Review of the Empirical Ethical Decision-Making Literature: Boundary Conditions and Extensions." *Journal of Business Ethics* 129(1):195–219.

Leicht, Kevin T. and Mary L. Fennell. 2001. *Professional Work: A Sociological Approach*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers.

Leicht, Kevin T. and Mary L. Fennell. 2008. "Institutionalism and the Professions." Pp. 431–48 in *The SAGE handbook of organizational institutionalism*, edited by R. Greenwood, C. Oliver, and R. Suddaby. London: Sage Publications Ltd.

Loe, Terry W., Linda Ferrell, and Phylis Mansfield. 2000. "A Review of Empirical Studies Assessing Ethical Decision Making in Business." *Journal of Business Ethics* 25(3):185–204.

Long, Brad and Cathy Driscoll. 2008. "Codes of Ethics and the Pursuit of Organizational Legitimacy: Theoretical and Empirical Contributions." *Journal of Business Ethics* 77(2):173–89.

Van Maanen, John. 2010. "Identity Work and Control in Occupational Communities." Pp. 111–66 in *Organizational Control*, *Cambridge Companions to Management*, edited by K. M. Bijlsma-Frankema, L. B. Cardinal, and S. B. Sitkin. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Macdonald, Stuart and Bo Hellgren. 2004. "Interviewing in International Business Research: Problems We Would Rather Not Talk About." Pp. 264–81 in *Handbook of Qualitative Research Methods for International Business*, edited by R. Marschan-Piekkari and C. Welch. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.

Madden, Raymond. 2010. *Being Ethnographic: A Guide to the Theory and Practice of Ethnography*. London: Sage Publications ltd.

Mahadevan, Jasmin. 2017. *A Very Short, Fairly Interesting and Reasonably Cheap Book about Cross-Cultural Management*. London: Sage Publications.

Mahmood, Saba. 2012. *Politics of Piety : The Islamic Revival and the Feminist Subject*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Malkki, Liisa. 1992. "National Geographic: The Rooting of Peoples and the Territorialization of National Identity Among Scholars and Refugees." *Cultural Anthropology* 7(1):24–44.

Malm, Tobias. 2018. "Recognizing the Practitioner-Self: Lessons from Studying Rock Bands at-Home." *Journal of Organizational Ethnography* 7(2):135–46.

Malone, Susan. 2003. "Ethics at Home: Infomed Consent in Your Own Backyard." *Qualitative Studies in Education* 16(3):797–815.

Mantere, Saku and Mikko Ketokivi. 2013. "Reasoning in Organization Science." *Academy of Management Review* 38(1):70–89.

Marcus, George E. 1995. "Ethnography in/of the World-System. The Emergence of Multi-Sited Ethnography." *Annual Review of Anthropology* 24:95–117.

Marcus, George E. 1997. "The Uses of Complicity in the Changing Mise-En-Scène of Anthropological Fieldwork." *Representations* 59(special issue):85–108.

Marschan-Piekkari, Rebecca and Christina Reis. 2004. "Language and Languages in Cross-Cultural Interviewing." Pp. 224–43 in *Handbook of Qualitative Research Methods for International Business*, edited by R. Marschan-Piekkari and C. Welch. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing.

Marschan-Piekkari, Rebecca, Catherine Welch, Heli Penttinen, and Marja Tahvanainen. 2004. "Interviewing in the Multinational Corporation: Challenges of the Organizational Context." Pp. 244–63 in *Handbook of Qualitative Research Methods for International Business*, edited by R. Marschan-Piekkari and C. Welch. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing.

Martin, Emily. 2006. "Pharmaceutical Virtue." *Culture, Medicine and Psychiatry* 30:157–74.

Martineau, Joé T., Kevin J. Johnson, and Thierry C. Pauchant. 2016. "The Pluralist Theory of Ethics Programs Orientations and Ideologies: An Empirical Study Anchored in Requisite Variety." *Journal of Business Ethics* 142(4):791–815.

Mathias, John. 2019. "Sticky Ethics: Environmental Activism and the Limits of Ethical Freedom in Kerala, India." *Anthropological Theory* 1–24.

Matten, Dirk and Jeremy Moon. 2008. "'Implicit' and 'Explicit' CSR: A Conceptual Framework for a Comparative Understanding of Corporate Social Responsibility." *Academy of Management Review* 33(2):404–24.

Mattingly, Cheryl. 2012. "Two Virtue Ethics and the Anthropology of Morality." *Anthropological Theory* 12(2):161–84.

Maurice, Marc and Arndt Sorge. 2000. *Embedding Organizations: Societal Analysis of Actors, Organizations, and Socio-Economic Context. Advances in Organization Studies 4*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company.

Mauss, Marcel. 2000. *The Gift: Forms and Functions of Exchange in Archaic Societies*. Copenhagen: Spektrum.

Mayer, David M., Maribeth Kuenzi, Rebecca Greenbaum, Mary Bardes, and Rommel (Bombie) Salvador. 2009. "How Low Does Ethical Leadership Flow? Test of a Trickle-down Model." *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes* 108(1):1–13.

McCabe, Catherine A., Rhea Ingram, and Mary Conway Dato-on. 2006. "'The Business of Ethics and Gender.'" *Journal of Business Ethics* 64(2):101–16.

Mcdonald, Gael M. 2009. "An Anthology of Codes of Ethics" edited by G. Svensson. *European Business Review* 21(4):344–72.

McKinney, Joseph A., Tisha L. Emerson, and Mitchell J. Neubert. 2010. "The Effects of Ethical Codes on Ethical Perceptions of Actions Toward Stakeholders." *Journal of Business Ethics* 97(4):505–16.

Merton, Robert K. 1972. "Insiders and Outsiders: A Chapter in the Sociology of Knowledge." *American Journal of Sociology* 78(1):9–47.

Michailova, Snejina, Rebecca Piekkari, Emmanuella Plakoyiannaki, Tiina Ritvala, Irina Mihailova, and Asta Salmi. 2014. "Breaking the Silence about Exiting Fieldwork: A Relational Approach and Its Implications for Theorizing." *Academy of Management Review* 39(2):138–61.

Miller, Peggy J., Angela R. Wiley, Heidi Fung, and Chung-Hui Liang. 1997. "Personal Storytelling as a Medium of Socialization in Chinese and American Families." *Child Development* 68(3):557–68.

Moore, Celia, James R. Detert, Linda Klebe Treviño, Vicki L. Baker, and David M. Mayer. 2012. "Why Employees Do Bad Things: Moral Disengagement and Unethical Organizational Behavior." *Personnel Psychology* 65(1):1–48.

Moore, Fiona. 2005. *Transnational Business Cultures: Life and Work in a Multinational Corporation*. Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing Ltd.

Moore, Fiona. 2011. "Ambivalence, Anthropology and Business: A Review of Ethnographic Research in International Organisations." *Social Anthropology* 19(4):506–19.

Moore, Fiona. 2012. "Identity, Knowledge and Strategy in the UK Subsidiary of an Anglo-German Automobile Manufacturer." *International Business Review* 21(2):281–92.

Moore, Fiona. 2015a. "An Unsuitable Job for a Woman: A 'Native Category' Approach to Gender, Diversity and Cross-Cultural Management." *International Journal of Human Resource Management* 26(2):216–30.

Moore, Fiona. 2015b. "Towards a Complex View of Culture: Cross-Cultural Management, 'Native Categories', and Their Impact on the Concepts of Management and Organisation." Pp. 19–27 in *The Routledge Companion to Cross-Cultural Management*, edited by N. Holden, S. Michailova, and S. Tietze. Routledge Handbooks Online.

Morgan, Lynn M. 2013. "The Potentiality Principle from Aristotle to Abortion." *Current Anthropology* 54(S7):15–25.

Morse, Janice M. 2015. "'Data Were Saturated...'" *Qualitative Health Research* 25(5):587–88.

Mulinari, Shai. 2016. "Regulating Pharmaceutical Industry Marketing: Development, Enforcement, and Outcome of Marketing Rules." *Sociology Compass* 10(1):74–86.

Murphy, Elizabeth and Robert Dingwall. 2001. "The Ethics of Ethnography." Pp. 339–51 in *Handbook of Ethnography*, edited by P. Atkinson, A. Coffey, S. Delamont, J. Lofland, and L. Lofland. London: Sage Publications ltd.

Nader, Laura. 1969. "Up the Anthropologist – Perspectives Gained from Studying Up." Pp. 284–311 in *Reinventing anthropology*, edited by D. Hymes. New York: Pantheon Books.

Nakhle, Samer Francois and Eric Davoine. 2016. "Transferring Codes of Conduct within a Multinational Firm: The Case of Lebanon." *EuroMed Journal of Business* 11(3):418–36.

Narayan, Kirin. 1993. "How Native Is a 'Native' Anthropologist?" *American Anthropologist* 95(3):671–86.

Natifu, Barbra. 2016. "Multiple Levels of 'Knowing and Being Known', Their Affiliated Capital, Benefits and Challenges." *Journal of Organizational Ethnography* 5(3):219–34.

van Nes, Fenna, Tineke Abma, Hans Jonsson, and Dorly Deeg. 2010. "Language Differences in Qualitative Research: Is Meaning Lost in Translation?" *European Journal of Ageing* 7:313–16.

Nguyen, Angela-Minhtu D. and Verónica Benet-Martínez. 2010. "Multicultural Identity. What It Is and Why It Matters." Pp. 87–114 in *The Psychology of Social and Cultural Diversity: Social Issues and Interventions*, edited by R. J. Crisp. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell.

Nyberg, Daniel. 2008. "The Morality of Everyday Activities: Not the Right, But the Good Thing To Do." *Journal of Business Ethics* 81(3):587–98.

O'Fallon, Michael J. and Kenneth Butterfield. 2005. "A Review of the Empirical Ethical Decision-Making Literature: 1996-2003." *Journal of Business Ethics* 59(4):375–413.

O'Reilly, Karen. 2009. "Key Informants and Gatekeepers." Pp. 132–37 in *Key Concepts in Ethnography*. London: Sage Publications ltd.

Olwig, Karen Fog and Kirsten Hastrup. 1997. *Siting Culture: The Shifting Anthropological Object*. London: Routledge.

Osland, Joyce S. and Alan Bird. 2000. "Beyond Sophisticated Stereotyping: Cultural Sensemaking in Context." *The Academy of Management Executive (1993-2005)* 14(1):65–79.

Østergård, Uffe. 2012. "Danish National Identity." Pp. 37–55 in *Global Collaboration: Intercultural Experiences and Learning*, edited by M. C. Gertsen, A.-M. Søderberg, and M. Zølner. London: Palgrave Macmillan UK.

Paine, Lynn Sharp. 1994. "Managing for Organizational Integrity." *Harvard Business Review* 92(2):106–17.

Painter-Morland, Mollie. 2008. *Business Ethics as Practice: Ethics as the Everyday Business of Business*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Pascale, Celine-Marie. 2011. *Cartographies of Knowledge: Exploring Qualitative Epistemologies*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

Patton, Michael Quinn. 2015. *Qualitative Research & Evaluation Methods: Integrating Theory and Practice*. 4. ed. London: Sage Publications.

Peltokorpi, Vesa and Eero Vaara. 2012. "Language Policies and Practices in Wholly Owned Foreign Subsidiaries: A Recontextualization Perspective." *Journal of International Business Studies* 43(9):808–33.

Phillips, Margaret and Sonja Sackmann. 2015. "Cross-Cultural Management Rising." Pp. 8–18 in *The Routledge Companion to Cross-Cultural Management*, edited by N. Holden, S. Michailova, and S. Tietze. Routledge Handbooks Online.

Piekkari, Rebecca and Susanne Tietze. 2016. "Doing Research on Power and Politics in Multinational Corporations (MNCs): A Methodological Perspective." Pp. 208–40 in *Micropolitics in the Multinational Corporation*, edited by F. Becker-Ritterspach, S. Blazejewski, C. Dörrenbächer, and M. Geppert. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Pilgerstorfer, Marcus. 2017. "EU Law and Policy on Pharmaceuticals Marketing and Post-Market Control Including Product Liability." Pp. 156–96 in *Research Handbook on EU Law and Policy*, edited by T. K. Hervey, C. A. Young, and L. E. Bishop. Cheltenham & Northampton: Edward Elgar Publishing.

Prasad, Pushkala. 2015. *Crafting Qualitative Research: Working in the Postpositivist Traditions*. Taylor and Francis online.

Pratt, Michael G. 2009. "From the Editors: For the Lack of a Boilerplate: Tips on Writing up (And Reviewing) Qualitative Research." *The Academy of Management Journal* 52(5):856–62.

Pratt, Michael G., Kevin W. Rockmann, and Jeffrey B. Kaufmann. 2006. "Constructing Professional Identity: The Role of Work and Identity Learning Cycles in the Customization of Identity among Medical Residents." *The Academy of Management Journal* 49(2):235–62.

Preble, John F. and Arie Reichel. 1988. "Attitudes towards Business Ethics of Future Managers in the U.S. and Israel." *Journal of Business Ethics* 7(12):941–49.

Primecz, Henriett, Laurence Romani, and Sonja Sackmann. 2011. *Cross-Cultural Management in Practice: Culture and Negotiated Meanings*. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.

Rajak, Dinah. 2011. *In Good Company : An Anatomy of Corporate Social Responsibility*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Rappaport, Roy A. 1999. *Ritual and Religion in the Making of Humanity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Rasche, Andreas and Robert Chia. 2009. "Researching Strategy Practices: A Genealogical Social Theory Perspective." *Organization Studies* 30(7):713–34.

Rasche, Andreas and David Seidl. 2019. "Management Ideas as Standards." Pp. 1–18 in *The Oxford Handbook of Management Ideas, Oxford Handbooks Online*, edited by A. Sturdy, S. Heusinkveld, T. Reay, and D. Strang. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Reay, Trish, Elizabeth Goodrick, Susanne Boch Waldorff, and Ann Casebeer. 2017. "Getting Leopards to Change Their Spots: Co-Creating a New Professional Role Identity." *Academy of Management Journal* 60(3):1043–70.

Reichertz, Jo. 2014. "Induction, Deduction, Abduction." Pp. 123–35 in *The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Data Analysis*, edited by U. Flick. London: Sage Publications.

Rest, James R. 1986. *Moral Development : Advances in Research and Theory*. New York: Praeger.

Ritter, Barbara A. 2006. "Can Business Ethics Be Trained? A Study of the Ethical Decision-Making Process In." *Journal of Business Ethics* 68(2):153–64.

Robbins, Joel. 2001. "Ritual Communication and Linguistic Ideology: A Reading and Partial Reformulation of Rappaports Theory of Ritual." *Current Anthropology* 42(5):591–614.

Robbins, Joel. 2013. "Beyond the Suffering Subject: Toward an Anthropology of the Good." *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 19:447–62.

Romani, Laurence, Christoph Barmeyer, Henriett Primecz, and Katharina Pilhofer. 2018. "Cross-Cultural Management Studies: State of the Field in the Four Research Paradigms." *International Studies of Management & Organization* 48(3):247–63.

Romani, Laurence, Jasmin Mahadevan, and Henriett Primecz. 2018. "Critical Cross-Cultural Management: Outline and Emerging Contributions." *International Studies of Management & Organization* 48(4):403–18.

Rosaldo, Renato. 1988. "Ideology, Place, and People without Culture." *Cultural Anthropology* 3(1):77–87.

Ruhleder, K. 2000. "The Virtual Ethnographer: Fieldwork in Distributed Electronic Environments." *Field Methods* 12(1):3–17.

Ruiz, Pablo, Ricardo Martinez, Job Rodrigo, and Cristina Diaz. 2015. "Level of Coherence Among Ethics Program Components and Its Impact on Ethical Intent." *Journal of Business Ethics* 128(4):725–42.

Ryan, Janette. 2010. "'The Chinese Learner': Misconceptions and Realities." Pp. 37–56 in *International education and the Chinese learner*, edited by J. Ryan and G. Slethaug. Hong kong: Hong Kong University Press.

Sacconi, Lorenzo. 1999. "Codes of Ethics as Contractarian Constraints on the Abuse of Authority within Hierarchies: A Perspective from the Theory of the Firm." *Journal of Business Ethics* 21(2/3):189–202.

Sackmann, Sonja A. 1997. *Cultural Complexity in Organizations: Inherent Contrasts and Contradictions*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

Sackmann, Sonja A. and Margaret E. Phillips. 2004. "Contextual Influences on Culture Research. Shifting Assumptions for New Workplace Realities." *International Journal of Cross Cultural Management* 4(3):370–90.

Sackmann, Sonja A., Margaret E. Phillips, M. Jill Kleinberg, and Nakiye A. Boyacigiller. 1997. "Single and Multiple Cultures in International Cross-Cultural Management Research." Pp. 14–48 in *Cultural complexity in organizations: inherent contrasts and contradictions*, edited by S. Sackman. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

Sahlins, Marshall. 1972. *Stone Age Economics*. Chicago: Aldine Atherton Inc.

Saldaña, Johnny. 2016. *The Coding Manual for Qualitative Researchers*. 3rd ed. London: Sage Publications Ltd.

Sampson, Steven. 2016. "The 'Right Way': Moral Capitalism and the Emergence of the Corporate Ethics and Compliance Officer." *Journal of Business Anthropology* (Special Issue 3):65–86.

Sanjek, Roger. 1990. *Fieldnotes: The Makings of Anthropology*. Cornell: Cornell University Press.

Sanjek, Roger and Susan W. Tratner. 2016. *EFieldnotes: The Makings of Anthropology in the Digital World*. Pennsylvania: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Saunders, Mark N. K. 2017. "Choosing Research Participants." Pp. 35–52 in *Qualitative Organizational Research: Core Methods and Current Challenges*, edited by G. Symon and C. Cassell. London: Sage Publications, Inc.

Scheper-Hughes, Nancy. 2000. "Ire in Ireland." *Ethnography* 1(1):117–40.

Scholtens, Bert and Lammertjan Dam. 2007. "Cultural Values and International Differences in Business Ethics." *Journal of Business Ethics* 75(3):273–84.

Schramm-Nielsen, Jette. 2018. "Scandinavia: Europe's Advanced North." Pp. 1–40 in *The Influence of Business Cultures in Europe: An Exploration of Central, Eastern, and Northern Economies*, edited by R. A. Crane. London: Palgrave Macmillan UK.

Schwartz, Jonathan. 1997. "'Roots' and 'Mosaic' in a Balkan Border Village. Locating Cultural Production." in *Siting culture: the shifting anthropological object*, edited by K. F. Olwig and K. Hastrup. London.

Schwartz, Mark S. and Archie B. Carroll. 2003. "Corporate Social Responsibility: A Three-Domain Approach." *Business Ethics Quarterly* 13(4):503–30.

Schwartz, Mark S. and Archie B. Carroll. 2008. "Integrating and Unifying Competing and Complementary Frameworks: The Search for a Common Core in the Business and Society Field." *Business & Society* 47(2):148–86.

Scott, James C. 1985. *Weapons of the Weak: Everyday Forms of Peasant Resistance*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Seale, Clive and David Silverman. 1997. "Ensuring Rigour in Qualitative Research." *European Journal of Public Health* 7(4):379–84.

Sedgwick, Mitchell W. 2017. "Complicit Positioning: Anthropological Knowledge and Problems of 'Studying Up' for Ethnographer-Employees of Corporations." *Journal of Business Anthropology* 6(1, Themed Issue: Anthropology of versus Anthropology for Business):58–88.

Sharbatoghlie, Ahmad, Mohsen Mosleh, and Taha Shokatian. 2013. "Exploring Trends in the Codes of Ethics of the Fortune 100 and Global 100 Corporations." *Journal of Management Development* 32(7):675–89.

Sims, Randi L. 2006. "Comparing Ethical Attitudes across Cultures." *Cross Cultural Management: An International Journal* 13(2):101–13.

Sims, Randi L. and Ercan A. Gegez. 2004. "Attitudes towards Business Ethics: A Five Nation Comparative Study." *Journal of Business Ethics* 50(3):253–65.

Singh, Jang B., Greg Wood, Michael Callaghan, Goran Svensson, and Svante Andersson. 2018. "Operationalizing Business Ethics in Organizations. The Views of Executives in Australia, Canada and Sweden." *European Business Review* 30(4):494–510.

Sismondo, Sergio. 2013. "Key Opinion Leaders and the Corruption of Medical Knowledge: What the Sunshine Act Will and Won't Cast Light On." *The Journal of Law, Medicine and Ethics* 41:635–43.

Smets, Michael, Gary Burke, Paula Jarzabkowski, and Paul Spee. 2014. "Charting New Territory for Organizational Ethnography: Insights from a Team-Based Video Ethnography." *Journal of Organizational Ethnography* 3(1):10–26.

Smets, Michael, Paula Jarzabkowski, Gary T. Burke, and Paul Spee. 2015. "Reinsurance Trading in Lloyd's of London: Balancing Conflicting-yet-Complementary Logics in Practice." *Academy of Management Journal* 58(3):932–70.

Søderberg, Anne-Marie. 2015. "Recontextualising a Strategic Concept within a Globalising Company: A Case Study on Carlsberg's 'Winning Behaviours' Strategy." *The International Journal of Human Resource Management* 26(2):231–57.

Søderberg, Anne-Marie and Nigel Holden. 2002. "Rethinking Cross Cultural Management in a Globalizing Business World." *International Journal of Cross Cultural Management* 2(1):103–21.

Søderberg, Anne-Marie and Verner D. Worm. 2011. "Communication and Collaboration in Subsidiaries in China - Chinese and Expatriate Accounts." *European Journal of Cross-Cultural Competence and Management* 2(1):54–76.

Solli, Rolf, Peter Demediuk, and Robert Sims. 2005. "The Namesake: On Best Value and Other Reformmarks." Pp. 30–46 in *Global ideas: How ideas, objects and practices travel in the global economy*, edited by B. Czarniawska and G. Sevón. Malmoe: Liber.

Sparks, John R. and Yue Pan. 2010. "Ethical Judgments in Business Ethics Research: Definition, and Research Agenda." *Journal of Business Ethics* 91(3):405–18.

Srivastava, Vinay Kumar. 1992. "Should Anthropologists Pay Their Respondents?" *Anthropology Today* 8(6):16–20.

Stahl, Günter K., Christof Miska, Sheila M. Puffer, and Daniel J. Mccarthy. 2016. "Responsible Global Leadership In Emerging Markets." Pp. 79–106 in *Advances in Global Leadership*. Vol. 9, edited by J. S. Osland, M. Li, and M. E. Mendenhall. Bingley: Emerald.

Stansbury, Jason and Bruce Barry. 2007. "Ethics Programs and the Paradox of Control." *Business Ethics Quarterly* 17(2):239–61.

Statler, Matt and David Oliver. 2016. "The Moral of the Story: Re-Framing Ethical Codes of Conduct as Narrative Processes." *Journal of Business Ethics* 136(1):89–100.

Stevens, Betsy. 1994. "An Analysis of Corporate Ethical Code Studies: 'Where Do We Go from Here?'" *Journal of Business Ethics* 13(1):63–69.

Swartz, Sharlene. 2011. "'Going Deep' and 'Giving Back': Strategies for Exceeding Ethical Expectations When Researching amongst Vulnerable Youth." *Qualitative Research* 11(1):47–68.

Symon, Gillian, Catherine Cassell, and Phil Johnson. 2018. "Evaluative Practices in Qualitative Management Research: A Critical Review." *International Journal of Management Reviews* 20:134–54.

Taussig, Karen-Sue, Klaus Hoeyer, and Stefan Helmreich. 2013. "The Anthropology of Potentiality in Biomedicine: An Introduction to Supplement 7." *Current Anthropology* 54(S7):3–14.

Tenbrunsel, Ann E. and Kristin Smith-Crowe. 2008. "Ethical Decision Making: Where We've Been and Where We're Going." *Academy of Management Annals* 2(1):545–607.

Thompson, E. P. 1971. "The Moral Economy of the English Crowd in the Eighteenth Century." *Past & Present* 50:76–136.

Tracy, Sarah J. 2012. *Qualitative Research Methods: Collecting Evidence, Crafting Analysis, Communicating Impact*. Sussex: Wiley-Blackwell.

Tracy, Sarah T. 2010. "Qualitative Quality: Eight 'Big-Tent' Criteria for Excellent Qualitative Research." *Qualitative Inquiry* 16(10):837–51.

Trapp, Leila N. 2011. "Staff Attitudes to Talking Openly About Ethical Dilemmas: The Role of Business Ethics Conceptions and Trust." *Journal of Business Ethics* 103(4):543–52.

Treviño, Linda K., Gary R. Weaver, and Scott J. Reynolds. 2006. "Behavioral Ethics in Organizations: A Review." *Journal of Management* 32(6):951–90.

Tsalikis, John and Bruce Seaton. 2007. "The International Business Ethics Index: European Union." *Journal of Business Ethics* 75(3):229–38.

Tsalikis, John, Bruce Seaton, and Tiger Li. 2008. "The International Business Ethics Index: Asian Emerging Economies." *Journal of Business Ethics* 80(2):643–51.

Udviklingskontoret. 1996. *Dansk Ledelseskultur: Hvad Har Grundtvig at Sige Den Danske Leder?* Knebel: Udviklingskontoret.

Valentine, Sean and Tim Barnett. 2002. "Ethics Codes and Sales Professionals' Perceptions of Their Organizations' Ethical Values." *Journal of Business Ethics* 40(3):191–200.

Vallaster, Christine. 2000. "Conducting Field Research in Asia: Fundamental Differences as Compared to Western Societies." *Culture & Psychology* 6(4):461–76.

Vaughan, Diane. 2004. "Theorizing Disaster: Analogy, Historical Ethnography, and the Challenger Accident." *Ethnography* 5(3):315–47.

Vaughan, Diane. 2009. *The Challenger Launch Decision: Risky Technology, Culture, and Deviance at NASA*. United States: University Of Chicago Press.

Verma, Pratima, Siddharth Mohapatra, and Jan Löwstedt. 2016. "Ethics Training in the Indian IT Sector: Formal, Informal or Both?" *Journal of Business Ethics* 133(1):73–93.

Victor, Bart and John B. Cullen. 1988. "The Organizational Bases of Ethical Work Climates." *Administrative Science Quarterly* 33(1):101–25.

Vincett, Joanne. 2018. "Researcher Self-Care in Organizational Ethnography: Lessons from Overcoming Compassion Fatigue." *Journal of Organizational Ethnography* 7(1):44–58.

Vora, Kalindi. 2013. "Potentiality and Humanness: Revisiting the Anthropological Object in Contemporary Biomedicine." *Current Anthropology* 54(S7):97–106.

Wang, Liz C. and Lisa Calvano. 2015. "Is Business Ethics Education Effective? An Analysis of Gender, Personal Ethical Perspectives, and Moral Judgment." *Journal of Business Ethics* 126(4):591–602.

Warren, Danielle E., Joseph P. Gaspar, and William S. Laufer. 2014. "Is Formal Ethics Training Merely Cosmetic? A Study of Ethics Training and Ethical Organizational Culture." *Business Ethics Quarterly* 24(1):85–117.

Weaver, Gary R. 1993. "Corporate Codes of Ethics: Purpose, Process and Content Issues." *Business & Society* 32(1):44–58.

Weaver, Gary R. and Linda Klebe Treviño. 1999. "Compliance and Values Oriented Ethics Programs: Influences on Employees' Attitudes and Behavior." *Business Ethics Quarterly* 9(2):315–35.

Weaver, Gary R., Linda Klebe Treviño, and Philip L. Cochran. 1999. "Corporate Ethics Practices in the Mid-1990's: An Empirical Study of the Fortune 1000." *Journal of Business Ethics* 18(3):283–94.

Weber, John A. 2007. "Business Ethics Training: Insights from Learning Theory." *Journal of Business Ethics* 70(1):61–85.

Weick, Karl E. and Kathleen M. Sutcliffe. 2007. *Managing the Unexpected: Resilient Performance in an Age of Uncertainty*. 2. ed. Chichester: John Wiley.

Welch, Catherine and Rebecca Piekkari. 2017. "How Should We (Not) Judge the 'Quality' of Qualitative Research? A Reassessment of Current Evaluative Criteria in International Business." *Journal of World Business* 52(5):714–25.

Wenger, Etienne. 1998. *Communities of Practice: Learning, Meaning, and Identity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Whitley, Richard. 2007. "The Contingent Nature of National Business Systems: Types of States and Complementary Institutions." in *Business Systems and Organizational Capabilities: The Institutional Structuring of Competitive Competences*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Whittington, Richard. 2006. "Completing the Practice Turn in Strategy Research." *Organization Studies* 27(5):613–34.

Winkler, Ingo. 2012. "Moments of Identity Formation and Reformation: A Day in the Working Life of an Academic." *Journal of Organizational Ethnography* 2(1):191–209.

Wright, Susan and Sue Reinhold. 2011. "'Studying Through': A Strategy for Studying Political Transformation. Or Sex, Lies and British Politics." Pp. 86–104 in *Policy worlds: Anthropology and the analysis of contemporary power*, edited by C. Shore, S. Wright, and D. Però. Oxford: Berghan Books.

Ybema, Sierk and Frans Kamsteeg. 2009. "Making the Familiar Strange: A Case for Disengaged Organizational Ethnography." Pp. 101–19 in *Organizational Ethnography: Studying the Complexities of Everyday Life*, edited by S. Ybema, D. Yanow, H. Wels, and F. Kamsteeg. London: Sage Publications Ltd.

Zetterqvist, Anna V and Shai Mulinari. 2013. "Misleading Advertising for Antidepressants in Sweden: A Failure of Pharmaceutical Industry Self-Regulation." *PloS One* 8(5):1–12.

Zigon, Jarrett. 2014. "Attunement and Fidelity: Two Ontological Conditions for Morally Being-in-the-World." *Ethos* 42(1):16–30.

Appendix 1 – Coding for Chapter 4

Please find in the following an overview of the different code groups used for chapter 4 as well as a few examples of coded material under each code. Not all first order codes have sub-codes, but for the ones that do, the examples can be found under each sub-code. Thus, the examples are provided at the lowest coding-level. Due to the relatively small number of ethics officers, the country of origin of each ethics officer is not specified. Codes related to interpretations of Ferring's ethics program can be found in Appendix 5.

This code group contains analytical codes as well as a number of descriptive codes with the purpose of ordering the material according to the ethnographic content. The codes under "Elements of the ethics program" are examples of the latter, where the codes have been assigned to facilitate an easy access to all material about e.g. Ferring Philosophy workshops or train the trainer workshops.

Code group: The Global Ethics Office's approach to working with ethics
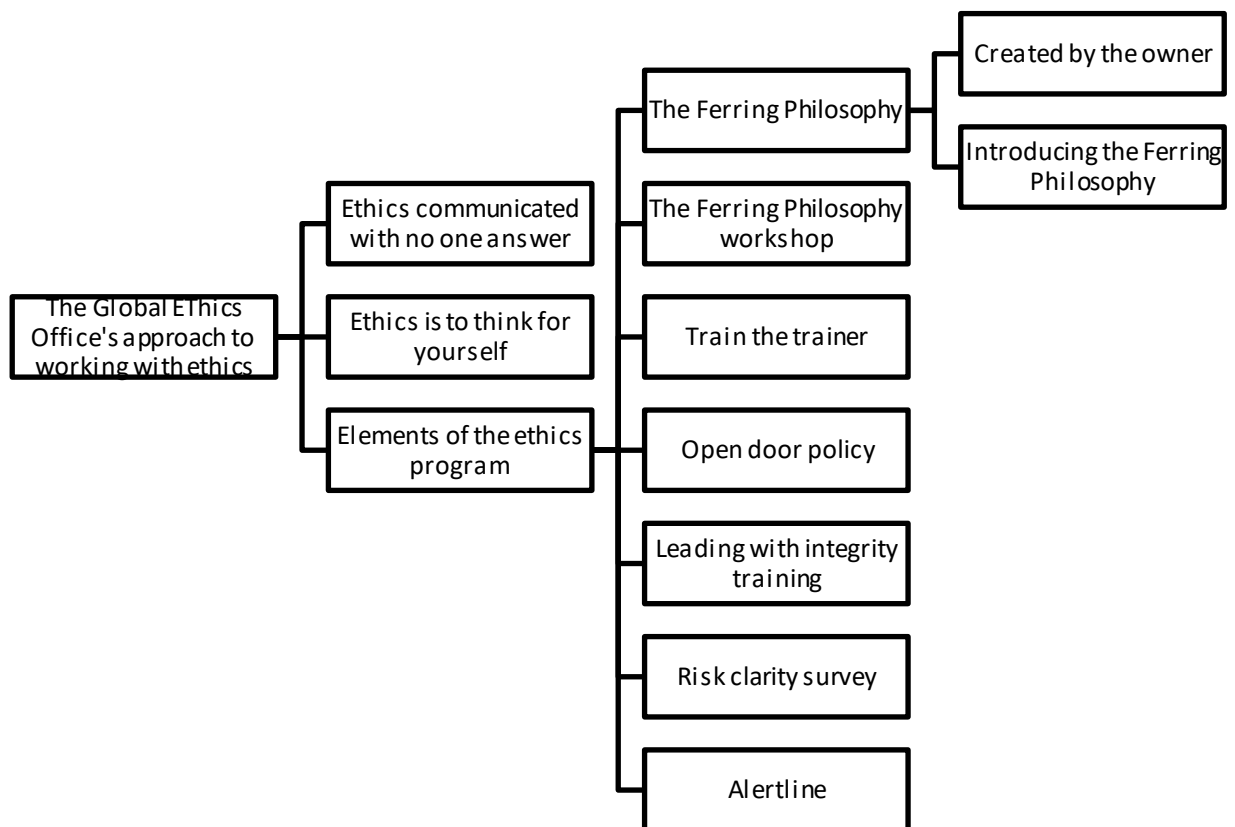
[Coded material removed from print version due to confidentiality]

Code group: The Global Ethics Office being challenged

```
                                    ┌─────────────────────────────────┐
                                    │ Limited reach of the Global Ethics │
                                    │            Office                  │
                                    └─────────────────────────────────┘

                                    ┌─────────────────────────────────┐
                                    │      Leadership Principles         │
                                    └─────────────────────────────────┘

┌──────────────────────────────┐    ┌─────────────────────────────────┐
│ The Global Ethics Office being│────│ LP, CoC or China Values competing │
│         challenged             │    │       with ethics program         │
└──────────────────────────────┘    └─────────────────────────────────┘

                                    ┌─────────────────────────────────┐
                                    │   People mixing up ethics office,  │
                                    │        compliance etc.             │
                                    └─────────────────────────────────┘

                                    ┌─────────────────────────────────┐
                                    │  Ethics office feeling left out,   │
                                    │   neglected or under pressure      │
                                    └─────────────────────────────────┘
```

[Coded material removed from print version due to confidentiality]

Code group: The Global Ethics Office defining and demarcating themselves

```
                                    ┌──────────────────────────────┐
                                    │  Difference between ethics and│
                                    │         compliance           │
                                    └──────────────────────────────┘
┌──────────────────────────────┐
│ The Global Ethics Office defining and│
│   demarcating themselves      │
└──────────────────────────────┘
                                    ┌──────────────────────────────┐
                                    │  Right and wrong ways to work with│
                                    │            ethics            │
                                    └──────────────────────────────┘
```
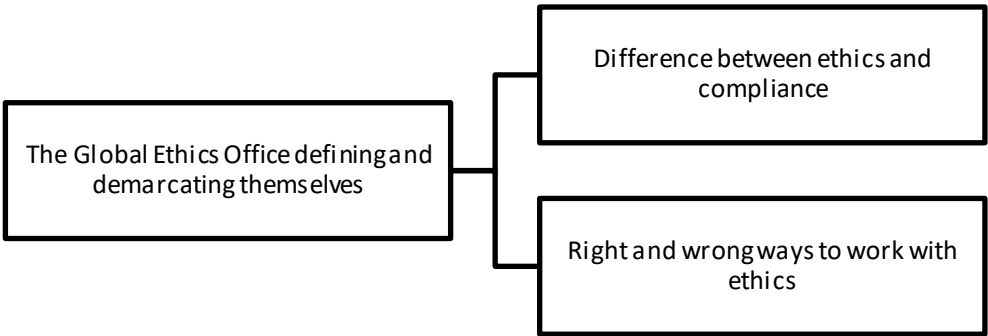
[Coded material removed from print version due to confidentiality]

Appendix 2 – Coding for Chapter 5

Please find in the following an overview of the different code groups used for chapter 6 as well as a few examples of coded material under each code. Not all first order codes have sub-codes, but for the ones that do, the examples can be found under each sub-code. Thus, the examples are provided at the lowest coding-level. For the codes related to interpretations of Ferring's ethics program, please see Appendix 5.

Code group: GxP, leeway and designing a clinical trial
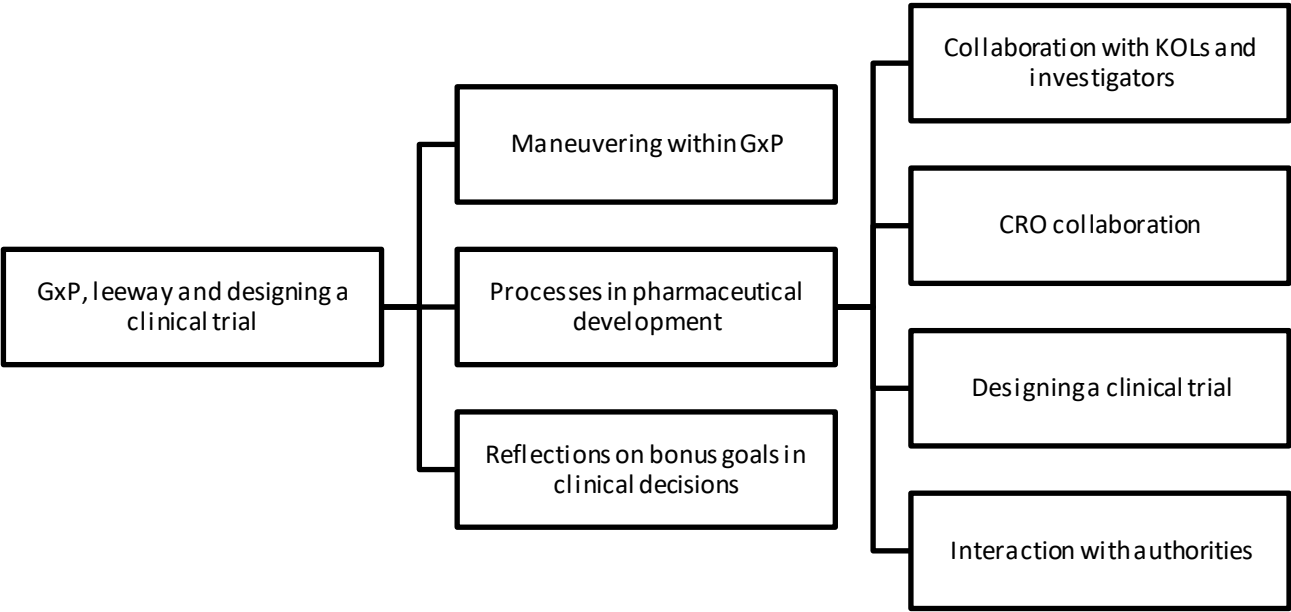
[Coded material removed from print version due to confidentiality]

Code group: Clinical trials ethics in practice
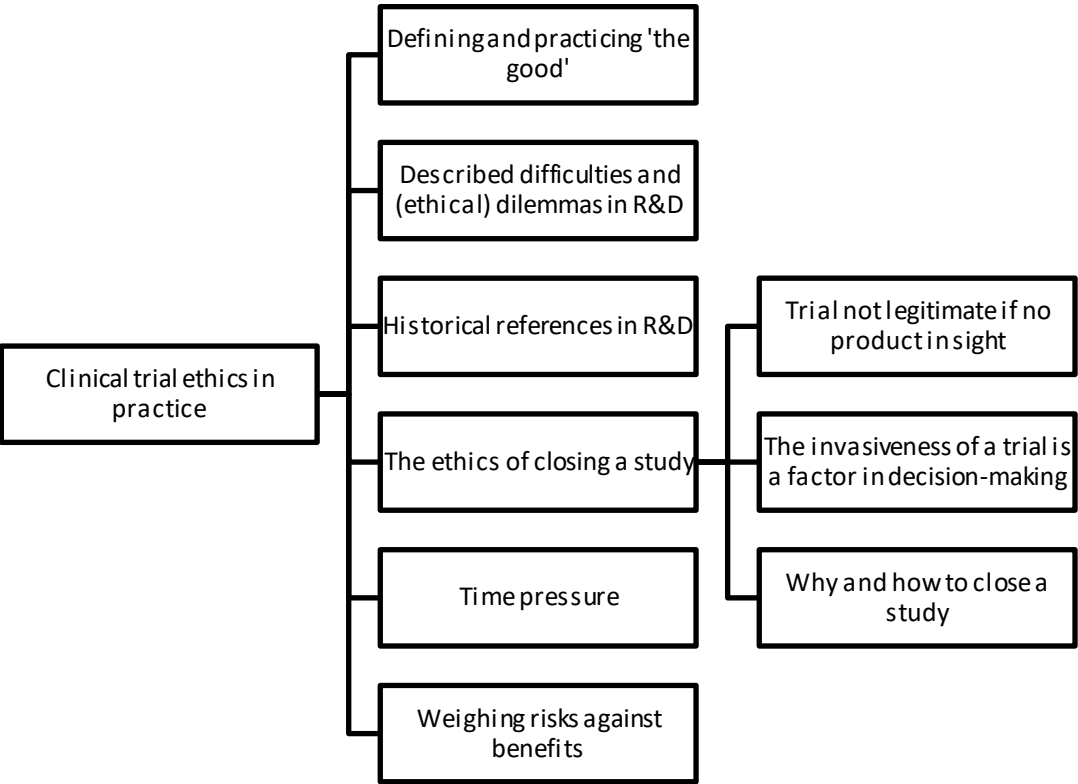
[Coded material removed from print version due to confidentiality]

Code group: Regulators and regulatory circumstances defining work
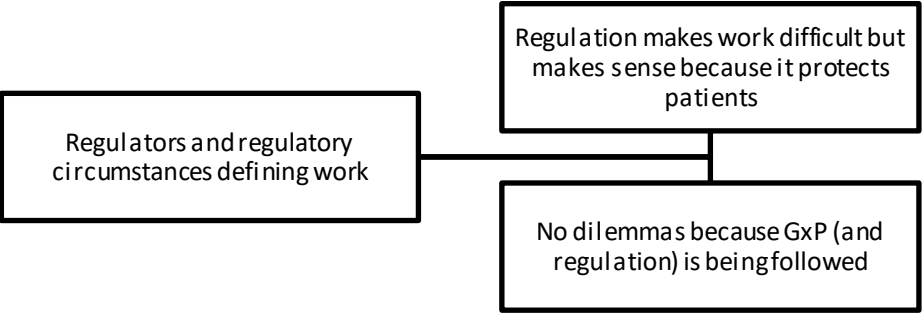
[Coded material removed from print version due to confidentiality]

Code group: Working with the purpose of helping people

Please note that this code group consists of codes used in chapter 6 and 7. For the sake of stringency, I only show the ones that have been used in chapter 6 here.

Working with the purpose of helping people	Helping people and doing good
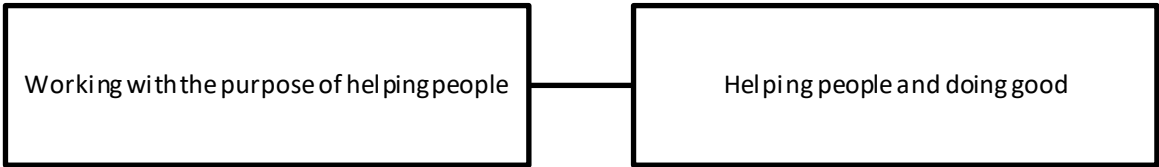
[Coded material removed from print version due to confidentiality]

Appendix 3 – Coding for Chapter 6

Please find in the following an overview of the different code groups used for chapter 7 as well as a few examples of coded material under each code. Not all first order codes have sub-codes, but for the ones that do, the examples can be found under each sub-code. Thus, the examples are provided at the lowest coding-level. For the codes related to interpretations of Ferring's ethics program, please see Appendix 5.

Code group: Working with the purpose of helping people

```
┌─────────────────────────┐           ┌──────────────────────────────────┐
│                         │           │                                  │
│ Working with the        │           │ Marketing - for the benefit of   │
│ purpose of helping      │───────────│ patients                         │
│ people                  │           │                                  │
│                         │           └──────────────────────────────────┘
└─────────────────────────┘           ┌──────────────────────────────────┐
                                       │                                  │
                                       │ Regulation getting in the way (of│
                                       │ helping people)                  │
                                       │                                  │
                                       └──────────────────────────────────┘
```

[Coded material removed from print version due to confidentiality]

Code group: Regulators and regulatory circumstances defining work

```
┌──────────────────────────────┐          ┌──────────────────────────────────────────┐
│ Regulators and regulatory    │──────────│ Compliance getting in the way of politeness│
│ circumstances defining work  │          └──────────────────────────────────────────┘
│                              │
│                              │          ┌──────────────────────────────────────────┐
│                              │──────────│ Increasing regulation in the industry      │
└──────────────────────────────┘          └──────────────────────────────────────────┘
```

[Coded material removed from print version due to confidentiality]

Code group: Reciprocity, relationships and giving back to doctors

```
                                          ┌──────────────────────────────────────────┐
                                          │ Building (and the importance of)           │
                                          │ relationships                              │
                                          └──────────────────────────────────────────┘

                                          ┌──────────────────────────────────────────┐
                                          │ Educating doctors - to increase            │
                                          │ prescriptions                              │
                                          └──────────────────────────────────────────┘

┌──────────────────────────────┐          ┌──────────────────────────────────────────┐
│ Reciprocity, relationships and│─────────│ Industry and doctors (researchers)         │
│ giving back to doctors        │         │ mutual interest in collaborating           │
└──────────────────────────────┘          └──────────────────────────────────────────┘

                                          ┌──────────────────────────────────────────┐
                                          │ Support for conferences in return          │
                                          │ for contact                                │
                                          └──────────────────────────────────────────┘

                                          ┌──────────────────────────────────────────┐
                                          │ Supporting the needs of the                │
                                          │ doctors                                    │
                                          └──────────────────────────────────────────┘

                                          ┌──────────────────────────────────────────┐
                                          │ Win-win reflections                        │
                                          └──────────────────────────────────────────┘
```

[Coded material removed from print version due to confidentiality]

Code group: Perceived (ethical) dilemmas in marketing and sales

```
┌─────────────────────────────┐        ┌────────────────────────────────────┐
│                             │        │                                    │
│ Perceived (ethical) dilemmas│────────│ Wanting the sales relation to be   │
│ in marketing and sales      │   ┬    │ 'scientific'                       │
│                             │   │    │                                    │
└─────────────────────────────┘   │    └────────────────────────────────────┘
                                  │    ┌────────────────────────────────────┐
                                  │    │                                    │
                                  └────│ Sales and marketing in the past    │
                                       │                                    │
                                       └────────────────────────────────────┘
```
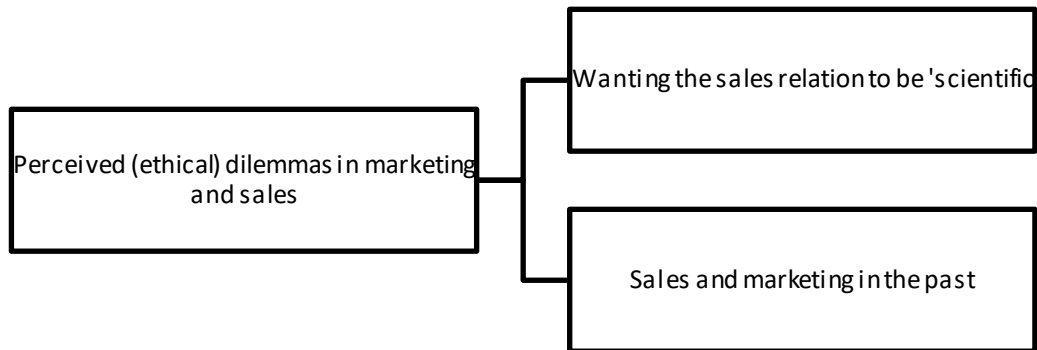
[Coded material removed from print version due to confidentiality]

Code group: Marketing – ways to influence costumers

```
                                       ┌────────────────────────────────────┐
                                       │                                    │
                                   ┌───│ Interacting with KOLs              │
                                   │   │                                    │
                                   │   └────────────────────────────────────┘
┌─────────────────────────────┐    │   ┌────────────────────────────────────┐
│                             │    │   │                                    │
│ Marketing - ways to influence│────┼───│ The hybrid role of medical affairs │
│ customers                   │    │   │                                    │
└─────────────────────────────┘    │   └────────────────────────────────────┘
                                   │   ┌────────────────────────────────────┐
                                   │   │                                    │
                                   └───│ Visiting doctors                   │
                                       │                                    │
                                       └────────────────────────────────────┘
```
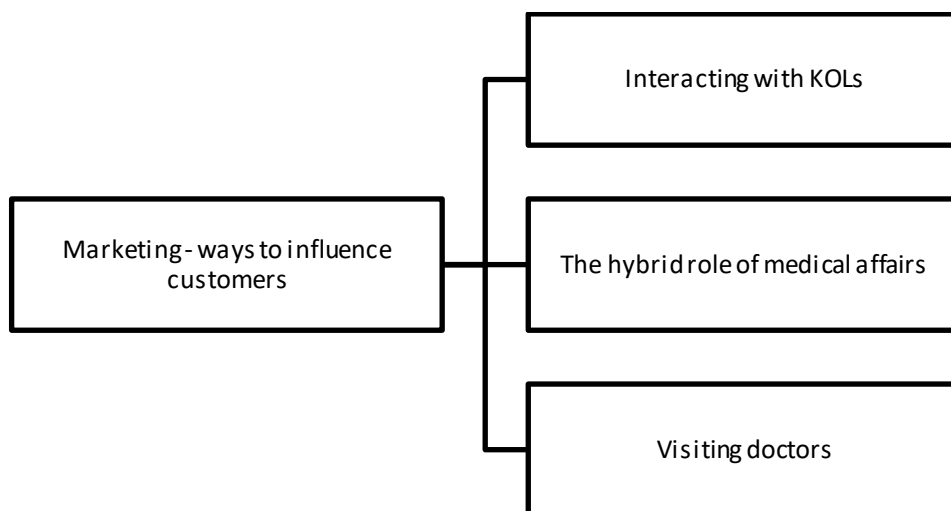
[Coded material removed from print version due to confidentiality]

Appendix 4 – Coding for Chapter 7

Please find in the following an overview of the different code groups used for chapter 8 as well as a few examples of coded material under each code. Not all first order codes have sub-codes, but for the ones that do, the examples can be found under each sub-code. Thus, the examples are provided at the lowest coding-level. For the codes related to interpretations of Ferring's ethics program, please see Appendix 5.

Code group: The logics of a family owned company

```
┌─────────────────────────────┐          ┌──────────────────────────────────────┐
│                             │          │                                      │
│ The logics of a family      │──────┬───│ The owner influencing business       │
│ owned company               │      │   │ decisions                            │
│                             │      │   │                                      │
└─────────────────────────────┘      │   └──────────────────────────────────────┘
                                     │
                                     │   ┌──────────────────────────────────────┐
                                     │   │                                      │
                                     └───│          'Protected' employees       │
                                         │                                      │
                                         └──────────────────────────────────────┘
```
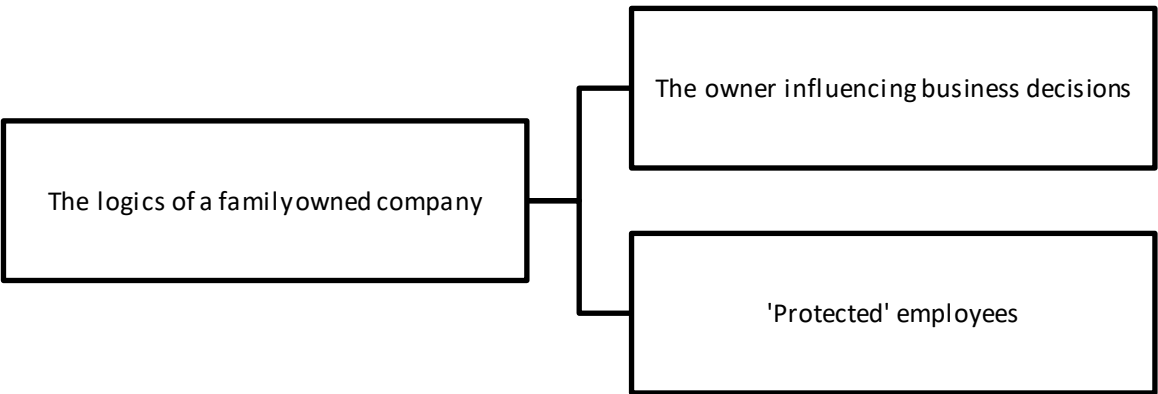
[Coded material removed from print version due to confidentiality]

Appendix 5 – Coding for Chapter 4, 5, 6, and 7

Please find in the following an overview of the codes related to the interpretation of Ferring's ethics program across chapter 4, 6, 7 and 8 as well as a few examples of coded material under each code. Not all first order codes have sub-codes, but for the ones that do, the examples can be found under each sub-code. Thus, the examples are provided at the lowest coding-level.

Code group: Interpretations of the ethics program
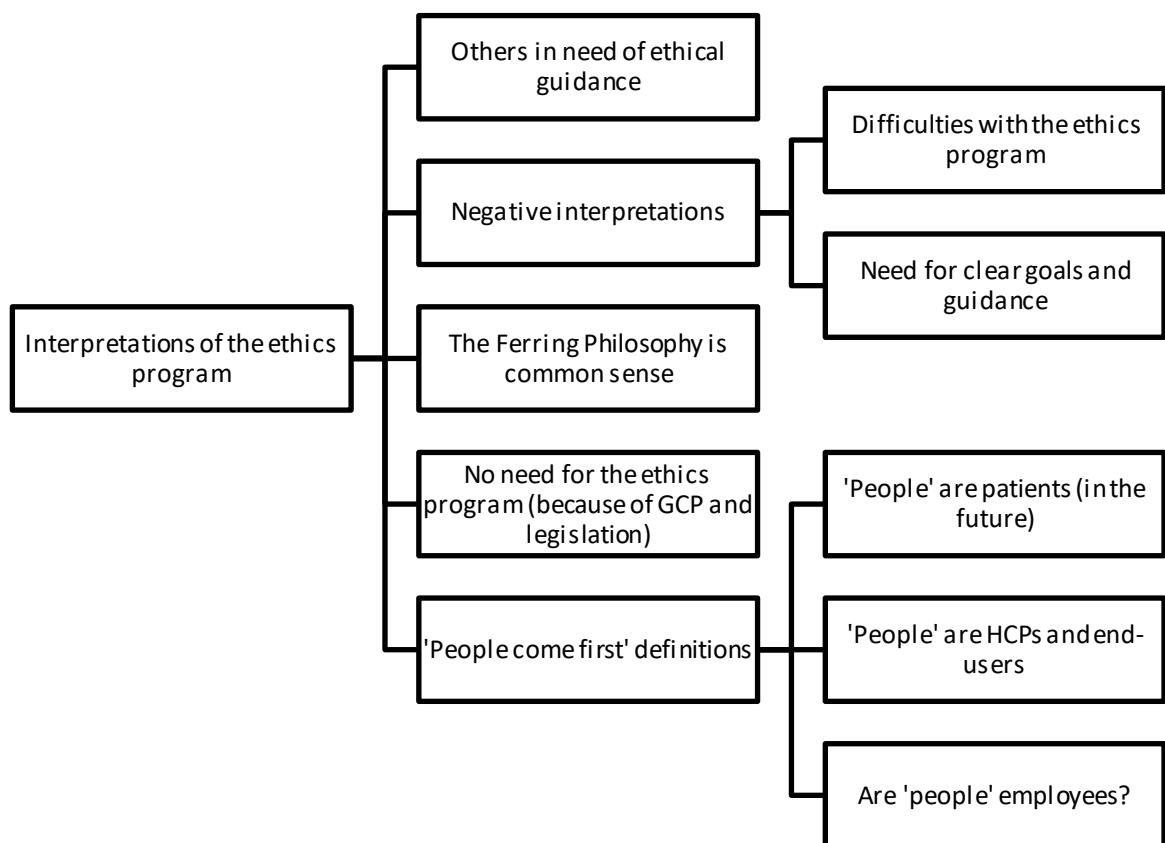
[Coded material removed from print version due to confidentiality]

Appendix 6 – Interview guides and interview transcripts

Please find in the following two examples of interview guides and interview transcripts. The purpose of this appendix is to illustrate the flow of the semi-structured interviews. As will be visible from the examples, while the topics in the interview guide are covered in the interviews, the order and phrasing of the questions are often turned around according to the flow of the conversation and the agenda set by the interviewee.

As mentioned in chapter 3, I have adjusted the interview guide for every new interviewee in order to cover the more general topics as well as any particular issues pertaining to their role or a common meeting, workshop or experience we have had together. This is particularly visible in the first example of an interview guide and interview transcript with a clinical trials officer.

Interview guide, Clinical trials officer

Introduction

- Introduction to the PhD project, anonymization, recording etc.

- Could you explain to me what your work consists of?

Budget prioritizations

- I would like to hear your considerations about the budget prioritization meeting.
- In your own words, what was the discussion [that we were both present at] about?
- Could I ask you to describe what the meeting was about? Please describe everything that you can think of.
- What was difficult about the situation?
- [Name] spoke about it as an ethical dilemma. Do you see it that way? Why/Why not?

- What makes a decision difficult or easy? Please give several examples.
- Could you give an example of another dilemma that you have found yourself in? What did you do then? How was the decision made?

Rules and regulation

- I have been told that there are many rules in your area.
- Do you agree?
- Can you describe what it means to have such rules in these situations where you meet such dilemmas?
- Does it help you make decisions? Does it make it more difficult?
- Can you describe what it means that there are so many rules (if she thinks so)?
- Do you have to work in a particular way?
- Do you have to make decisions in a particular way?
- How is it different from other ways of working?
- Is there anything you would do differently if these rules were not in place?

The ethics program

- I am also interested in the Ferring Philosophy and if you as an employee use it and how.
- Have you experienced using it in your daily work? How/ why not? Can you give an example?
- There is an ethics coordinator in [location] but not in [location]. How visible is the ethics office from where you sit?
- Ethics office is also in charge of conducting these workshops for new employees and for Ferring's alertline.
- If you were to use the alertline, what would you use it for?
- Have you experienced that people bring up the Ferring Philosophy? How? For what?
- Is there anything in particular that you have noticed about the work of the Global Ethics Office?

Interview with clinical trials officer

[Removed from print version due to confidentiality]

Interview guide, Human resources officer

Introduction

- Introduction about the project, anonymization, coding etc.

- Mention that she has been selected as an interviewee because the Global Ethics Office uses different HR colleagues to convey their messages locally.

The purpose is:

- To understand your perspective on the work of the ethics office, the Ferring philosophy and the role that you play in regards to this particular task where the message is conveyed to new employees.
- I know from your email that you don't have the direct contact with local people, but I still wanted to hear your perspective, since the Ferring philosophy workshop belongs to your area.

The ethics program

- From your perspective, what is the purpose of having the ethics program, the ethics office and these workshops and the Ferring philosophy?
- What does it mean to have it?
- In Ferring, there is a difference between ethics and compliance. Could you, in your own words, describe how you see the difference between the two and what are the pros and cons to this approach?

- Then, I would like to ask you to describe your role in conveying the message. I know that [name of HR officer] is formally the one who does it, but how do you see your role in training and development as local bearers of the message?
- How much of your work consists of ethics-related tasks? And how did you get this task? (Maybe explain that the reason for me asking is that I understand that there are also local HR coordinators – the country specific HR personnel – who take on these roles sometimes).

- In your opinion, what difference do the Ferring Philosophy workshops make?

- How do people respond to them?

- What are the pros of having these workshops?

- What are the cons?

The Ferring philosophy

- I am also trying to understand how people use the Ferring Philosophy in their work. If they use it and how.

- Do you use it?

- How/ why not?

- Can you give an example?

- What would you say is the most important message in the Ferring Philosophy?

- Is there anything in particular that you have noticed or wonder about or wish to comment about with regards to the work of the ethics office?

Ethical dilemmas

- Can you describe a dilemma that you have encountered?

- How did you handle it?

Interview with Human resources officer

[Removed from print version due to confidentiality]

Interview guide, Marketing and Sales officer

Introduction

- Introduction to the project, anonymization, recording etc.
- I have some more broad questions about the nature of your work and also some more specific questions about [name of product].
- As part of the study, I have been following the [name of trial] group and sat in on clinical team meetings etc. Explain that I am learning about [name of product] from different ankles.

Marketing and sales and how they work

- Could you describe the different methods you use to market a product like [name of product] and how they work?
- Can you give an example?
- If I worked in marketing, what should I know to be able to do my work well?
- What challenges would I meet? (And what would be the right thing to do?).
- Do you encounter any dilemmas in what you do?
- Could you give an example of one?
- How did you handle it?
- How did you decide what was the right thing to do?

Rules and regulation

- I have been told that there are many rules in your area.
- Do you agree?
- Can you describe what it means to have such rules?
- Can you describe what it means that there are so many rules (if she thinks so)?
- Do you have to work in a particular way?
- Do you have to make decisions in a particular way?
- What does it mean to have these rules when you have to make such difficult decisions (as discussed earlier)?
- How is it different from other ways of working?
- Is there anything you would do differently if these rules were not in place?

The ethics program

- I am also interested in the Ferring Philosophy and if you as an employee use it and how.

- Have you experienced using it in your daily work? How/ why not? Can you give an example?

- Ethics office is also in charge of conducting these workshops for new employees and for Ferring's alertline.

- Have you attended one of these workshops? How did you experience it? Can you describe what happened?

- If you were to use the alertline, what would you use it for?

- Have you experienced that people bring up the Ferring Philosophy? How? For what?

- Is there anything in particular that you have noticed about the work of the Global Ethics Office?

Interview, Marketing and sales officer

[Removed from print version due to confidentiality]

Appendix 7 – The Ferring Philosophy

People come first at Ferring

Because:

Patients using our products and physicians prescribing them have a right to expect:

- that we will only make available those products in which we have full confidence.
- that we will offer the best possible products at the most reasonable cost.
- that Ferring's employees will always display courtesy and respect, and act professionally.

Ferring seeks the loyalty of these patients and physicians, and we are prepared to earn this loyalty anew every day.

Ferring expects that its employees will create value for the company and its stakeholders.

Ferring employees, at all levels, have a right to expect from the company and their colleagues:

- respect, support and encouragement.
- a work environment that is safe, stimulating and rewarding.
- the freedom to make mistakes and to admit to them without fear of retribution.
- that the highest standards of integrity will be maintained at all times.
- that colleagues will never knowingly do anything to compromise their position as Ferring employees.
- that all who represent Ferring will do so in ways that generate respect for the company and its employees.

Ferring asks its employees to:

- Always do what is right, proper and ethical, and encourage your colleagues to do so.
- Speak out when you think that wrongs are being committed in Ferring's name.
- Be loyal, but only to that which is just, equitable, honourable and principled - and true to the Ferring philosophy.

No statement of principled behaviour can ever cover every situation, or deal with every contingency. It can only set the tone, making each individual responsible for applying that tone to his or her everyday practice. We strive to set that tone with five simple words:

People come first at Ferring

Effectiveness of Grocer Media Advertising
Measuring Ad Recall and Recognition, Purchase Intentions and Short-Term Sales

11. Allan Mortensen
Essays on the Pricing of Corporate Bonds and Credit Derivatives

12. Remo Stefano Chiari
Figure che fanno conoscere
Itinerario sull'idea del valore cognitivo e espressivo della metafora e di altri tropi da Aristotele e da Vico fino al cognitivismo contemporaneo

13. Anders McIlquham-Schmidt
Strategic Planning and Corporate Performance
An integrative research review and a meta-analysis of the strategic planning and corporate performance literature from 1956 to 2003

14. Jens Geersbro
The TDF – PMI Case
Making Sense of the Dynamics of Business Relationships and Networks

15 Mette Andersen
Corporate Social Responsibility in Global Supply Chains
Understanding the uniqueness of firm behaviour

16. Eva Boxenbaum
Institutional Genesis: Micro – Dynamic Foundations of Institutional Change

17. Peter Lund-Thomsen
Capacity Development, Environmental Justice NGOs, and Governance: The Case of South Africa

18. Signe Jarlov
Konstruktioner af offentlig ledelse

19. Lars Stæhr Jensen
Vocabulary Knowledge and Listening Comprehension in English as a Foreign Language

An empirical study employing data elicited from Danish EFL learners

20. Christian Nielsen
Essays on Business Reporting
Production and consumption of strategic information in the market for information

21. Marianne Thejls Fischer
Egos and Ethics of Management Consultants

22. Annie Bekke Kjær
Performance management i Proces-innovation
– belyst i et social-konstruktivistisk perspektiv

23. Suzanne Dee Pedersen
GENTAGELSENS METAMORFOSE
Om organisering af den kreative gøren i den kunstneriske arbejdspraksis

24. Benedikte Dorte Rosenbrink
Revenue Management
Økonomiske, konkurrencemæssige & organisatoriske konsekvenser

25. Thomas Riise Johansen
Written Accounts and Verbal Accounts
The Danish Case of Accounting and Accountability to Employees

26. Ann Fogelgren-Pedersen
The Mobile Internet: Pioneering Users' Adoption Decisions

27. Birgitte Rasmussen
Ledelse i fællesskab – de tillidsvalgtes fornyende rolle

28. Gitte Thit Nielsen
Remerger
– skabende ledelseskræfter i fusion og opkøb

29. Carmine Gioia
A MICROECONOMETRIC ANALYSIS OF MERGERS AND ACQUISITIONS

A case study of the Fashion and Design Branch of the Industrial District of Montebelluna, NE Italy

12. Mikkel Flyverbom
Making the Global Information Society Governable
On the Governmentality of Multi-Stakeholder Networks

13. Anette Grønning
Personen bag
Tilstedevær i e-mail som inter-aktionsform mellem kunde og medarbejder i dansk forsikringskontekst

14. Jørn Helder
One Company – One Language?
The NN-case

15. Lars Bjerregaard Mikkelsen
Differing perceptions of customer value
Development and application of a tool for mapping perceptions of customer value at both ends of customer-supplier dyads in industrial markets

16. Lise Granerud
Exploring Learning
Technological learning within small manufacturers in South Africa

17. Esben Rahbek Pedersen
Between Hopes and Realities: Reflections on the Promises and Practices of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)

18. Ramona Samson
The Cultural Integration Model and European Transformation.
The Case of Romania

2007
1. Jakob Vestergaard
Discipline in The Global Economy Panopticism and the Post-Washington Consensus

2. Heidi Lund Hansen
Spaces for learning and working
A qualitative study of change of work, management, vehicles of power and social practices in open offices

3. Sudhanshu Rai
Exploring the internal dynamics of software development teams during user analysis
A tension enabled Institutionalization Model; "Where process becomes the objective"

4. Norsk ph.d.
Ej til salg gennem Samfundslitteratur

5. Serden Ozcan
EXPLORING HETEROGENEITY IN ORGANIZATIONAL ACTIONS AND OUTCOMES
A Behavioural Perspective

6. Kim Sundtoft Hald
Inter-organizational Performance Measurement and Management in Action
– An Ethnography on the Construction of Management, Identity and Relationships

7. Tobias Lindeberg
Evaluative Technologies
Quality and the Multiplicity of Performance

8. Merete Wedell-Wedellsborg
Den globale soldat
Identitetsdannelse og identitetsledelse i multinationale militære organisationer

9. Lars Frederiksen
Open Innovation Business Models Innovation in firm-hosted online user communities and inter-firm project ventures in the music industry
– A collection of essays

10. Jonas Gabrielsen
Retorisk toposlære – fra statisk 'sted' til persuasiv aktivitet

integration in the process of product innovation

19. Throstur Olaf Sigurjonsson
Governance Failure and Icelands's Financial Collapse

20. Allan Sall Tang Andersen
Essays on the modeling of risks in interest-rate and inflation markets

21. Heidi Tscherning
Mobile Devices in Social Contexts

22. Birgitte Gorm Hansen
Adapting in the Knowledge Economy Lateral Strategies for Scientists and Those Who Study Them

23. Kristina Vaarst Andersen
Optimal Levels of Embeddedness The Contingent Value of Networked Collaboration

24. Justine Grønbæk Pors
Noisy Management A History of Danish School Governing from 1970-2010

25. Stefan Linder
Micro-foundations of Strategic Entrepreneurship Essays on Autonomous Strategic Action

26. Xin Li
Toward an Integrative Framework of National Competitiveness An application to China

27. Rune Thorbjørn Clausen
Værdifuld arkitektur Et eksplorativt studie af bygningers rolle i virksomheders værdiskabelse

28. Monica Viken
Markedsundersøkelser som bevis i varemerke- og markedsføringsrett

29. Christian Wymann
Tattooing The Economic and Artistic Constitution of a Social Phenomenon

30. Sanne Frandsen
Productive Incoherence A Case Study of Branding and Identity Struggles in a Low-Prestige Organization

31. Mads Stenbo Nielsen
Essays on Correlation Modelling

32. Ivan Häuser
Følelse og sprog Etablering af en ekspressiv kategori, eksemplificeret på russisk

33. Sebastian Schwenen
Security of Supply in Electricity Markets

2012

1. Peter Holm Andreasen
The Dynamics of Procurement Management - A Complexity Approach

2. Martin Haulrich
Data-Driven Bitext Dependency Parsing and Alignment

3. Line Kirkegaard
Konsulenten i den anden nat En undersøgelse af det intense arbejdsliv

4. Tonny Stenheim
Decision usefulness of goodwill under IFRS

5. Morten Lind Larsen
Produktivitet, vækst og velfærd Industrirådet og efterkrigstidens Danmark 1945 - 1958

6. Petter Berg
Cartel Damages and Cost Asymmetries

7. Lynn Kahle
Experiential Discourse in Marketing A methodical inquiry into practice and theory

8. Anne Roelsgaard Obling
Management of Emotions in Accelerated Medical Relationships

33. Thomas Jensen
*Shipping Information Pipeline:
An information infrastructure to
improve international containerized
shipping*

34. Dzmitry Bartalevich
*Do economic theories inform policy?
Analysis of the influence of the Chicago
School on European Union competition
policy*

35. Kristian Roed Nielsen
*Crowdfunding for Sustainability: A
study on the potential of reward-based
crowdfunding in supporting sustainable
entrepreneurship*

36. Emil Husted
*There is always an alternative: A study
of control and commitment in political
organization*

37. Anders Ludvig Sevelsted
*Interpreting Bonds and Boundaries of
Obligation. A genealogy of the emer-
gence and development of Protestant
voluntary social work in Denmark as
shown through the cases of the Co-
penhagen Home Mission and the Blue
Cross (1850 – 1950)*

38. Niklas Kohl
Essays on Stock Issuance

39. Maya Christiane Flensborg Jensen
*BOUNDARIES OF
PROFESSIONALIZATION AT WORK
An ethnography-inspired study of care
workers' dilemmas at the margin*

40. Andreas Kamstrup
*Crowdsourcing and the Architectural
Competition as Organisational
Technologies*

41. Louise Lyngfeldt Gorm Hansen
*Triggering Earthquakes in Science,
Politics and Chinese Hydropower
- A Controversy Study*

2018

1. Vishv Priya Kohli
*Combatting Falsifi cation and Coun-
terfeiting of Medicinal Products in
the E uropean Union – A Legal
Analysis*

2. Helle Haurum
*Customer Engagement Behavior
in the context of Continuous Service
Relationships*

3. Nis Grünberg
*The Party -state order: Essays on
China's political organization and
political economic institutions*

4. Jesper Christensen
*A Behavioral Theory of Human
Capital Integration*

5. Poula Marie Helth
Learning in practice

6. Rasmus Vendler Toft-Kehler
*Entrepreneurship as a career? An
investigation of the relationship
between entrepreneurial experience
and entrepreneurial outcome*

7. Szymon Furtak
*Sensing the Future: Designing
sensor-based predictive information
systems for forecasting spare part
demand for diesel engines*

8. Mette Brehm Johansen
*Organizing patient involvement. An
ethnographic study*

9. Iwona Sulinska
*Complexities of Social Capital in
Boards of Directors*

10. Cecilie Fanøe Petersen
*Award of public contracts as a
means to conferring State aid: A
legal analysis of the interface
between public procurement law
and State aid law*

11. Ahmad Ahmad Barirani
*Three Experimental Studies on
Entrepreneurship*

2019

1. Shihan Du
ESSAYS IN EMPIRICAL STUDIES BASED ON ADMINISTRATIVE LABOUR MARKET DATA

2. Mart Laatsit
Policy learning in innovation policy: A comparative analysis of European Union member states

3. Peter J. Wynne
Proactively Building Capabilities for the Post-Acquisition Integration of Information Systems

4. Kalina S. Staykova
Generative Mechanisms for Digital Platform Ecosystem Evolution

5. Ieva Linkeviciute
Essays on the Demand-Side Management in Electricity Markets

6. Jonatan Echebarria Fernández
Jurisdiction and Arbitration Agreements in Contracts for the Carriage of Goods by Sea – Limitations on Party Autonomy

7. Louise Thorn Bøttkjær
Votes for sale. Essays on clientelism in new democracies.

8. Ditte Vilstrup Holm
The Poetics of Participation: the organizing of participation in contemporary art

9. Philip Rosenbaum
Essays in Labor Markets – Gender, Fertility and Education

10. Mia Olsen
Mobile Betalinger - Succesfaktorer og Adfærdsmæssige Konsekvenser

11. Adrián Luis Mérida Gutiérrez
Entrepreneurial Careers: Determinants, Trajectories, and Outcomes

12. Frederik Regli
Essays on Crude Oil Tanker Markets

13. Cancan Wang
Becoming Adaptive through Social Media: Transforming Governance and Organizational Form in Collaborative E-government

14. Lena Lindbjerg Sperling
Economic and Cultural Development: Empirical Studies of Micro-level Data

15. Xia Zhang
Obligation, face and facework: An empirical study of the communicative act of cancellation of an obligation by Chinese, Danish and British business professionals in both L1 and ELF contexts

16. Stefan Kirkegaard Sløk-Madsen
Entrepreneurial Judgment and Commercialization

17. Erin Leitheiser
*The Comparative Dynamics of Private Governance
The case of the Bangladesh Ready-Made Garment Industry*

18. Lone Christensen
STRATEGIIMPLEMENTERING: STYRINGSBESTRÆBELSER, IDENTITET OG AFFEKT

19. Thomas Kjær Poulsen
Essays on Asset Pricing with Financial Frictions

20. Maria Lundberg
Trust and self-trust in leadership identity constructions: A qualitative exploration of narrative ecology in the discursive aftermath of heroic discourse

TITLER I ATV PH.D.-SERIEN

1992
1. Niels Kornum
Servicesamkørsel – organisation, øko-nomi og planlægningsmetode

1995
2. Verner Worm
Nordiske virksomheder i Kina Kulturspecifikke interaktionsrelationer ved nordiske virksomhedsetableringer i Kina

1999
3. Mogens Bjerre
Key Account Management of Complex Strategic Relationships An Empirical Study of the Fast Moving Consumer Goods Industry

2000
4. Lotte Darsø
Innovation in the Making Interaction Research with heteroge-neous Groups of Knowledge Workers creating new Knowledge and new Leads

2001
5. Peter Hobolt Jensen
Managing Strategic Design Identities The case of the Lego Developer Net-work

2002
6. Peter Lohmann
The Deleuzian Other of Organizational Change – Moving Perspectives of the Human

7. Anne Marie Jess Hansen
To lead from a distance: The dynamic interplay between strategy and strate-gizing – A case study of the strategic management process

2003
8. Lotte Henriksen
Videndeling – om organisatoriske og ledelsesmæs-sige udfordringer ved videndeling i praksis

9. Niels Christian Nickelsen
Arrangements of Knowing: Coordi-nating Procedures Tools and Bodies in Industrial Production – a case study of the collective making of new products

2005
10. Carsten Ørts Hansen
Konstruktion af ledelsesteknologier og effektivitet

TITLER I DBA PH.D.-SERIEN

2007
1. Peter Kastrup-Misir
Endeavoring to Understand Market Orientation – and the concomitant co-mutation of the researched, the re searcher, the research itself and the truth

2009
1. Torkild Leo Thellefsen
Fundamental Signs and Significance effects A Semeiotic outline of Fundamental Signs, Significance-effects, Knowledge Profiling and their use in Knowledge Organization and Branding

2. Daniel Ronzani
When Bits Learn to Walk Don't Make Them Trip. Technological Innovation and the Role of Regulation by Law in Information Systems Research: the Case of Radio Frequency Identification (RFID)

2010
1. Alexander Carnera
Magten over livet og livet som magt Studier i den biopolitiske ambivalens