

Life Mode Analysis – the coming in to being

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Life mode and state form analysis

First I will say a little about the discipline in which life mode theory is born and elaborated. In Denmark we call it "Ethnology". Ethno-Logos is a scientific discipline explaining the ways in which groups are living and the ways in which these different kinds of living are developing. *Life* is a cyclic process and its *form* is that whole of structural features, which make a specified cycle possible in a specific milieu. So ethnology could be compared to biology. The ancient Greek philosophical term for life mode is “bios”. Bio-Logos became the science about all kinds of natural life forms. If we compare the two disciplines in modern times then we all know that biology is concerned with relations, processes, and systems - since the epistemological rupture of Darwin (introducing the three-dimensional concept of survival of the fittest: variation, transmission and selection) its theoretical object has been ecosystems – i.e. complex metabolic chains of biological life forms eating each other and coexisting life forms adapting to and competing with each other in the so called struggle for survival. These relations of metabolism determine which kinds of life forms are possible in a concrete and specific ecosystem. Ethnology explores the division and appropriation of labour between the distinct cultural life modes, which are recognizing, contrasting and presupposing each other as possible in a specific social system (Højrup 2002, 2003: 10ff).

The scientific praxis of biology aims to explicate and specify the thinkable concepts of all possible natural life forms. The ethnological praxis aims to make explicit and to specify the thinkable concepts of all possible cultural life modes. While the life forms of the ecosystem are determined by the selection process of struggle for survival, the life modes of the social system are determined by the selection process of struggle for recognition. While the biological life forms reproduce themselves through relations of metabolism, the cultural life modes reproduce themselves through mutual relations of recognition, production, and distribution. The biological ecosystem theory is constituted by the concept of *survival of the fittest*, while the ethnological state system theory (as presented here) is constituted by the concept of *survival of the superior defence*. Both of these concept structures are theories about the coexistence and transformation of mutually connected and contradicting forms of life. While the natural history is the object of biological evolutionary theory, the cultural history of evolving life modes and state forms is the object of ethnology as an evolutionary culture theory – i.e. the opposite of vitalist and teleological “evolutionism” (Højrup 2002a, 2003: 221f, 2008).

Perhaps this can explain the way in which the *ethnological* life mode analysis always demands an *ethnographic* description of the features of life modes in question as they are changing in self-transcending culture-historical processes. Ethnology is inspiring ethnography by making explicit the logically possible life mode concepts which may be relevant. Ethnography is inspiring ethnology by describing the observable traits of life modes, which can be seen with help from the preliminary concepts. While ethnography is describing the life modes synchronically and diachronically (coexistence and succession of features in time) ethnology aims to specify the ways in which they in theoretical terms presuppose each other as mutually necessary prerequisites in the a-chronic structures of concept relations. The ethnographic actuality will always be studied at the background of the describable historical process in which the forms we are studying now are generated. The object of ethnographical life mode research is a historical object as well as an actual object. When we are analysing the cultural history of life modes we are trying to explore the ways in which a complex of life modes is dependent upon the structure of dominance between the necessary conditions of existence of different modes of production and their life modes which are making contradictory demands to the political, legal, ideological and economic structures of a state. From this perspective ethnography grasps how some life modes are losing their necessary conditions of possibility and are disappearing from the social formation of specific states, whereas new life modes are developing in the same state because their conditions of existence are improved as part of the sovereignty work of the state in question. The structure of dominance is determining how contradictory conditions of possibility can coexist in the social formation of a state. This coexistence means that

some life modes are excluded and new ones are introduced (Højrup 2003: 16ff, 127ff, Højrup 2011, Højrup & Schriewer 2012: 70ff, Høst 2013).

The elaboration of a form specifying life mode analysis

The earliest Danish books on modern life modes were written in the situation of the 1970s, where states in the northern part of Europe had political interests in decentralizing the physical planning which earlier was an exclusive part of state planning and management (Højrup 1983). As part of a structure rationalization of the state apparatus it was decentralised to the regional level and to the local level. A new perspective of this kind of planning was to involve the citizens in the planning process itself. The new and more efficient trend was that the planning process should listen to the different wishes or needs - cultural, social, industrial needs - in the different parts of the population to improve the efficiency and the suitability of the plans and the planning process.

It was a very difficult task to integrate for the first time family farmers, career professional people, self-employed fishermen, wageworkers, civil servants, housewives, investors, people from the cities, and people from the countryside in one planning process. Where are the roads to be constructed, where can we place the new hospital and the new settlements, which part of the industrial area is to be closed down and where are we to develop new areas? It was not an easy task to get people to take responsible part in that conscious, contradictory and self reflective process in a meaningful way. Often the planners told about the different visions of possible plan models and scenarios, but it was not always possible for the different citizens to understand what it was all about.

This kind of planning process laid bare harsh contradictions behind visible and concrete conflicts between the different needs and wishes of the different parts of the population. Because of that the authorities thought that it perhaps could be useful to ask the ethnologists if they could help the planners, the politicians, and the authorities to understand the background of the different ways in which the different people conceived the needs, the wishes, the planning process, and the meetings. I was a student at that time and I was asked if I would take part in an exploratory project at the planning research institute of Denmark with the aim to describe the different ways of living in the population in such a way, that it could improve this planning process (Højrup 2003: 13ff).

One should think that it would be a very easy task to describe the way a modern population is living using a conception about everyday life. We all have an impression of what modern everyday life is in an European welfare state, but the problem of a general conception is that you cannot use a general conception of a supposed general life to understand the

different points of departure or the different backgrounds behind the specific interests people articulated, and behind the differences in the wishes and the needs which was formulated in this planning process. By the help of general conceptions of imagined human needs and supposed common modern norms the planners did not get access to an understanding of the cultural contradictions which were so important for the process. They therefore asked if ethnology had an alternative to that. And the alternative in the 1970s was to atomize the question about, or the way to conceive, everyday life. And it was done with a kind of series of arguments which could be called action theory.

The general model was that you can understand how people are living by saying: everyone is maximizing some cultural values. People are evaluating their family, their work, their neighbours, their home, their education as well as the landscape, the local community, the city, etc. very differently. These evaluations reflect their scale of values. Culturally equipped with such a scale of value the way in which the “actors” are maximizing the value is dependent on the resources each actor has. So when the ethnologist knows the scale of values and the resources of people it should be possible to explain the way in which people act. Action therefore can be explicated by considering peoples scales of values and resources because every actor is maximizing his or her values (Højrup 2003: 91ff).

The next step of the argumentation is that if two actors are acting in relation to each other then they are interacting. Each of them has a scale of values and some resources, at the basis of which they are able to exchange values with each other. Exchange is the core figure of this concept of interaction. Out of this concept the theoretical interactionists induced a social law. This law says that interaction between actors, with different scales of value, is a process in which the actors step by step are getting to know each other’s scales of values. This learning process produces a feed-back on the actors’ scales of values, and the effect of that is an “integration” of the scales of value of the actors. The law was formulated as a proposition saying: The more interaction the more integration. The more people in a country or between different countries are interacting with one another, the more we have a cultural process of integration.

At the basis of this kind of interactionist mode of analysis ethnologists and social anthropologists could tell the planners how important it was to map the scales of values in a population. At the background of such mapping they would tell them how different values are spread in a population and can be used to explain why people are thinking differently about the planning proposals. But experienced planners posed a very interesting question to the researchers. They asked: "If you have all these many, many different values, if you are atomizing the understanding of everyday life, then we have to pose you a new

question. And the new question is this: Are there differences in scales of values which it is *necessary* for us as planners to reflect? Because a plan cannot seriously take into account an unending, or atomized mass of different values."

A planning process has to take into account the necessary differences which do not just change with interaction. The need in the planning process to be able to provide for the cultural features which necessarily will impede the implementation of the planning, if you do not take them into account, became a very important feature and demand from practitioners to the ethnological analysis. The necessary differences are those who do not change with the endless interaction processes of everyday life. The next question was: Is it possible to make explicit specific differences which are more constant, more grounded, more deeply rooted in the way the society we are talking about is structured? Are there cultural forms which are dependent on the basic social structure and upon which the foundational structure of the social formation of a specific state is dependent? Are there - so to speak - cultural forms which are possible to conceive as building blocks of a specific kind of state and society? (Højrup 2003:16ff)

To produce an answer to that question it was not enough to use functionalism or action theories. We had to look for culture concepts which were based upon an understanding of those necessary modes of existence that are able to reproduce their own conditions of existence. The task was to be theoretically able to specify possible modes of existence which are necessary for the foundational structures of the relevant state form and its specific kind of society. How were they to be conceived theoretically and described empirically? The question of reproduction, durability and being was introduced into the work.

One important and old concept in European thinking has delivered and elaborated on such a reproduction perspective, namely the concept of praxis. This concept is structured as a kind of theoretical tool to specify the way in which praxis may be formed under specific conditions of possibility to be able to reproduce its own conditions of existence. We know many variants of that kind of thinking and it points to the fact that praxis always must have a cyclic form and mode of existence to be a possible *life*, a self-reproducing element/process of a social formation. One variant of this mode of analysis is represented by the concepts of modes of production. This mode of analysis takes its point of departure in the way in which the economic cultures of a country may be grasped as structured by a whole of distinct forms of self-reproducing production and appropriation processes.

The initial problem with that kind of theory was in the 1970's that these different modes of production was conceived as composed of social classes. And these classes had their

specific, perhaps antagonistic, interests which clashed with each other. But if a class is conceived as a mass of individuals with common interests we once more had to do with a (classificatory) concept where the actor was a fundamental figure in the thinking and the actors were agents with specific interests. When these interests were thought to be just caused by the actors' material resources it might follow that when the resources are changing, then the fundamental interests are automatically changing (Højrup 2003: 121ff).

If the concept of class was seen in that way it could not provide a solution to the problem we had to work with in the planning process as well as in the ethnological analysis. It was quite another aspect of the mode of production theory which was useful to our work. We found it possible to use the mode of production concept to ask the question: Which necessary life modes are the prerequisites for the self-reproducing structures of the distinct mode of production concepts? Answering this question became the key to construct theoretically and understand empirically the most fundamental cultural forms of the Danish society. To describe a set of life modes and their conditions of existence we are using the mode of production concept as that structure of relation concepts, which have a specific set of life mode concepts as their end points, their terminals, their terms. Let us look at the capitalist mode of production. Characteristic of that concept is that it has three sets of relations all of which are necessary for each other. We cannot have a relation between work and wage without a relation between these two relations that can determine their content, this relation concept is the tariff. This kind of relation presupposes a negotiation between sellers and buyers of workforce that determines the tariff. The labour market itself presupposes other markets. You cannot have a labour market without a capital market, where it is possible to acquire and invest capital and to get profit in return from the investments. Profit presupposes surplus value, and the production of surplus value presupposes the labour market. The two markets presuppose each other as relation concepts. At the next step of specification the competition between different companies and different investors implies that they are trying to produce more efficiently than their competitors, trying to develop hitherto unknown products, and new ways to market their commodities making it possible for the individual company to create a temporary monopoly at the market which will be profitable. To do this the companies must buy expertise from "career professionals", people who are creating new unique ideas in the most general sense of the word, new ideas making it possible for a company to be ahead of its competitors, so that it can stay on the market and produce a surplus value which make it possible to pay a surplus profit to the investors. A profit which they must invest in improving their ability to compete, to buy more labour, to sell more commodities, to produce more profit, and so on - in the capitalists struggle for competition (Højrup 2003: 144f).

This capitalist self-reproducing process involves three different life modes, each of them yield their specific kind of necessary work or participation to the mode of production as a whole. The capitalist mode is connected to the commodity market, to which also the small enterprises of the self-employed people in agriculture, in fishery, in services, in software production, in trade etc. are marketing their articles and services. They do not need external investors. They make a supreme effort to develop their own ideas without buying help from career professionals, and they are doing as much of the manual labour as possible by themselves. This mode is called the simple commodity mode of production in which the producer families are realizing the self-employed life mode (Højrup 2003: 138ff). In this very first specification of a social formation, we have four different life modes involved in one total economic process: the life mode of the self-employed, the life mode of investors, the life mode of career professionals, and the life mode of wage workers. Like the natural life-forms of an ecosystem are interdependent and interrelated, the different cultural life modes of the social formation are contrasting, coexisting, and depending on each other.

In this way we have reached a necessity, because none of the four life modes can be excluded from a social formation based on these two modes of production. These cultural life modes cannot disappear or develop just because of interaction (in the action theory kind of thinking). They are more grounded, they are depending on the social formation structure and the structure of the social formation depends on them. Because of that it is possible to specify the conditions of existence of each distinct life mode. All variants of the four life mode concepts posit distinct prerequisites which make it possible to describe them, i.e. to explore them ethnographically, and to explain them ethnologically. Let us look at the concept of the wage-worker life mode: Its primary economic condition of possibility is the concept of labour market. The labour market is in logical terms the necessary condition of existence of the life mode of wage workers because this concept is implied in the concepts of wage and sale of working hours (Højrup 2003: 119, 147ff). The labour market depends on the political and legal conditions of possibility, because it implies the concepts of property, contract, and tariff. These three concepts imply the political relation concept of the constitutional state and the conception of law which is a specific kind of ideological relation concept. The conditions of possibility of those concepts are the domain of the sovereignty concept and the defence mode concept, in which the concepts of struggle for recognition and state system are implied. Ethnographically we may experience this ethnological chain of prerequisites in the way workers eventually participate in a demonstration making demands for state protection of the national labour market against intruders and illegal immigrants taking their jobs by undermining the wage level.

In this form, specifying the analysis of presuppositions of a specific life mode, you are

exploring the possible and necessary conditions for the continuation of for example one variant of the wage worker life mode which exists in Spain today. Perhaps the demands of the demonstrating people are expressing necessary prerequisites, perhaps they are not. To be able to differentiate between necessary demands and those who are mere rhetoric without being necessary for a specific mode of existence, is important for the planners and the planning processes of the unions, the employers, the regions and the state.

In the same way we can explore the conditions of possibility of the investor life mode. Its prerequisite in economic terms is a financial market. The investor life mode implies the specific relations of the capital market concept. The capital market itself demands very specific legal systems, rights, and duties (Høst 2013). We all know how difficult it was to introduce a capital market in Russia without the risk of producing an economic mafia, wild capitalism, oligarchs and so on. It was exactly these kinds of legal conditions of existence for the functioning of a financial market, which were so difficult to establish for the politicians in a short time. Today capitalists pose the same question to China, and to many other states where the politicians are allowing the introduction and expansion of the capitalist mode of production and speculation. To introduce the new mode of production and its life modes, the politicians are forced to establish legally and defend politically the necessary conditions of existence of a labour market, a capital market, and not least, a market for that kind of skills, which is a necessary condition of possibility of the career professional life mode. They have to be able to differentiate between the features and structural traits of a labour market and a career professional skill market. They have to find out what these high paid professionals are yielding if it is not just very competent labour. They have to ask: Is it possible to find a genuine contrast between these two kinds of work? Are there two kinds of employees here? Both of them seem to be wage earners who are employed by a company, both of them are paid money for what they are doing; none of them own the company wherein they are working. But what is then the difference between them?

For the labour force tariffs fix the rate of payment for an hour. The worker is paid for the times spend at work. He is selling his labour at a market for working hours. It is the responsibility of the employer how much value his employees are producing in one hour. As a wage worker you cannot get more for the hour you are spending in the company for your employer than what the tariff describes. The worker can say: "I'm producing much more surplus value than you thought I could produce". But the responsibility for the efficiency of his work in one hour is not his own but in the hands of the employer. The employer has the right to plan the working process, the right to manage and supervise the work, and he is responsible for paying the wage not depending on how much is actually

produced by the employees. The employer's right to manage the work and appropriate its surplus value is complementary to the right of the employee to receive a fixed wage for each hour spend at work. That is the contrast between being an employer and a wage worker. For the wage worker life mode, this figure is a necessary part of what is perceived as 'the good life'. After working hours he or she has no obligation to puzzle over how it is possible to be more effective at the working place. This is the essence of free time, of leisure. In the free time you have your own responsibility for leisure and family life. Free time means that it is not necessary for your family to talk every evening about how it is possible for the farm or the shop or the company to survive. You can put the work aside and concentrate on your commitment to your home, the family life, and sports etc. (Højrup 2003: 23ff, 32ff).

To have an independent free time is a core feature of the concept structure of the wage worker life mode, and it is the only life mode, I know, in the cultural history which has this kind of leisure concept. I do not know any other life mode with that very specific structural trait. But today it is a very important feature in our societies because this life mode plays such a crucial role. But it is not a feature, we find, in some of the other life modes which we know about today. Nevertheless many planners think they have to plan the cities and regions as if all people are dividing up and classifying their everyday life activities in either work or leisure respectively. In other parts of the population, where the integration of the family life, the family firm, and the local community is a core feature, these kinds of planning will not be meaningful. At the contrary they risk to produce difficult troubles for the planning processes, if people cannot understand that kind of thinking at all because it does not make sense for them. For the career professional the division between work and leisure is meaningless too, if not totally absurd, and that is a possible point of departure for specifying the contrasts between the wage worker life mode and the life mode of the career professional.

In the first life mode studies, we thought that it was the expertise of the career oriented person, which was differentiating the workers life mode from that of career professionals (Højrup 2003: 24f). The managers and researchers etc. were paid higher than routine workers because the routine worker had less expertise to offer than these people. So the differences between the exchange value of routine work and management were thought to be caused by the fact that expertise is more expensive to produce and more scarce than skilled and unskilled labour force. But then we are facing a continuum of degree between more and less, and expertise cannot be used to explain how two life mode concepts differ principally from each other. Expertise is also implied in skilled workers practices. Therefore we had to explore if there are some specific features of expertise which are

necessary in quite another way than labour for the production of surplus value and appropriation of profit in a capitalist company. Studying the mode of production ethnologically we found, that a third specific praxis is absolutely necessary in that variant of this mode of production, where capitals are being moved by pure investors from company to company in the hunt for extra profit (Højrup 2003: 37ff, 144ff). The reason is that if a company cannot produce in an advantageous way which is still difficult for its competitors to copy or find out then it is difficult to avoid a competition which may undermine the market price of the products and remove the company's production of surplus value. But if you have this competitive advantage of doing something that your competitors cannot do yet, then it is possible for the company to produce a surplus value and pay a profit to the investors. It is that specific kind of temporary monopoly at the market which can be produced by developing a new favourable technology, an advantageous marketing strategy, a new kind of management, or a new product, which is a necessary condition of possibility for the capitalist company. In that variant of the capitalist mode of production, where the life mode of the productive capitalist is supplied or replaced by pure investors, the structure demands a specific life mode. This life mode is producing that specific kind of unique advantages which are decisive for the individual companies to be able to produce enough surplus value and profit to attract venture capital from the investors at the financial market. So what the company need from the career professionals is not just expertise, but that unique kind of expertise, solutions, ideas and creativity which its competitors cannot get hold on if the company has engaged the most unique people to develop, explore, and elaborate the most advantageous visions. These people are not hired for a wage; they are necessarily paid a part of the profit as their income. If they cannot get that part, they get an offer they cannot refuse from a head hunter engaged by a competitor to the company.

Because of that the career professional life mode stands in contrast to the wage worker life mode's concepts of work-time and free-time, where work and leisure is the fundamental concept structure of the ideology. As a career professional you think of yourself as a person who is able to produce unique ideas and solutions. But you have a problem: As soon as your unique product or method or solution is introduced, sold, and used by the company, then it is not any longer unique for you. To be able to reproduce the life mode you have to reproduce your uniqueness, i.e. your ability to produce new unique ideas and solutions. The payment you get for your ideas and solutions must be able to be transformed into facilities and conditions for your creativity so that you will be able to create new unique ideas and solutions. One way of doing this is to demand working conditions in the company making it possible for you to reproduce a unique lead. You have to be irreplaceable in the company. In the last instance, it is your irreplaceability which is what your praxis is

yielding as well as based upon. Your unique lead and your irreplaceability are the two features behind that aspect of the mode of existence these people call their "career perspective". The concept structure of unique lead and irreplaceability are the utmost negation of the concept structure of work and leisure. There is not a logical continuum between them, but a genuine contrast between distinct life modes. The economic condition of possibility of the career professional life mode is a market for unique expertise. Many people know such a market and are enjoying it every weekend when they look upon the results of the clubs' buying and selling of football players at the basis of the players' efforts at the ground to realize unique ideas and solutions in the matches between capitalist sports clubs.

The market for unique expertise demands that you can protect yours ideas and solutions against copying before they are sold, commercialized, and implemented. The legal prerequisite of this feature is the possibility to achieve a state protected right of patent on your idea. If you are permanently employed by the company as e.g. manager, developer or researcher the company can hold the right, and it can demand a clause prohibiting the career professional to move and use the trade secrets of the company immediately in another company. The legal status of patents and clauses is just as important to this specific kind of market as the right of contract and the legal system is to the financial market.

To consider the floating mode of existence of the capitalist life-modes opens a way for the exploration of what we have named *the paradox of temporality*, which epitomizes a complex of research questions. These regard the struggle of competition, which characterizes the relation between the profit-driven companies that compete on the same market (Højrup 2003: 32-41). This particular competition that regards transcending the competition raises a number of questions, which can be deduced and formulated as logically coherent statements in order to test them through the empirical examinations of the life-mode ethnography. The chain of statements can in brief be described this way: the specific concept of competition entails that all the resources of a company are strategically concentrated on attaining an advantageous position to the rivals as well as fighting their attempts of preventing it. In this sense a strategic linking of (those from their combination optimized) human and material resources lie at the root of the commercial mode of existence of a capitalist company. This implies that the means of production, the creativity of professionals, and the labor that cannot contribute to this need will be excluded when they become a liability to the strategic goal. For this to happen all components must be obtainable from the markets (of trades, labor, unique expertise and capital) however, it must also be possible to leave them at their respective markets again, once they are no longer useful to the goal of the company. Seen from the complementary perspective of the

markets, the life-modes concerned offer only their presence in the company as long as this (combination) is able to make such productive use of them that they in return can receive better, or at least equal wage, salary, pay, work conditions and profit for their performance as the competitors of the company can offer (Højrup 2003:144f). The thesis is that these features presuppose each other logically and may be explored as the formation of a potential intensional conceptual coherence, the possibility, elaboration and correction of which we can thus explore and examine empirically.

This examination aims to qualify the foundation for the following inferences of which the coherence of the statements can be studied empirically: just as strongly as the components of the compound company are strategically interlinked by the battle against the competitors, just as temporary is their presence in the company and at short notice they can float away and take employment in any competing company. The company is nothing more than their temporary strategic unity. The mode of existence of companies therefore, logically speaking, rests on their ability to gain more from a strategic organization of the same resources (respectively the wage-earner's, the manager's, and the investor's life-modes) than their competitors manage to. As a whole there is a constant and disparate flow of the relevant life-modes from one company to another, new companies emerge, old break up, and in the mist of the flow these life-modes are mutually creating one another's necessary conditions of existence through the logic of the dialectic of temporality.

This logic entails that we must ask the fundamental question if not exactly these three life-modes all perceive the company as a means and only in exceptional cases as an end in itself? As long as they are engaged in a certain company it is the career professional and investor life-modes that set and develop its ends and its means. In other words, they have the company as a means because the company also uses them as a means to set its strategic goals – which constitute its identity as a commercial will. It is important to explore and explicate this dialectic, as it constitutes a deeply interesting generative cultural paradox which is the foundation of innovation. Furthermore it will examine whether this is the key to formulating the complementary relation between these three life-modes – that is to say the relation that constitutes their revised concepts. The exploration of this relation has empirically become so much the more important as the state-apparatus throughout the past 30 years appears to have adopted significant features from the career-professional life-mode. A thesis is that it is such features that, because of new challenges in the state system, are discursively expressed in concepts like “new public management” and “the competition state”.

As a countermeasure to globalization and Europeanization the civil servants of the state

apparatuses contribute to guaranteeing the conditions for the growth of strategic significant allied corporations through investments in interpellation and infrastructure under national management as well as direct facilitating of their companies (Højrup 2003:205ff). This indicates that we must be able to specify how the Civil Service on the one hand creates and maintains the necessary conditions of existence for private companies’ development of the dialectics of temporality on the market with the purpose of securing economic growth and the accompanying necessary expelling and abandoning of failing strategies and producers in the country. On the other hand we must explore how the state apparatuses manage the complementary consequence of the paradox of temporality, namely that growth-seeking companies are being purchased out of the country or that companies move overseas in order to engage the same kinds of life-modes cheaper in third countries. For the civil servant of a state economic growth inside the domain of sovereignty is essential whereas the moving out of companies and headquarters is a constant threat. Thus the life-mode of civil servants of the state appears as both concerned with and contrasting to the flows of the life-modes on markets structured by the dialectic of temporality.

As mentioned before the natural life forms (of biology) are determined by the relations of metabolism of the ecosystem, they are eating each other so to speak. The cultural life modes (of ethnology) are determined by relations of division and appropriation of labour and their specific political, legal and ideological prerequisites. Life modes are yielding distinct contributions to a common process, the social formation. But one more feature is distinguishing cultural life modes from the biological life forms. Each life mode implies its own cultural concept system. This system of concepts is the foundation of its specific ideology, world view, and system of everyday concepts. This means that from a life mode specific ideology you can look at the other life modes surrounding you, but the glasses with which you are looking are coloured by the ideology of your own life mode and not by the ideology with which people bearing other life modes are looking at their own life or by an independent conception of their life mode. Because of that it is difficult to recognize that there really exist other life modes than your own, i.e. that it is relevant to talk about life modes at all. This feature of cultural blindness between life modes is a core feature of the relation between them. The cultural contrasts imply blindness between the contrasts (Højrup 2003: 125f, 61ff). This structurally blind and ignorant ideological relation is called life mode centrism. This kind of relation is only possible to transcend by the help of an ethnological concept system, with which it is possible to explore the ways in which life modes are implying and presupposing each other and at the same time are looking at each other through the glasses of life mode centrism. Mutual dependency and life mode centrism imply each other in the relations between cultural life modes. Because of that a very important work is to describe and explain the way in which the life mode centrism is

unfolding, functioning and for instance disturbing planning processes, determining political processes, and so on.

I can sketch very shortly some examples on how the words of our language seem to be universal but nevertheless are used with contrasting content of meaning by bearers of different life modes. For the career professional the “work” is your life. The wage worker is “working” for a living. As self employed you are living for your “work”. Many of the words we often understand as general are hiding the life mode centrism. We all know what freedom is and think it has a common content of meaning. But freedom means something specific in the distinct life modes. In the self employed life mode freedom means to be free as an independent producer, as an independent peasant family farmer, or a share fisherman. In the wage worker life mode freedom is something that you get in the free time when you are not working, it contrasts the time spend on work. In the career professional life mode you are free to make a career; freedom is to be able to unfold your own creativity to develop unique ideas and solutions promoting your own career. Freedom does not imply ownership of the company; it is freedom to be able to leave the company when you get a better opportunity to develop a unique lead and irreplaceability in another company. In the civil servant life mode freedom is to be independent of the labour market and capital market and free to improve the general interests of the state, the region or the local municipality as a permanently employed civil servant.

From the perspective of career professionals the wage workers waste their time when they prefer those kinds of work in which they do not improve their qualifications and they do not get ahead. They know these people because as students they have had that kind of work to earn money and down at the bottom of the company’s hierarchy many people are employed with this kind of work, so they know it very well (Højrup 2003: 37). They understand what they see as the more lazy attitudes of these people as caused by their more narrow capabilities, education and competences – not by a life mode with an opposite conception of what ‘the good life’ is. From the opposite perspective many wage workers know the career professional people well enough to see that they are always working, so they cannot have a good family life. When they have their children in their arms they may be absent-minded in a strange way. Even if the career professional is thinking of new ideas and markets, how to get ahead of competitors, how to create a new lead, how to gain a renewed irreplaceability it is not possible to see that from the wage earner perspective – what is visible is that the father is not just concentrated on the daughter in his arms. Often wage earners think of these people as people who earlier did everything the employer wanted, and now they just enjoy the benefits, driving big cars, etc. (Højrup 2003: 36, Højrup 1989).

We could also try to sketch the life mode centrism with which these people are looking at people realizing the self-employed life mode (Højrup 2003: 34). They know these people in two ways; as colleagues or as shopkeepers. They know them as colleagues in the company, because very often these kinds of people have to take a supplementary job supplying the income from their own shop or farm. In this case the wage worker think of their colleagues activities at home in a romanticized manner, as leisure and a beautiful country life. Knowing them as shopkeepers they understand their work either as a never ending toil and moil or as a cunning way to earn more money at the expense of others. From the opposite perspective people from the self employed life mode understand the wage workers as persons who are too idle to work themselves free of the dependency of the employer rising to be self employed.

By this mode of analysis we get the possibility to study the ways in which the different life modes are looking at each other from the perspective of each of their own specific concept structure. The planners’ problem is that they have to produce one common plan and not a plan for each and every specific life mode. That is what the planning process of the state, the region, and the local municipality must be able to (Højrup 2010). In that plan you have to reflect the different and often contradictory interests of distinct life modes because you have to make it possible for the different life modes to maintain their specific conditions of existence. The political process and the planning process are concerned with that problematic. But we can take the opposite position and ask: What is the reason why we have to protect the conditions of existence of these life modes? The answer is that the state and society is depending on them. But why is the state, or the political government, dependent on distinct life modes in its society? The life modes are important for the state’s capability to defend the recognition of its domain of sovereignty. It has to be able to demand recognition from the neighbouring states (Højrup 2003: 172ff). The state is not only important to keep internal harmony and to maintain the conditions of existence of the internal life modes. This last function is only possible if the state is able to maintain the recognition of its sovereign will and borders from the states in the state system. The necessary sovereignty work and foreign policy make demands on which internal life modes one need to have to be able to produce the resources and competencies which are required by the defence of the domain of sovereignty.

These demands are not constant but ever changing. The state system is always changing; the threats and opportunities are never constant. Because of that it is very often necessary for the state to exclude some of the old life modes and to introduce new ones. To take an example: Why was it in Europe necessary to transform the life mode of the feudal peasants into the self employed family farmers two hundred years ago? The land reform became

necessary because one could not base the national defence on the conscription of feudal peasants after the Napoleonic wars where the infantry of citizens had demonstrated its military superiority. The European states had to improve the conditions of possibility of this new kind of peasants for whom it was so important to defend their ownership to land that they were ready to offer their life for the defence of the new national state (Højrup 2003: 211ff). To take another example: Why was it necessary for the new Russian state after the Cold War to introduce the life modes of the capitalist mode of production in the Russian social formation? It was necessary if the Russian economy should be able to compete with the western economies after the breakdown of the Iron Curtain in Central Europe. It became necessary to introduce the life modes of productive capitalists, investors, career professionals, and self employed people to improve the market economy of the Russian society. There were already old reindeer herders and peasants in Siberia, family farmers in the Russian plain and many very small peasants in the Central European societies but most of them existed as a supplementary private family economy or even a pure black economy. They were there already, and it was possible to expand their conditions of possibility. At the same time the Russian state began to introduce the conditions of possibilities of investors who got the opportunity to buy the big kolkhozes, collectives, and industries with the intent to transform them into capitalist companies. They were manned with new career professionals recruited from the apparatnics of the bureaucracies, but they had to change their life totally to be able to survive at the new market for advantageous expertise and unique lead. The second book on life modes we published in Russia was a book on the life mode of career professionals and the capitalist mode of production (Hansen & Højrup 2000). Ever since Chayanov and Lenin, Russian researchers knew all about the life modes of peasants and farmers whereas the life mode of career professionals and the free market for unique lead was such a new and necessary core feature which had not been relevant to the old kind of state plan economy.

Today it is important for the transformation of the Chinese social formation to introduce the conditions of possibilities of these life modes. Old European, simplistic and evolutionist Marxism thought that one mode of production was replaced by another mode of production which was replaced by a third mode of production etc. in a unilinear culture history. Primitive communism was replaced by slavery, feudalism, capitalism, and at last by advanced communism. But just as the ecosystem is a theory of complex transformation the social formation must be transformed into a theory of complex self transcending processes. That kind of theory demands that we understand the significance and necessity of the state system concept as a fundamental condition of possibility for any social formation concept. We have to make explicit the way in which states are forged by the fight for recognition with each other and the importance of that praxis for the introduction and the exclusion of

new and old life modes in the internal social formations of the states. Inspired by Claude Bernard we can describe the complexity of the processes by describing the overall structure as a necessary concept relation between the internal milieu of the state and the external milieu of the states system (Højrup 2003: 221ff, Hirst 1975). The relations between these two levels are the prerequisite for the advanced understanding of the complexity of the transformation processes of the state system. Whereas the relationship between the internal milieu of the organism and the external milieu between the organisms is the core of the advanced biological theory of survival of the fittest processes of natural history, the relationship between the internal milieu of every single state and the external milieu of the state system is the core feature of the advanced ethnological theory of the complex survival of the superior defence processes of culture history.

The last part of this introduction will sketch out the way in which the transformation of the dominant features of the Danish social formation throughout the 20th century can be described by the help of this two-level mode of analysis and explain the formation of the state form and life mode analysis as a relative autonomous part of the transformation process itself.

The specifying description of a complex transformation and concept creating process

From the second half of the 19th century the Danish welfare state developed on the basis of a neutrality strategy in the European state system and an increased agricultural export to the British market. The state managed self-consciously to improve a number of strategically decisive fields where the small self-employed producers were in need of large-scale advantages and exclusivity in order to resist the capitalist competitors of the modern Europe. The contribution of the state mainly consisted of large infrastructure projects, which gave agriculture and fishing a strong alternative to the transport capacity of the large foreign corporations. Otherwise these would have been able to utilize their capital-intensive large-scale advantages, making it impossible for the Danish family holdings and share organized fishermen to compete. However, through the Danish state's establishing of harbour constructions, railway networks, bridges, channel and road systems the Danish producers – despite their relatively long distance to the markets in the European industrial cities – got a direct, collective and competitive opportunity of supplying fresh foods of high quality and value which a private corporation needed extraordinary large capital to beat (Højrup 2010).

At the same time the co-operative movement which spread around Europe, had, in the

Danish state, an important co-player that knew that it was possible to connect even the small producers' various agricultural activities to the national chains of production. It managed to unite the self-employed rural population's industriousness and ideals of independence with development and integration of capital-intensive large-scale advantages. It came into existence through the setting up of dairies, butcheries, export associations, electrical power and all new kinds of areas where it proved possible and beneficial to jointly establish common systems and cooperative businesses in rural as well as urban areas.

The connection between the export revenue, the total cost level and the maintenance of the competitive capacity on especially the British and the German markets, which emerged in the beginning of the 20th century, meant that all life modes had an interest in continuously renegotiating the national compromise regarding the distribution of the income at a – for the country as a whole – competitive level. The economic responsibility was implemented through the development of an internal coherence between the simple commodity producers' cooperative society on the one hand and the Danish labour market model on the other.

Rather than in a welfare culture where state legislation is directly regulating the labour market, which many south European welfare states developed, the recognition of the exclusive rights of the organizations to profile, uniform and represent the specific interests of their members resulted in the Danish labour market model which is relatively autonomous to the power of legislation (Jul Nielsen 2002). As a *quid pro quo* both the cooperative communities and the organizations and parties of the labour market had the responsibility to dim and fight the dissatisfaction with the consensus-seeking policy which in difficult times could develop into dangerous confrontations and social uprising. The state's service in return for a flexible and liberal labour market and cooperative society, under which the wage earners can be employed and dismissed in accordance with the economic cycle, and where each company is expected to take responsibility with regards to dimensioning their production and reproduction costs in accordance with the market conditions, was the increasingly comprehensive social security system, health care system and educational system which movements and parties won through successive social reforms, educational reforms and health care reforms of a century (Højrup & Bolving 2007).

In this way Denmark in the late 19th century laid out a different strategy for its general industrial development than the purely capitalist. It primarily consisted of creating a chain of value that combined family holdings and industry and which was intended for exporting

foods to the capitalistic mother countries of the world market. The first link of the export chain was produced by the predominating self-employed rural population at farms and small holdings and by the share organized fishermen of the cutter fleet. In return an innovative industry, market towns and ports were the main suppliers of machines and tools for both fisheries and agriculture. Local artisan businesses supplied service, installation and construction. Co-operative societies and private limited companies competed for supplying energy, fodder, fertilizer and other feeding stuffs on the one hand and for processing and exporting the resultant foods on the other hand. National shipping companies and the local skippers at wooden schooners carried fertilizers, coal, building materials, grain and other goods from ports and landing places. The wharfs build increasingly larger steel ships. Regional railroad companies lay out a web of branch lines for transporting goods and passengers. Market towns and parishes struggled to develop, locate and get access to the most beneficial institutions and infrastructure projects, as well as lines of transportation and communication. Both local and national banks, thrift institutions and credit institutions – which were typically created in order to safeguard the particular interests of the life modes – borrowed money to the five sectors while the state, counties, and municipalities developed and maintained a general infrastructure that secured the export trades the collective large-scale advantages which were needed in order to be competitive at the European markets.

The power holding parties in the parliament, the liberal party, the social liberals, the social democrats, and the conservative party each represented – at all levels from parishes to the national parliament – their own life mode in what became a thoroughly organized co-operative and industrial society. Organized in the sense that a labour market model and a tradition for tripartite negotiations, which mutually secured the economic balances, prices and pay that made the Danish chain of values competitive on a chaotic and risky world market, was developed. And well organized in the sense that it took place on the basis of a life mode structured association-Denmark. It contained the large organizations of agriculture along with the associations and co-operative societies of the smallholders and farmers as well as the folk high schools in the rural areas and the fishing associations in the ports and small landing places. The labour movement created corresponding associations in the market towns and in the capital that contained clubs, unions, political associations, and housing associations as well as evening schools, press, publishing houses, and cooperative companies. The master craftsmen and the public servants had their own organizations and associations just as the heads of banks, branches and trades, the lawyers and the families of proprietors created their own associations, shooting societies, lodges, clubs and political organizations. And across all of these, housewives organized themselves in housewife and house holding associations that contained their own training schools under intense national

scrutiny.

It was largely the life modes' differentiated and cohesive association-Denmark which in several areas handled the social and organizational affairs of the cooperative and industrial society and did it on the various entirely different life mode premises that existed in the population.

From the co-operative period and until the 1950s, 80 % of the Danish economy came from the agricultural exports. The farmers produced milk, pork and eggs, the co-operative companies processed the goods of butter, cheese, bacon and eggs that were intended for the English breakfast table. Railroads and shipping companies carried the processed product to England. For the income of the export there was bought coal and machinery for the power stations and the industry, which supplied fertilizers and machines for the agriculture as well as processed its products to the resultant export product. Broadly speaking, this was how the Danish economy was organized after the Second World War and this economy is characterized by two different modes of production, each with their own deeply rooted life modes. It was the family holding, the master craftsmen and the merchants' variants of the self employed life mode on the one hand and the investor life mode of the industry, the productive capitalist life mode, the career professional life mode and the wage worker life mode on the other hand. The simple commodity mode of production was, empirically speaking, dominant in the countryside and it co-existed along with the capitalist mode of production at manors, in market towns and in the capital. It was all administered by the civil servant life mode headquartered in Copenhagen and from where self-management was delegated to the local civil servants' formalized public administration in the cities and the parish councils' local communities in the country.

The life modes, that organized people's cooperative and industrial society, was throughout the second part of the 20th century not only combined but constantly confronted with something entirely different – which is probably best described as an industrial and service society – that was structured as a national welfare state with a – from the food manufacturers independent – capitalist industry, economic growth and with citizens whose rights and praxis (through a large public sector) was to be adjusted to improve growth as the basic rationale of the welfare state (Højrup & Bolving 2008).

After the Second World War Denmark decided to reorganize its survival strategy of maintaining sovereignty from neutrality to being an armed member of the Western alliance led by the United States and thus Denmark followed the other Western European countries into an open American-led world economy. Here one state was no longer allowed to utilize restrictive commercial policies and custom dues as a means of protecting the most

important life modes. In order to get the western economies going, the United States forced its European allies to liberalize their economies if they wanted a share of the American dollar through the Marshall program. In return for adjusting to international competition through economic liberalization the countries were given the opportunity to base their currency on the American dollar through the Bretton Woods system. This way the European countries avoided the worst currency fluctuations, however they had to manage on the premises of an open world market where the life modes surviving are those that manage to find niches containing sufficient competitive advantages. Thus the European countries had to find entirely new strategies than the ones of protecting the agricultural life modes, the craftsmen, the cooperative industry, the labour movement etc. Among leading civil servant economists the solution was to create ‘a modern population’ who manages to complete a lifelong adjustment to the economic growth and ongoing structural rationalizations (Højrup 2002, 2003a, Buus 2001, 2002).

In the discourse and cultural picture of the world, on which the post-war governments and civil servants built the Danish welfare state’s hitherto largest extension of the public sector, economic growth was the overall aim and the dominant motive power. A motive power which the politicians and civil servants imagined would break up the established ways of living and forms of social life and move the focus to the individual through the rapid structural changes’ demands of an increasing and lifelong adjustment of the individual. It was an ideological world view without distracting contradictions between principally different life modes.

The first life mode analysis was - as described above - carried out in the end of the 1970s with the aim of illuminating and problematizing the notion that the fundamental cultural differences in the Danish population were now dissolved and replaced by homogenous norms about ‘the good life’. The co-operative and industrial society’s well organized life modes proved, beneath the surface, to constitute the cultural foundation for the life in the rural areas and in the market towns. The universalistic welfare state was under development and its mono-cultural political ideology was contrasting the life modes, but they did not disappear – they had been developed and organized throughout a century, and for the ethnologists it was possible to document and investigate these both empirically and theoretically.

The development of concepts that this research entailed as well as the description of the 20th century’s dominant life modes enable the concepts to form the basis for today’s ethnological inquiry of the life modes’ conditions and changes since the first life mode analysis 40 years ago. The first conceptions of the self-employed life mode, the wage

worker life mode, the career professional life mode, the investor life mode and the housewife life mode were characterized theoretically on the basis of the theory of the mode of production and the 1970s everyday life. At that time the universal welfare state was well under way with recreating and adjusting the life modes' conditions of existence to the liberal world economy of the post-Second World War period as a safeguard against the Eastern bloc. Hence these conditions were exposed to radical changes as the Cold War ten years later winded up and the universal welfare state form thus lost its function as a defence mode of the Danish state against ideologies and threats from the Soviet Union (Højrup 2003a, Jul Nielsen 2004).

The theoretical struggle in the 1980s against the Cold War's doctrines of deterrence became an important impulse to a fundamental revision of the mode of production and social formation theory behind the life mode concepts. The concept of state system (i.e. the struggle for recognition) replaced the mode of production as the point of departure for the concept formation. The Cold War was characterised by the superpowers' efforts to reach offensive superiority, and, failing that, to achieve a balance of forces. The decisive problem was that the best one could imagine – a kind of balance of forces between East and West – would continue to base the state system upon a fundamentally insecure form of peace (Boserup & Nield 1990). The practical question of whether there were logical possibilities for basing the peace upon quite alternative types of strategic relations between the states provided the occasion for a theoretical exploration of the fundamental conditions of possibility for states recognising each other, and of the specific preconditions for robust (as opposed to insecure) systems of relations of recognition. When this research was applied to strategic praxis, it was demonstrated that the strength of the defensive and the weakness of the offensive – culminating in the concept “defensive defence” – is critical for creating a robust peace. Our scientific praxis at the research centre EUCIS (European Centre for International Security) arrived at the conclusion that the prerequisite of the state concept was precisely the fundamental superiority of the defensive mode of fighting, formulated as $D > O$. Logically speaking it is the superiority of defence that splits the struggle for recognition into mutually recognizing states. $D > O$ constitutes the states as self conscious Subjects that are able defend each their domain of sovereignty, i.e. able to set a limit (draw borders) to the will of each other.

The state, then, is defined in the system of states as a capability for defence. As the result of its own defensive capability, the state is theoretically determined by the demands from the specific state system's conditions of war or pause of war. As the defence capability rests upon the state's ability to generate and renew the internal milieu of conditions of possibility for the specific life modes, which provides the defence capability and the will to

defence, the social formation of the state is conditioned by the specific conditions of possibility in (the struggles for recognition of) the state system. States are constantly forged in the struggle for recognition, the state system may be conceived theoretically as *a fission process*, and the sovereignty work of each state determines the political, legal, ideological and economical conditions of possibility for the specific modes of production and their life modes that are precarious for the defence capability of each state. The *will to sovereignty* became an ethnological key to explore the constant self-transcending transformation processes of the state system and their continued implications at the levels of politics, discourses, economy, and life modes (Højrup 2003: part 4). It is from the epistemological rupture with the traditional state concept we have just begun the ethnological elaboration of the culture historical development theory earlier mentioned as *Survival of the superior defence*.

With a basis in the still more precarious Anglo American domination in the post Cold War state system, the development of the neo-liberalism turned into a global discourse and a thorough deregulation created first a finance-driven growth economy and next its breakdown, in the form of the American financial crisis which spread to the world economy (Højrup & Juul Jensen 2010). Here it developed into an economic crisis that had a crucial impact on the conditions of the existing modes of existence. Simultaneously the Asian states' and later also the BRIC-countries' growth and seizing of the increasingly more advanced parts of the world market concerning goods, service and capital has started the actual radical transformation of the conditions of the life modes in countries all over the world. And a huge formation of new life modes is going on in many states outside the old Western world.

At the theoretical level the life mode concepts were, then, further developed during these processes and the entire conceptual fundament was exposed to the epistemological rupture caused by the discovery of the crucial importance of the concept of struggle for recognition which was a hitherto unknown and unrealized precondition of the theory, its hidden prerequisite (Højrup 2002a, 2003). This way the state system and the sovereignty work of the states came into focus as such a decisive precondition for the modes of production of the specific state-forms that it could found the basis for the correction, explication, elaboration and specification of concepts. It has opened the way for today to consolidate the theoretical understanding of the life mode concepts and their conditions of existence. By studying the changes in the necessary conditions that have characterized the fundamental transformations of the state system's empirical realization throughout the past 40 years and are still accelerating, an important ethnographic task of today is to examine which of these imply complementary changes in the life modes and vice versa. A similar

important ethnological task is to explore the connexions between state forms and life modes preparing the empirical exploration of their culture historical evolution in a long time perspective.

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