

**WORKPLACE CONTROL AND RESISTANCE FROM BELOW:
AN ETHNOGRAPHIC STUDY IN A CYPRIOT LUXURY HOTEL**

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ABSTRACT

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Luxury hotels are service workplaces with high aesthetic, emotional and affective expectations. However, from a critical perspective, hotel workplaces and their labour processes, including issues of control and resistance from below, remain relatively unexplored. Little research has directly examined the subjectivities, perceptions, critical thoughts, plots, interactions and responses of workers in both the hotel's 'frontstage' and 'backstage'. Therefore, consistent with the concerns of Labour Process Theory (LPT) and theories of aesthetic, emotional and affective labour, this thesis examines workplace control and resistance through an ethnographic study of a luxury hotel in Cyprus. A number of influences, such as employee relations, immigrant mobility and labour markets, seasonality and management attitude, are also discussed in relation to worker resistance or consent. Also, in seeking to contribute to a more detailed examination of resistance, this thesis provides an extensive A to Z catalogue of oppositional forms and practices.

My observations produced rich findings that revealed how a number of managerial strategies and mechanisms are in place to monitor, process and discipline worker performance. My evidence advocates that workers challenge the labour process through various forms of opposition, sometimes hidden and sometimes confrontational. Even though some resistance was fragmented by elements of consent, at other times it was challenging, effective and continuous. It also suggests that resistance in an organization can be mapped as a continuum and each practice should not be examined singularly or unconnectedly, but in relation to the previous practices that generated this practices, as well as those that followed. In this direction, even hidden and passive forms of resistance are important because they can produce an escalating effect that may lead to more confrontational resistance.

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Table of Contents

Abstract	ii
Acknowledgements	iii
Table of Contents	iv

Chapter 1 – Sweating Demons by the Poolside

1.1 Driven on by some <i>Demon</i> , 2007	1
1.2 A Personal History of Hotel Work, 1997	4
1.3 Key Research Questions, Literature Base, and Thesis Structure, 2005-2009	9

Chapter 2 – Hospitality and the Labour Process

2.1 Introduction	16
2.2 Marx's labour process: the beginning	17
2.2.1 Concepts Associated with Marx	19
2.3 Braverman: Labour and Monopoly Capital	21
2.4 Michael Burawoy	25
2.5 Michael Foucault	27
2.5.1 Foucauldians	30
2.6 Orthodox labour Process Theorists	34
2.7 Aesthetic, emotional, and affective labour	37
2.7.1 Aesthetic Labour	38

2.7.2 Emotion in Organisations	41
2.8 The role of culture in the labour process	46
2.8.1 Resisting organisational culture	52
2.9 From Theory to Primary Research	54
2.10 Conclusion	57

Chapter 3 – An A to Z Glossary of Workplace Resistance

3.1 Introduction	60
3.6 A to Z Catalogue	62
Absenteeism	62
Acquiring Company Products (or Appropriation)	63
Bitching	63
Bottleneck Strike	64
Careful Careless	65
Collective Bargaining	66
Creation	67
Cynicism	67
Decaf Resistance	70
Defiance	71
Deviant Dressing	71
Distance	72
Dumb Resistance	73

Duplicity	74
Escape	74
Fantasy	75
Fun at Work	76
Gestures	76
Gossip	77
Hidden Transcripts	77
Humour	78
Intentional Resistance	81
Irony	82
Joking	82
Knowledge Restriction	83
Leavin'	83
Murmus	84
Non-cooperation	85
Open Negotiations and Complaints	87
Organised Non-complaints	87
Output Restriction	88
Playing Dumb	88
Quasi-collective	89
Refusal	90
Resignations	90
Routine Workplace Resistance	91

Sabotage	92
Satire	95
Scammin’	95
Slammin’	96
Slow-Down	96
Smokin’	97
Soldiering	97
Strike	98
Svejkism	98
Technological Resistance	99
Theft	100
Unofficial Walkouts	100
Unionism	102
Voice	104
Walkouts	104
Whistleblowing	105
Working to Rule	105
Zapatismo	106
 3.3 How is Workplace Resistance Classified in the Literature?	 108
3.4 What is Resistance?	115
3.5 Sources and Generators of Resistance	119
3.5.1 Technological Change	120

3.5.2 Other Structural Issues	121
3.5.3 Dignity	122
3.5.4 Disbelief in Shared Values	123
3.5.5 ‘Simply Bored’ or Maybe in the Mood for Having Fun at Work?	124
3.6 Reasons why Resistance may be Difficult	125
3.6.1 Labour Markets and Immigrant Workers	127
3.6.2 Monitoring	128
3.7 Concluding Remarks	129

Chapter 4 – Methodology

4.1 Introduction	132
4.2 Research Questions	133
4.3 Research Philosophy	135
4.4 Research Strategy: Ethnography	138
4.5 Choice of Hotel	141
4.5.1 Length of Stay in the Organization	142
4.6 Participant Observation	143
4.6.1 Balance of ‘Self’	144
4.6.2 Balance between Participant and Observation	145
4.6.3 Practicalities and the Sensitivity of <i>Resistance</i>	147
4.7 Research Methods	150
4.7.1 Observation	152

4.7.2 Interviews – Casual/ ‘Flash’ Discussions	153
4.7.3 Note-taking	159
4.7.4 ‘Found’ Documents	160
4.8 Data Collection	163
4.8.1 Data Collection from Covert to Overt	164
4.9 Research Ethics	167
4.9.1 Benefit	168
4.9.2 Informed Consent and Covert/ Overt Dichotomy	169
4.9.3 Confidentiality and Anonymity	173
4.10 Interpretation of Data	175
4.10.1 Respondent Validation	178
4.11 Limitations	181
4.12 Conclusions	184

Chapter 5 – Analysis of Findings

5.1 Introduction	185
5.2 A Labour Process Diary	186
5.2.1 Training and meetings	188
5.2.2 The three-day unpaid orientation programme	188
5.2.3 Training programmes	190
5.2.4 Departmental meetings	192
5.2.5 Surveillance, measurement and discipline	194
5.2.6 Managerial meetings	200

5.2.7 Reduction of Costs	201
5.3 Aesthetic and emotional expectations	204
5.3.1 ‘Smile, it’s free’: aesthetic standards	204
5.3.2 Emotional expectations	207
5.4 Mistaken expectations and misjudgement of workers’ capacity to resist	210
5.5 Uncovered resistance	211
5.5.1 Opposing through exposing: struggle in meetings	211
5.5.2 Uncovered contestation of work processes	216
5.5.3 Consumption of products	220
5.5.4 The staffroom	223
5.6 Hidden forms of resistance	225
5.6.1 Asserting self-tailored preferences	228
5.6.2 Computer-based resistance	232
5.6.3 Secret talks and critical comments about management	234
5.6.4 Silence	237
5.7 Conclusion	239

Chapter 6 – Discussion

6.1 Introduction	241
6.2 The issues of defining resistance from below	242
6.2.1 Effectiveness of hidden resistance practices	244
6.2.2 Variability	249
6.2.3 Intentional or unwilling resistance	251

6.3 The weak spots in Labour Process Theory	253
6.4 Conclusion	257
Chapter 7 – Conclusion	259
Bibliography	263
Tables and Figures:	
Table 4.1: Categories of Information Sources	151
Table 5.1 Departmental target report based on questionnaire results	197
Figure 4.1: Stages from Covert to Overt for the Year 2007	164
Figure 6.1: Instances of hidden opposition leading to uncovered/ confrontational resistance	245

Chapter One

Sweating Demons by the Poolside

One would never undertake such a thing if one were not driven on by some demon...

George Orwell, 'Why I Write', 1984:10

1.1 Driven on by some *Demon*, 2007

Nodding on the pool-bar's desk, sweating and crushed by the heat, we could only find coolness in the shade under the bar's hut. Our only anticipation was a gentle southern breeze every now and then, passing through our Hawaiian-style shirts and cooling our bodies. Through the bustle, a joyful rock ballad by Santana was caressing our senses seductively, setting us motionless. But we had to go. We nodded there for more than 20 minutes and we really had to leave.

Next to us and in front of us people were flattened on sun-beds around the four big swimming pools, surrounded by tropical palm-trees, waterfalls, and a virescent Roman castle. Behind us, people lay by the sea, glimmering from the sun-tanning oils and lotions that were spread on their bodies.

Although we had to leave, we were always staying. Caught up in a superfluous dialogue, Alex and I were exchanging disconnected comments and staring around us

at the people in swimwear having fun in the sun. A young couple were coating each other with sun-lotion. A company of young British were talking and laughing loudly with chilled beers and whisky sours in their hands. A ball splashed a tanned mature lady while she was enjoying the sun burning her flesh. A big Russian body-builder was walking towards the jacuzzi, looking around for attention. The majority of the children were inside rather than outside the swimming pools. And Alex and I were nodding on the pool-bar's desk, under the shade.

Alex: The head barman said we are allowed to bring and wear our own hats.

Me: I hate wearing a hat, but I suppose we have no alternative under this bloody sun.

Alex: I love wearing hats. Do you think I can bring my sombrero?

Me: What's a sombrero, Alex?

Alex: You know, a sombrero, a huge leghorn Mexican hat. This is what we need under this sun.

Me: I don't think the head barman will let you wear a sombrero at work, Alex, but I think we really have to leave now.

Alex: I will ask him about the sombrero tonight, but you are right, we have to leave now. Back in five!

We really had to leave. Our task was to walk frequently amongst the sun-beds and take orders from guests. We had to walk between sun-beds, collect the empty plastic glasses, clean the ashtrays, ask with a big smile whether anyone wanted some more drinks, and hand the orders to our co-workers behind the pool-bar. One more beer? An ice-cream to cool you down, some fruit to keep you going until lunchtime? Or what about a tuna sandwich for those who woke up late and missed breakfast? Also, a fresh orange-juice from instantly-squeezed chilled oranges is always appealing. Or

take a look at our big selection of exotic cocktails? A pina colada served in an actual, big pineapple fruit instead of glass, a strawberry daiquiri made with fresh strawberries, a refreshing margarita, a Freddy-Fudpucker with a dash of Galliano to finish?

When the drinks were ready we would deliver them to guests and then rush back again to stand under the shade.

Alex: So a researcher, huh? What exactly are you researching in the hotel?

Me: You know, I am following the demon inside me.

Alex: The demon? It sounds interesting. Tell me about it. I am not returning out there for the next 30 minutes.

Me: My demon. Everyone needs to find and talk to the demon inside him, his own demon.

Alex: Oh OK, I got it, like something that keeps you in a stew. Similar to our discussion the other day about my interest in fine arts.

Me: Yes, something like that. Something that keeps you in a stew, a political *something*.

The dialogue with Alex¹ and the previous description of my job in a hotel in 2007 are part of my thesis's participant observation study. I worked in the hotel for four months, trying to quell my unease and find answers to some alarming trends that characterise the Cypriot hospitality industry today. This is what it was all about in 2007:

¹ Alex is the only participant whose real name I use. He used to work in the hotel during the summer and the rest of the year he was studying fine arts in Naples, Italy. He is now a full-time lecturer in Cyprus teaching fine arts. He insisted that I use his real name in this thesis for any dialogues deployed. Although I guarantee anonymity at all research stages, I had to respect his request. For him, research was a kind of art and it had to be real.

[o]ne would never undertake such a thing if one were not driven on by some demon whom one can neither resist nor understand. For all one knows that demon is simply the same instinct that makes a baby squall for attention.

George Orwell, 'Why I Write', 1984:10

This thesis draws attention to a specific labour process. I satisfy the demon inside me through examining and communicating to others a workplace experience, which is beyond the range of the mainstream business textbook, an ethnographic experience that took place in 2007, whose motives and political purpose demonised me for almost a decade, since 1997.

1.2 A Personal History of Hotel Work, 1997

This ethnographic study is my own 'moral, allegorical, and therapeutic project' (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005: xvi), my own contribution to an investigation I consider important. But in 2007 hotel work was not new to me. As a matter of fact, the origin of my interest in the hotel industry goes back to 1997, when I first worked in a luxury hotel in Cyprus. After that, I worked for almost a decade in a number of hotels in different positions, such as waiter, receptionist, barman, kitchen boy, night auditor, room attendant, and dishwasher. For ten years, in the front line of the service *battle*, I worked side by side with breadwinners whose basic motivation was to earn a living. They were struggling to survive the oppressive mortgage interest rate that was piling up; striving to satisfy their children's increasing demands, shaped by life's 'euphoric

marketing rhetoric’ (Klein, 2000:xvii); and, simply put, they were struggling to take a decent dinner back home.

Some of them were proud of making a living through doing an honest and fair job. Some of the older ones used to describe with pride how they first graduated from the newly-established Cypriot hospitality school² and staffed the newly-developed hotel sector four decades earlier. In one hotel the oldest cook among the kitchen workforce had attached to the main kitchen wall a couple of old pans, like a public display. He proudly explained that he brought them with him for the hotel’s grand opening thirty years earlier. Others explained how their unionised resistance gained benefits for the sector. Like any other workplace, aspirations, self-esteem, survival, stress, joy, tears, boredom, hangovers, everything, were part of a hotel’s work.

For all these people, work is important - John the barman, Maria the housekeeper, Alex the waiter, Nicole the receptionist, Anna the sous-chef, Nikos the kitchen boy. For all of them, and lots of other workers, hospitality work matters. ‘In recognising that work matters, work becomes a political issue’ (Bolton and Houlihan, 2009: 2). And indeed, in every hotel where I worked, the majority of workers were dissatisfied with how the hotel sector and the labour process had evolved. In most hotels, it was

² Photographs from the grand opening of the first hospitality school in Cyprus (KEO) in 1953.



(Source: Pancyprian Federation of Labour (2006) ‘We, and the past of our occupation’. Nicosia, Kyriakides.

quite common within the workforce that control, cost reductions, and job expectations were disproportional and unfair compared with the hotels' money inflow and firms' continuing expansion. At the same time, although most hotels were packed with fully skilled and fully-experienced Cypriot hospitality workers, a new wave of low-cost, unskilled and inexperienced immigrants was taking their place rapidly. A simple search in the archives of the Statistical Service of the Republic of Cyprus³ is indicative of the changing labour markets and mobilisation. Statistics indicate that immigrants are rapidly transforming Cypriot workplaces. The total number of immigrant workers in 1999 reached 24,059. In 2002, the number reached 35,122 immigrant workers. During the first quarter of 2006, the total number of legal immigrants increased to 48,572. During the first quarter of 2007, the total number increased to 50,036. Compared with the total number of working Cypriots (302,084) the number of immigrant workers constituted 16.7% of the total workforce in Cyprus in 2006. As a result, the power correlation of employee relationship was in disarray. It was clear the hospitality industry was changing.

Similar to the UK and US, work was changing: the change was characterised by cheaper wages, simpler employment contracts with fewer workers' rights, disregard of the national minimum wage, bypassing of collective bargaining, collective agreements and union membership; all for better labour control and less worker resistance. This is why, if we recognise that work matters, work becomes a political issue. Back in the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s, the first hospitality workers helped significantly to develop the island's main economic blood-donor. Technocrats of their time promised them a lifetime dream, including a decent job, relevant training

³ (CYSTAT – online at http://www.pio.gov.cy/mof/cystat/statistics.nsf/index_en/index_en?OpenDocument, 22/04/2009)

and education, fair wages, and work for life in the newborn industry. Following this dream, tens of thousands engaged directly with this industry. Lately, however, organisations, technocrats, and policymakers have been pushing the industry in the opposite direction from what the Cypriot hospitality workers were told, taught, and promised. That for which they trained, and what they dreamed of, is being transformed into low-paid, low-skilled service work. The sector is changing and the once-proud workers are now dissatisfied.

The Cypriot hotel sector, which was developed formally by British colonists in the 1950s, soon became the lifeblood of the Cypriot economy. Annual reports⁴ going back to 1950s are indicative of British orchestration and development of the Cypriot hotel sector during the Cypriot primitive accumulation era. The primitive accumulation process was mostly concerned with forcing self-sufficient Cypriots into paid labour.⁵ Within a wider framework, this process was about bringing within capitalism development and control the labour power that lived outside (Perelman, 2000).

More specifically, Marx discusses in part 8 of *Capital* vol. 1 primitive accumulation as the *process* of separating free workers from their means of providing for themselves. Through this *process*, workers *become* obliged to sell their Labour Power to exist. ‘This same primitive accumulation provided a basis for capitalist development’ (Perelman, 2000:13).

⁴ Colonists’ annual reports about the development of Cypriot tourism go back to the 1950s. Hard copies can be found only in the library of the Cyprus Tourism Organisation (CTO) in Nicosia, Cyprus.

⁵ In this thesis, the terms worker, employee and labour are used interchangeably and the same meaning is intended.

The origins of the primitive accumulation process in Cyprus go back to 1877. This is the year that British colonists took over Cyprus from the Turks. As a consequence, the feudal system was replaced by wage labour and one may assume that the origins of Cypriot primitive accumulation can be estimated chronologically with great precision. Immediately after their arrival, the British created roads, harbours and factories. Shipyards and ore furnaces cleared the trees, rivers became canalized into dumps, leaving numerous peasants unable to irrigate their land (Pancyprian Federation of Labour, 2002). But all these *developments* had a single purpose: to support the mining industry (1900s). Copper-pyrites, iron-pyrites, gold and other ores used to be extracted and directly exported to Great Britain.

The process of primitive accumulation in Cyprus caused the gradual drift of population to cities and around mining areas. The first wage labour originated in the poor self-producing farming class. These deprived peasants left their villages and moved to the towns or the mines in order to work for meagre wages. They used to live in squalid, miserable conditions and sleep in wooden huts, caves, and hovels. They were also plagued by various illnesses such as tuberculosis and typhus (Peo, 2002). The rural population was driven to extinction and thousands of Cypriot villages laid waste.

At the same time, some very basic and cheap family-run hotels appeared in towns in order to accommodate the British officials and visitors. In these hotels, workers worked from six o'clock in the morning until midnight and in return they used to get a bed and food. If they were lucky, they could be tipped by guests (Patsalos, 1990). However, by the late 1940s the mines were exhausted. Cyprus, a hot and sunny country all year round, appeared to be an ideal tourist destination and tourism the only

alternative to continue the primitive accumulation process. By 1950, the tourist industry was already on track. For instance, in the annual report of the Tourist Development Office of British colonists in Cyprus for 1951, G. F. Jarratt, the Director of Tourism, mentions:

The organization and development of the Island's tourist industry, which began in 1950, showed gratifying results during 1951 and the work of the Tourist Development Office is reflected in the steady increase of tourist traffic. Just over 28,000 visitors came to Cyprus in 1951 – an average of 500 a week. The island's economy benefited by this invisible export to the extent of just over one million pounds.

At the same time, the establishment of languages and hospitality schools in 1949, 1953 and 1954, reinforced the specialization of hospitality workers. Ever since the country's independence in 1960, each time government has accorded a high degree of priority to tourism development, and gradually, Cyprus became a global tourist destination.

1.3 Key Research Questions, Literature Base, and Thesis Structure, 2005-2009

I soon realised that most research engaged in the study of hotels was part of a management mainstream theory from an orthodox perspective⁶. In practice, the

⁶ In hotel business textbooks, management, control, and strategy are central practices. Much of this mainstream literature points to the hotel work's special characteristics, such as intangibility, inseparability and heterogeneity (Regan, 1963). Their rhetoric is that guest satisfaction is at all times workers' main aim. During my studies in Cyprus for the Diploma of Hotel and Catering Management, most books and material taught were published by AHMA (American Hotel and Motel Association).

reality of the Cypriot hotel industry, including issues such as structural asymmetries, the decline of trade unions, the corrosion of collective bargaining/agreements, worker opposition, and the implications of the ‘new’ labour markets (Eastern Europe), is not discussed in any textbook. Even within critical theoretical contexts such as the international labour process theory or theories of emotional and aesthetic labour, however, hotel work, including its labour process, power, control, and resistance, remains relatively unexplored.

Therefore, this thesis examines workplace control and resistance from below, and its fieldwork focuses specifically on hotel work. This ethnographic study aims to help these women and men who work in hotels through examining the ‘new order’ of the Cypriot hotel sector, through communicating hospitality workers’ story, participating in their work, making known their resistance, if any, suggesting opposition if necessary, and celebrating their dignity. ‘Ethnography is more than the record of human experience’ (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005: xvi). As I mentioned in the first paragraph, it may also be a moral, allegorical and therapeutic endeavour. At the same time, the unique nature and characteristics of the hotel sector enable an integrated Labour Process Theory (LPT) analysis, including elements from the literature of emotional, aesthetic, and affective labour, which is not commonly seen in the LPT framework.

What I experienced in hotels’ workplaces generated inside me a ‘political purpose’. Following Orwell’s (1984: 5) line of thought, the use of the word political in this thesis is linked to the ‘desire to push the world in a certain direction, to alter other people’s idea of the kind of society that they should strive after’. In other words, to become critical is to use our capabilities, creativity and even resistance for better

working conditions. To critique is to suggest change. To change is to develop. Development is to resist and oppose if necessary. Morality is creativity. It is good to interpret the world, but ‘the point however is to change it’ (Marx, 1998:571). I could abandon the hotel profession. I could leave the industry and never return. But you just cannot sit back and put your feet up. To use a lyric from the song *Deer Dance* (System of a Down, 2001⁷), ‘we can’t afford to be neutral on a moving train’. In a similar vein, Denzin and Lincoln (2005) suggest that a researcher is not a simple purveyor of knowledge. (S)he should try to make workplaces more humanistic and fair.

Uneasiness about the way that the Cypriot hospitality industry was changing, and the pace of that change, created inside me the need to do something about it, to learn more, to investigate. This is the point when I decided to start a full-time PhD and focus on the Cypriot hotel sector from a critical perspective. Therefore, this study sets out to review a wide spectrum of workplace resistance literature, and to explore the labour process and forms of worker opposition in a particular work setting. This thesis answers the following questions:

- ➔ How is power exercised in the luxury hotel as workplace? That is, how does management (attempt to) control workers?
- ➔ How do workers attempt to resist in a luxury hotel?
- ➔ What issues generate resistance?
- ➔ What resources are available to those who resist in a hotel workplace?
- ➔ Can emotional labourers resist?
- ➔ What are the effects of worker resistance?

⁷ The song *deer dance* is a criticism of the idleness of people with regard to power, control and propaganda.

➔ What issues limit worker autonomy?

Earlier, however, a number of research questions intend to locate the thesis' exploration within a particular theoretical framework through the literature review in chapter 2 and 3. The literature review asks questions such as:

➔ What is worker resistance and how can it be classified, categorised, or theoretically contextualised?

➔ When is a specific practice, such as satire, a form of resistance to domination and when is this same practice a form that preserves domination?

➔ When is a specific practice resistance and when is this same practice, simply, misbehaviour, play, or boredom?

To answer these questions a number of theoretical tools are necessary. Therefore, this thesis uses Labour Process Theory (LPT) in order to theoretically contextualise the overall study, including the fieldwork. I consider LPT as one of the most appropriate tools to examine workplaces and resistance. Unlike mainstream theory, LPT is a tool capable of opening up fields of analysis and reproblematising the structure and dynamic of work, including its realities and processes and the status of its main actors, namely, people. Specifically, LPT examines and questions the ultimate function of management, and asserts that this function is the conversion of labour power into labour under conditions which permit capital accumulation (Braverman, 1974).

Similarly, it is hard to imagine contemporary critical research at work which is not influenced by labour process insights (Smith, 2008). This is because, through the theoretical field of LPT, researchers can investigate power, trace the source of oppression, coercion, and repression at the workplace and identify the principles that collect all these instances together (Knights and Vurdubakis, 1994). For me, the

labour process is the process within the relations of power, where management subjects workers to control, pushes them towards increasing performance, production and profit. The labour process is not only an organisation's work processes. In other words, work process and labour process are not the same *thing*. Labour process I would suggest is a 'bundle' of managerial mechanisms, strategies, costs, work processes, organisational philosophy, disciplinary mechanisms, and any other means designed to impose power upon employees and subject them to organisational control. By this I do not necessarily mean direct or sharp oppression. On the contrary, an organisation's labour process may also be supported by more consensual strategies and humanistic practices (Burawoy, 1979; Edward, 1979; Cressey and MacInnes, 1980). The ultimate aim of the labour process, however, is to pull the strings to engineer profit maximisation.

At the same time, the second wave of LPT, which has been widely used as a 'control/resistance model' (Newsome et al., 2009: 146), is perhaps the most comprehensive theoretical body for analysing and investigating conflict, resistance, and misbehaviour at the workplace. Therefore, in the second chapter I review the concept of workplace resistance within the framework of Labour Process Theory. I discuss the development of LPT, including theories associated with Marx. Also, I examine the different viewpoints and debates associated with control and resistance. Owing to the nature of hotel service, I further present and discuss a number of additional theories such as those concerned with emotional, and aesthetic labour. These enable a more detailed analysis of hotel work, and they also incorporate serious analysis of workplace resistance and non-compliance with managerial control.

The third chapter explores the fundamental question ‘what is resistance?’. Initially, I investigate how workplace resistance is classified in the literature. Also I examine the generators of worker resistance, its effects, and the reasons that make workplace opposition risky and difficult. Then, on the basis of various theoretical frameworks and empirical cases I categorise and construct an extensive account of forms, strategies, and practices of workplace resistance in an ‘A to Z catalogue’. Although the catalogue is not exhaustive, it is extensive enough to cover a very wide spectrum of literature and practices which have been recorded in a diverse range of workplaces and work contexts. At the same time, apart from describing resistance, the purpose of this chapter is to conceptualize my ethnographic study, which is discussed in chapter four.

Fourth is the methodology chapter. This is an ethnographic text, presenting and explaining my methodological choices. A year, constituted by participant observation and respondent validation, has been dedicated to investigating the labour process and workplace resistance in a luxury hotel. In this chapter I explain my epistemological, and methodological choices. I link these decisions to the sensitive nature of worker resistance as a research topic. As I explain later, resistance implies actions and behaviour that not many would be interested to talk about. Chapter four justifies my research choices, including my position, research methods, ethical considerations and others.

The fifth chapter presents and discusses the findings collected during my participant observation and respondent validation. It is an integrated analysis, incorporating my findings and theories of labour process, and aesthetic, affective and emotional labour. It begins with an analysis of the hotel’s labour process, including the strategies and

mechanisms of the function of labour control. Then, the analysis talks about forms of workplace struggle, from unexpected, uncovered and confrontational practices to hidden, subversive, and passive acts.

Chapter six is a discussion of my ethnographic findings in relation to the wider framework of workplace resistance and relevant debates. More specifically, chapter 6 discusses the debatable ‘definition’ of worker resistance. In addition, another debate which is central in the analysis is the *effectiveness* of specific forms and practices of resistance. Also, analysis expands on issues of variability, intentionality/unwillingness of opposition, and measurability of labour value.

The last chapter is the conclusion. It summarises the implications of the thesis in relation to the crisis in the Cypriot hospitality industry, and how my findings can be interpreted in different ways. In addition, I discuss issues that relate to the viability of a more universal application of my findings, and whether worker resistance remains an option for effective change. Finally, this chapter outlines my contribution to knowledge and future directions for research.

Chapter Two

Hospitality and the Labour Process

2.1 Introduction

Of specific interest to me is worker resistance and control in luxury hotels. In this direction, this chapter provides an overview of labour process theory (LPT), the major theoretical foundation of the thesis which focuses on power, control and resistance from below. Considering its theoretical and empirical contributions, LPT is one of the most appropriate frameworks and conceptual tools for analysing workplace matters, resistance and consent. The theoretical and empirical contribution of the second wave of LPT, which has been used by LPT commentators as a “control/resistance model” (Newsome et al., 2009:146), has made this framework one of the most appropriate for investigating conflict, resistance, misbehaviour, consent and dissent in the workplace.

However, my particular interest in the work context of luxury hotels and the examination of the consent/resistance debate makes it necessary to focus on workers’ emotions and feelings both as a means to an end and as a concept from which consent or resistance may emerge. Therefore, I present and discuss a number of different theories of aesthetic, emotional and affective labour in parallel with LPT. In this context, this chapter answers a number of questions that determine the framework for the literature review, such as: how are power, control, and resistance theoretically conceptualised? What is the role of worker emotion, feeling, affect and appearance in the hotel labour process? And can labourers of this type resist?

The structure of this chapter is as follows. I begin by recalling the foundations of LPT in the work of Marx. Analysis then continues with a discussion about influential LPT contributors such as Braverman, Burawoy and Foucault. This section outlines and discusses a number of different LPT contributions and core concepts, including subjectivity, identity, identity-based control, individual attitudes and engineered culture. These concepts have generated extensive debate among labour process theorists and are used to investigate workplace resistance. After this, I discuss various theoretical concepts, including emotional, aesthetic and affective labour, which looks towards a more integrated LPT account. The rationale behind this decision is that different workplaces, such as hotels, adduce different labour process expectations. Finally, the chapter concludes with a discussion about commentators' differing viewpoints, and my own position on the issues of labour process and resistance.

2.2 Marx's labour process: the beginning

The foundations of LPT were laid by Marx (1976) in the first Volume of *Capital*. Marx's purpose for examining capital accumulation, his interest in relations at the point of production and his attempt to expose the most critical factor for the emergence and reproduction of capital, namely the free workers who lack the means to produce for themselves, became materialised through labour process analysis.

At first, Marx introduces the 'simple' elements of labour process including a) labour as a purposeful activity, b) the object on which work is performed and c) the instruments of that work. Based on these elements, Marx initially describes labour

process as a purposeful activity aimed at the production of use-value” (1976:290). Use-value is the product of this process. This product is material adapted to human needs by transforming its initial form through labour. In other words, it is a process of human self-producing with the aim of self-sufficiency and self-sustainability.

The labour process that constitutes the cornerstone of this thesis is what Marx names ‘capitalist labour process’. This is the process where workers work for the capitalist rather than for themselves. In this case, according to Marx, two characteristic phenomena exist. First is that the “worker works under the control of the capitalist to whom his work belongs” (p. 292). In addition, the capitalist takes care of the right use of instruments and correct allocation of resources. The second is that the product remains the property of the capitalist and not its immediate producer, the worker. In Marx’s words, “suppose that a capitalist pays for a day’s worth of labour power, then the right to use that power for a day belongs to him, just as much as the right to use any other commodity” (1976:292). Therefore, Marx’s labour process “is nothing more than the consumption of the commodity purchased” (p. 292), including the consumption of labour power. A capitalist employer consumes this power only by adding the means of production to it. Based on this analysis, we can then conclude that labour process is the point (or sequence of points) at which employers subject workers to control and extinguish their power and capacity to work in the final product through work processes. A number of issues comprising the labour process, such as surplus value, class struggle and control, are analysed in the next sub-section by understanding Marx’s logic of struggle between labour and capital.

2.2.1 Concepts associated with Marx

This section analyses a number of important ingredients of Marx's labour process, which have played a major role in the academic engagement with LPT.

A central characteristic of the capitalistic labour process is Marx's concept of "surplus-value" which was first expounded in Volume 1 of *Capital* (Mandel, 1976). The use-value for every commodity, i.e., the appropriation of materials to create products that satisfy human needs, is linked to capitalists' abilities to produce new value, which is greater than its own exchange-value. This is the process of surplus-value, that the capitalistic labour process not only appropriates surplus-value but also produces surplus-value. Simply put, surplus occurs from paying labour less than the value it adds to the labour process.

Analysis of Marx's labour process is the cornerstone of exposing the exploitation of workers, upon which the process of capital accumulation is based. Knights and Willmott (1990:2) observe that Marx is 'especially attentive to relations at the point of production'. This focus enabled Marx to reveal 'not only how capital produces, but how capital is itself produced' (Marx, 1976, cited in Knights and Willmott, 1990:2).

Furthermore, worker alienation occurs because individuals lose ownership and control of their own work, and produce wealth under private command. Private command is when a 'worker works under the control of the capitalist to whom his labour belongs' (Marx, 1976:291), and this, according to Marx, is one of the first characteristic phenomena of the labour process. In the labour process, capitalist wealth is produced

by alienated workers whose social character is no longer recognised by society, so that ‘their commodity can exist only together with a necessary corollary, money, a universal means of exchange’ (Mandel, 1976:32).

Marx distinguishes four aspects of alienation in *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts* of 1844 (Marx, 1988). But a worker is alienated from his/her product *not* because s/he works under direct control of the capitalist, but because s/he produces product for exchange on the market. Marx describes this situation as one of ‘formal subsumption’. The “*capitalist* labour process” is what goes on when worker works under direct control of the capitalist, e.g. in a factory or as an employee in a hotel. This is a situation of “real subsumption” and is the object of analysis of LPT.

Moreover, resistance for Marx can take many forms, as long as it is rooted in revolutionary class-consciousness (Jermier et al., 1994). To overcome alienation, workers must engage to class-based resistance and put an end to private ownership. In other words, Marx defines class struggle by the relationship between workers and the means of production. They must reject the separation of the means and ends of their production, on which surplus-value depends. Class struggle can be violent, including strikes and lockouts, or not violent through class-antagonism, minor sabotage and hoarding of information. But class struggle rises in parallel with workers’ class-consciousness (Marx, 1976).

2.3 Braverman: Labor and Monopoly Capital

The writer who made significant use of Marx's work on labour process was Braverman with *Labor and Monopoly Capital* first published in 1974 (Willmott, 1993; O'Doherty and Willmott, 2001; Burawoy, 1979; Edwards, 1979; Friedman, 1977; Knights and Willmott, 1990; Jermier et al., 1994; Thompson, 1989, 1993; Burrell, 1990; Littler and Salaman, 1982). Based on Marx's *Capital*, especially Volume 1, Braverman used labour process to focus significantly on workplace micro-patterns of structural conflict (Smith, 2008). His work on LPT emerged from the refusal to accept unconditionally managerial/bourgeois industrial sociology studies of the workplace that presented the organisation of labour process as natural, necessary and inevitable, and rationalised workers' dissatisfaction (Wray-Bliss, 2002).

He was critical of the proposition of industrial sociologists of his time that skilled work had declined in importance with the rise of capitalist industrialisation, which is the change of production methods and increase of wealth-making capabilities (Wray-Bliss, 2002). Braverman's work on the degradation of work was linked to employers' increased control over their workforces as a means of increasing labour productivity. The principal means for securing this control was the separation of conception and execution, which is the appropriation of all planning and design knowledge by managers, and workers being left only the responsibility for operating pre-programmed machinery and performing routine and 'de-skilled' tasks. In this process, "every step in the labour process is divorced, so far as possible, from special knowledge and training and reduced to simple labour" (ibid).

De-skilling is the process of reducing the cost of labour by breaking down complex work processes into simple, unskilled tasks. At the same time, however, “the relatively few persons for whom special knowledge and training are reserved are freed, so far as possible, from the obligations of simple labour” (1974: 83). Through this polarisation process, Braverman suggests a formal structure is given to all labour processes. The result is “the general law of the division of labour, which is so powerful it shapes not only work, but entire populations through the creation of a mass of simple labour” (1974:83).

According to Knights and Willmott, the managerial/bourgeois industrial sociology studies, including the sociologists and personnel management of the early 1970s, implied that workers can be liberated from alienation through programmes of job enrichment and work-humanisation that “require no substantive change in the basic, exploitative and oppressive structure of the capitalist relation of production” (1989:537). This is because “for industrial sociology the problem does not appear with the degradation of work, but only with overt signs of dissatisfaction on the part of worker” (Braverman, 1974:29). Therefore, Braverman refused to accept as normal the degradation of work and increasing rigour of management control. He insisted on the need to re-interpret these findings through his critique of the organisation of labour process and its effects on the nature of work. This critical interpretative stance, mostly after the publication of *Labor and Monopoly Capital*, stimulated an immediate, intense interest in labour process theory within organization studies, which continues until the present day (e.g., with annual labour process conferences). Indicative of Braverman’s influence is the phrase ‘the rise of Bravermania’, which was coined in the 1970s (Littler and Salaman, 1982).

However, although Braverman's work instantly became a classic, it also stimulated an extensive debate about issues he had allegedly ignored, overemphasised, neglected, underdeveloped and/or denied. The main criticism of this thesis is related to worker resistance. The argument is that Braverman neglected the significance of how, and the ways in which, workers oppose and negotiate. More specifically, he is accused of neglecting class-consciousness in relation to the subjective content of class⁸ and workplace resistance outside the deskilling efforts framework (Palmer, 1975; Friedman, 1977), and underestimating trade union resistance (Burrell, 1990).

On one hand, there is notable criticism of Braverman's "representation of workers as rather passive, conditioned victims of 'objective' capitalist structures and dynamics rather than active participants in the reproduction of these structures through the process of (class) struggle and accommodation" (O'Doherty and Willmott, 2001:113). For early critics, such as the Marxist Edwards (1979), resistance was a theoretical nothingness in Braverman's thesis. Others support the view that "his neglect of resistance was not as great as some critics have claimed" but this is largely problematic because of his several, simplified assumptions about subjectivity (Jermier et al., 1994:4, for subjectivity see Foucault below).

On the other hand, however, some commentators support the view that "it is simply untrue to say that Braverman disregarded worker resistance and class struggle" (Thompson; 1990:114). They argue he did not present workers as passive actors of the production process. On the contrary, workers are active participants in the dynamics

⁸ For Braverman, industrialisation removed the "subjective factor of the labour process ... to a place amongst its innate objective factors" (1974:180). In other words, his analysis focuses on how the degradation and industrialisation of work objectified the labour process, leaving no space for subjectivity in workers' class. In this way, according to Burawoy, Braverman ignored the human side of work and its role in industrialisation, degradation and class-consciousness (1985).

of workplace power relations (Mumby, 2005). Put simply, because of his persistent examining of the organisation of labour process and analysis of its effects, Braverman, “focused on the characteristics of control rather than employee initiatives” (Thompson and Ackroyd, 2003:23).

In this thesis, I do not wish to pursue a detailed critique about whether Braverman neglected worker resistance or not. Apart from being repetitive, such a critique would add nothing to the capability of workers to resist, or the capacity of researchers to conduct empirical examinations. It is sufficient to say that Braverman’s work showed the path to LPT. His work is the cornerstone of LPT, but like any work, no matter how stunning it is, it cannot be perfect. Nevertheless, for the sake of this literature review, it is worth mentioning that two years later in *Two Comments* (1976), the last work before his death, Braverman mistakenly added that in advanced capitalist regions, such as the United States, Western Europe and Japan, “the class struggle has been in a state of relative quiescence” (1976:314). This is a statement that, in my opinion, reflected his stance on worker resistance in *Labor and Monopoly Capital* two years earlier. With this statement, one may assume that Braverman paid no attention to worker resistance because he was preoccupied by this ‘quiescence’.

Despite heavy criticism, and although LPT writers have moved the boundary of traditional LPT towards a wide spectrum of disciplinary areas through empirical and theoretical research (Burrell, 1990; Smith, 2008), they all start from Braverman’s work. In this context, Wray-Bliss (2002:86) agrees that “in studying the subjective response of workers to the labour process, authors assume a critical interpretive stance or method not dissimilar to that which Braverman employed ... in the labour process”. In other words, the theoretical foundations laid by Braverman remain a

focal point for most labour process theorists and critical researchers studying workplace struggle and resistance. One of these writers was Marxist sociologist Michael Burawoy, as covered in the following analysis.

2.4 Michael Burawoy

For a number of writers (Willmott, 1993; Knights⁹ and Willmott, 1989), Burawoy's (1979) work is the most significant contribution to reconstructing LPT. His work, heavily influenced by traditional Marxist theories (e.g. Braverman, 1974; Edwards, 1979), focused on aspects of worker subjectivity and social identity. Five years after Braverman's *Labor and Monopoly Capital*, Burawoy's *Manufacturing Consent* was one of the earliest attempts to incorporate subjectivity into the workplace. He was also concerned with labour-capital conflict over control of the labour process.

Within this notion of subjectivity and labour-capital conflict, worker resistance is somehow subsumed within, and reproduced by, managerial control mechanisms (Mumby, 2005). In other words, the game of 'making out'¹⁰ that Burawoy suggests as the main practice of collective resistance reproduces the capitalist relations of production. Game-playing is the product of informal rules imposed on, and tolerated by, management until they become counter-productive. So these 'games' reproduce the capitalist relations by redistributing "conflict away from vertical management-worker relations to intra-employee lateral disputes" (Ackroyd and Thompson, 2000:48). Besides, such games do not necessarily threaten the organisation of work (Burawoy, 1981:93). On the contrary, they reinforce consent because as he suggests:

⁹ Burawoy is described by Knights (1990) as a humanist Marxist.

¹⁰ Maximising bonus pay in piece-rate work

“The very activity of playing a game generates consent with respect to its rules. One cannot play a game and question the rules at the same time; consent to rules becomes consent to capitalist production.”

(1981:92)

In this framework, workers reproduce the conditions of their own subordination, and preserve capitalist exploitation. In addition, management puts up with these informal practices in order to enable the adaptation of the working class to the working environment (Manwaring and Wood, 1985:183).

Although Burawoy has been praised for illustrating the importance of subjectivity through social identity, he has been criticised considerably by labour process theorists (e.g. Knights, 1990; Willmott, 1990; Collinson, 1992) for failing to sufficiently investigate workplace subjectivity, “leaving out some crucial dimensions of subjective experience” (Jermier et al., 1994:7). This is connected to Burawoy being accused of not providing designated accounts of workplace resistance. For instance, Jermier et al. (1994) argue that Burawoy (1979, 1985) has emphasised the theory about managerial control rather than the relationship between organisational control and resistance. Although Burawoy rejected the notion that views workers as passive “victims of the inexorable forces of capitalism accumulation” (1979:77), “there is a danger in his reading too much consent into the social game of ‘making out’” (Knights and Collinson, 1985:202). Therefore, many commentators have progressed the significance of subjectivity in labour process using Foucault’s (1982) work, which enabled a closer examination between the subject and power, and by focusing on more localised forms of resistance.

2.5 Foucault

There is an absence of a direct engagement of Foucault in theories of resistance both inside and outside the labour process debate (Knights and Vurdubakis, 1994). Specifically, “Foucault has contributed little to the discussion of the labour process” (1994:17). However, aspects of his work have been applied by many commentators, and have enthused so-called Foucauldian-inspired critical researchers (Mumby, 2005). To some researchers, Foucault has contributed a positive and forward-thinking motion. But for others, Foucault’s work confused LPT even further. As Knights and Vurdubakis (1994) effectively put it, for some researchers (e.g. Knights and Willmott, 1989), “Foucault is seen to provide a way out of crisis, for some others, Foucault is the crisis itself” (e.g. Ackroyd and Thompson, 1999).

One concept used in LPT and associated to workplace resistance is Foucault’s Panopticon. In its strictest sense, this is a centralised system of surveillance and inspection situated at the centre of circular or semi-circular prisons supervising inmates’ cells.

“Without moving and without being seen ... it would be possible to see from a single centre all the prisoners in their cells and the wardens in the inspection galleries.”

(Bentham, 1841:9, cited in Foucault, 1977:250)

The main idea of Panopticon is that since it cannot be seen back, and since inmates cannot tell whether they are being watched, it exercises power and control over

individuals' subjectivities who think that they are being watched at all times. As a result, individuals become self-disciplining. At the same time, it was a system of observing, collecting information, gathering knowledge and documenting individual reports for each inmate. "The overall aim was to make the prison a place for the constitution of a body of knowledge that would regulate the exercise of penitentiary practice" (Foucault, 1977:250). In a similar way, the concept of Panopticism was used in other institutions, such as hospitals and schools, and then applied in contemporary organisations.

However, for traditional labour process theorists, the concept of Panopticism is problematic (Thompson and Findlay, 1999; McKinlay and Taylor, 1994). Specifically, Thompson and Ackroyd (2000:157) mention that "the idea of Panopticon, in which power becomes automatic, is particularly dangerous in closing the space to 'see' resistance". According to this body of literature, if power is everywhere and nowhere¹¹, there is an impression that there is no escape or resistance.

Furthermore, the concept of *panopticon* as a system of surveillance that produces self-disciplined subjects; and as a system of observing, collecting and documenting individual reports, generates a number of questions which are central in this thesis. For instance, guest questionnaires and 'mystery dining' are common practices in the service industry (also see in Chapter 3, '3.5.2 Monitoring'). Both techniques aim to monitor and assess how well the experience conforms to the standards set by the organizations themselves (Dowling, 2006). So the question here is, can these or similar practices exercise control on individuals' subjectivities who think that they are

¹¹ Foucault said: "It seems to me that power is 'always already there', that one is never outside it and there are no margins for those who break with the system to gambol in" (Foucault, 1980:142).

being watched at all times? What other similar *panoptic* practices exist in a hotel organization? Is there escape or resistance from panoptic surveillance? These questions are addressed in chapter 5.

Drawing upon Foucault's texts such as *Discipline and Punish* (1977) and *The Subject and the Power* (1982), one concept widely used by Foucauldians is subjectivity. For Foucault, subjectivity (the state of being a subject) is an effect of the relationship of power. In this relationship, one can be "subject to someone else by control and dependence, and tied to his own identity by a conscience or self-knowledge" (Foucault, 1982:212). Both ways subjugate. "Subjectivity is understood as a product of disciplinary mechanisms, techniques of surveillance and power knowledge strategies" (1989:554). Employees' subjectivity is the way individual employees interpret and understand their circumstances and is bound up with the sense of their own identity (Knights and McCabe, 2000). Subjectivity can also be a source of worker resistance. Resistance is conceptualised within an agonistic power/knowledge regime, where opposition arises from managerial attempts to regulate identities (Symon, 2005), and occurs in expressions and/or defence of these managerial attempts (Knights, 2002).

However, all these concepts need to be tested in specific work contexts. Debates around subjectivity, Panopticism and other Foucauldian concepts have been examined during my participant observation in a luxury hotel. In Chapter 5, I provide an analysis including all these issues. The following section examines the contribution of Foucauldians to the labour process debate.

2.5.1 Foucauldians

Drawing upon post-structural themes, Foucauldian accounts do not examine resistance within the structural antagonism framework. 'Post-structural themes' refers to the fact that some LPT contributors based their work on a body of literature that rejects structuralism. The post-structural body of literature is characterised by an ideological line that contradicts structuralism. One of the philosophers that cultivated this thought is Michael Foucault. Following a similar line of thought, Foucauldian labour process contributors openly criticise traditional labour process theorists for neglecting subjectivity in favour of structural issues (Symon, 2005). By way of correction, Foucauldians argue that the problematic contradiction existing in workplaces cannot be adequately theorised by reference only to structural issues, such as wages, employment relations and working conditions (Jermier et al., 1994).

This body of literature argues that although orthodox LPT provides a good departure for analysing the management-workers relationship in organisations, including important insights into the structure and dynamics of work organisation, it marginalises important aspects of these structures. Foucauldians, therefore, place effort into reconstructing LPT. Indicative of this is the statement by Ezzamel and colleagues (2001:1054): "[LPT] must be radically revised to appreciate the presence and influence of 'subjectivity' as a medium and outcome of processes of control and resistance at work."

Knights and Willmott (1989) are the most influential applicators of Foucault to LPT. The two writers have edited a number of collections (1982, 1989, 1990, 1997)

exploring subjectivity through issues such as the redesign of jobs and position of women and technology. To overcome the theoretical limitations of LPT, as they suggest, they borrow elements of Foucault's work, and explore resistance through the relationships between worker subjectivity and corporate power (Knights and Willmott, 1989).

As mentioned previously, one can be "subject to someone else by control and dependence, and tied to his own identity by a conscience or self-knowledge" (Knights and Willmott 1982:208). A state of being a subject is an effect of the relationship of power. Foucault's analysis of power is as central to this thesis as resistance because resistance and power co-exist at the same place. More specifically, he mentions:

"[W]here there is power, there is resistance, and yet, or rather consequently, this resistance is never in a position or exteriority in relation to power. Should it be said that one is always 'inside' power, there is no 'escaping' it, there is not ... always a winner."

Power is the medium of relations in which subjectivity, as a complex and all-shifting experience, is produced, transformed and reproduced (Knights and Willmott, 1989:541). More specifically, Foucault power is a characterisation or name given to a certain set of social relations. For instance, he mentions:

"Power is everywhere; not because it embraces everything, but because it comes from everywhere; One needs to be nominalistic, no doubt: power is not an institution and not a structure ... It is the name one attributes to a complex strategic situation in a particular society."

In this framework, power and subjectivity are both understood as a condition and consequence of one another. In other words, subjectivity is both the means and the outcome of power relations, as well as the response of workers (1989:538). For instance, based on the findings of his study on an accounting labour process, Grey (1994) uses the concept of worker career to explain that both disciplining power and workers' pursuit of career contribute towards the formation of self-disciplined workers.

'[T]he professionalised labour process could not be effectively created simply through the development of disciplinary power, without the harnessing of the self-discipline of career in ways which contribute to the success of the firm. In this sense, the self discipline of career is to some extent the precondition of the accounting labour process and, presumably, of other professional labour processes'

(1994:495).

Following this line of thought, subjectivity of the managed self, even from the time that future recruits study in universities, is both the means and outcome of power relations.

Within the Foucauldian framework, Fournier's (1998, cited in Symon, 2005:1643) perspective is that managerial control is achieved and maintained through the subject positioning of employees in different power/knowledge regimes. In this way, corporate power is exercised in a manner that isolates individual workers from one another "and turns them back in on themselves" (Knights and Willmott, 1989:555). It *enables* them, however, to self-express and internalise organisational interests and values, making individual resistance superfluous. In other words, subjectivity imposed by management makes workers self-disciplining. It makes them "the principle of

[their] own subjection” (Foucault, 1977:203). It makes them self-governing (Deetz, 1998).

Finally, Foucauldians support the view that “most of the critiques of Foucault tend to be rooted in dualistic understandings of the relationship between various subject-object polarities” (Knights and Vurdubakis, 1994:168). In other words, their accounts depart from dichotomised positions such as individual/society, force/consent, control/resistance, and powerful/powerless, in which resistance is always situated on one pole outside of power. But:

“There is no binary and all-encompassing opposition between rulers and ruled at the root of power relations ... No such duality extending from the top down and reacting on more and more limited groups to the very depths of the social body.”

Foucault (1976:94)

As a result, post-structuralists stress that by overemphasising extensive power asymmetries, outside the Foucauldian framework, and resistance as a response to practices of managerial control only, we repeat Braverman’s deterministic mistake once more. In other words, by overemphasising managerial control, traditional labour process theorists and structuralists have managed to overcome the neglect of labour resistance and subjectivity (Knights and Willmott, 1990; Knights and Collinson, 1985, 1987; Knights and Vurdubakis, 1990; Clegg, 1990).

2.6 Orthodox labour process theorists

Orthodox labour process theorists, heavily influenced by Marx¹² and Braverman, hold that social relations exist in a structural antagonism, in which control and resistance are part of a fundamental dynamic (Ackroyd and Thompson, 1999). Structural antagonism concentrates on the dichotomy where employers, on the one hand, attempt to secure profitable production and translate labour power into actual labour and surplus (Taylor and Bain, 2003). On the other hand, workers struggle to attain meaningful employment and resist structural injustices through *effective and purposive* emancipatory actions, such as absenteeism, sabotage and trade union struggle.

Paul Thompson is one of the most important commentators in this theoretical spectrum, and one who argues that although *Labor and Monopoly Capital* is imperfect in a number of respects, it incorporates core elements on which one can develop the labour process in a way that retains its emancipatory intent, including attempts to retain autonomy and control. In other words, departing from *Labor and Monopoly Capital*, Thompson argues for a return to the core labour process. However, while Thompson abandons the Marxist orthodoxy – in which the analysis of the capitalist labour process is devoted – for a theory of transformation through class struggle (1994), he emphasises the need to retain a theory committed to develop ideas and practices that empower workers and their organisations.

¹² “Labour process writers are influenced by Marx, but have generally abandoned any attempt to ‘read off’ a theory of class struggle and broader social transformation from the relations between employees and employers in the workplace” (Ackroyd and Thompson, 1999:23).

In addition, traditional labour process theorists criticise Foucauldians' conceptions of the inseparability of power and resistance (Thompson and Ackroyd, 2003:157). Starting from 'year zero', Thompson and Ackroyd (2009) explain that in the initial Foucauldian accounts, power and resistance were inseparable and worker resistance inexistent and pointless. They ask:

"If, as Foucault says, resistance is in the same place as power, where then does it come from? Asking this question, according to Knights and Vurdubakis (1994), commits the sin of 'dualism', where resistance is seen as dichotomous to and outside of power. Power instead is productive of, and generates, resistance. But it is problematic, at least in the sense that no actual accounts of resistance can normally be found in such studies. Most importantly, there is the problem that because power is everywhere and nowhere, the impression can be given that it is a force from which there can never be escape."

(Thompson and Ackroyd, 2000:157)

They accuse Foucauldians of overlooking the place and practice of resistance in the workplace, producing an image of docile workers (Thompson and Ackroyd, 1995, 1999), presenting over-totalising views of managerial power and failing to see structural issues such as employment relations, wages and productivity (Mulholland, 2004). They also support that not only is the Foucauldian framework flawed, but it is an inappropriate account of the workplace. "By treating the workplace as an extension of disciplinary practices ... the specific character of employment relations in a capitalist society is lost" (Thompson and Ackroyd, 2000:158).

Ackroyd and Thompson also accuse post-structuralists of overemphasising studies of culture engineering and managerial individualising strategies, saying that this is another factor that led to an almost complete neglect of workers' recalcitrance and resistance. Foucauldians' focus on workplace resistance and conflict has not always been a priority for contributing literature. This is because the central orientation and effort were aimed at reconceptualising the subject in general (1999) and because of the over-pessimistic accounts of radical sociologists in their appraisal of power and work agency. In a similar vein, Thompson and Findlay (1999:174) observe that "the language of Foucauldian-influenced researchers is of the 'good' or docile worker who adjusts to the techniques propounded by those who would engineer our souls". In addition, they accused a number of writers of being members of a 'new orthodoxy', who encounter workers as programmed automatons who meticulously perform managerial demands (Thompson and Ackroyd, 1995).

In the mid-1990s, during the so-called second LPT wave, Thompson and Ackroyd (2009) argue that a large number of writers, including Foucauldians, started seeing workplace resistance *almost everywhere*. In this sense, the term of resistance itself was 'heavily violenced' (2009). Every action of misbehaviour at the workplace, such as sabotage, cynicism and absenteeism was interpreted as resistance. Therefore, in an attempt to record what resistance is, and map its practices and categories in different theoretical frameworks, Ackroyd and Thompson wrote *Organisational Misbehaviour*. In their analysis, they distinguish between resistance, misbehaviour and dissent in the workplace. For them, even if a practice is stimulated by moral intentions, it is not necessarily resistance, but misbehaviour.

However, they clarify that there are no clear-cut boundaries between misbehaviour and resistance (Thompson, 2009). Lines among forms of opposition are rather blurred. Nevertheless, practices are only distinguishably resistance if they are conscious, intended, active and most importantly, effective. Resistance should be an intentional behavioural response to interests, threats and identities, which might not necessarily be collective, but should be effective. Even though some traditional collective practices can be no longer incorporated, such as full-scale strikes, it does not mean they should be written off.

In the next section, the examination of managerial control and worker resistance focuses on theories of emotional, aesthetic, and affective labour

2.7 Aesthetic, Emotional and Affective labour

This section analyses a number of theoretical contributions, such as emotional, aesthetic and affective labour. These theoretical tools are useful for exploring the labour process of specific work contexts, and especially service work involving face-to-face interactions, such as hotels. Their theoretical foundation and empirical contribution also enable an examination of whether this type of labourers can resist, and what their practices of opposition are.

Furthermore, such concepts, although consistent with the core of labour process analysis (e.g. Bruke, 2009; Smith, 2008; Dowling, 2006) are often omitted from traditional LPT. Therefore, this study aims to incorporate concepts comprising

common ground on labour process control and worker resistance or consent in today's organisations. In the next section, I discuss the concept of aesthetic labour, which is the first point encountered by guests when they are physically present in a service organisation, such as a luxury hotel.

2.7.1 Aesthetic labour

"Aesthetic labour is increasingly being systematically utilised in interactive service work and employment" (Nickson et al., 2001:186), and includes using worker appearance and smile in forming organisational core competencies and/or competitive advantage. In other words, aesthetic labourers fulfil 'the need of the employer to convey meanings and conjure particular associations through use of the worker's body' (Dean, 2005:762).

To begin with, commentators suggest that aesthetics and appearance are important at the point of entry into the organisation, i.e., the process of recruitment and selection of employees (Callaghan and Thompson, 2002; Warhust et al., 2000b; Witz et al., 1998). In the same course, Nickson et al. (2001) recognise that in some industries aesthetic skills and competencies are even more important than technical skills at the point of entry into the organisation. For instance, in the fashion modelling industry 'the majority of fashion model agencies are pretty exclusive, rejecting many more people who walk through their doors than they accept' (Entwistle, 2002:325). Fashion modelling is an industry with high aesthetic expectations. Workers "can be exquisite communicators without saying a word" (Wissinger, 2007:259). In other words, a

fashion model's appearance is enough to cultivate and communicate a lifestyle. However, at the point of entry, most candidates are simply 'inappropriate' (Nickson et al., 2001:179).

But aesthetic labour is not only concerned with getting a job but being capable of doing the job as well. Following this line of thought, Witz et al., (2003:37) and Warhurst et al., (2000: 4) define aesthetic labour as:

the mobilization, development, and commodification of... capacities and attributes... possessed by workers at the point of entry to the employment. [E]mployers then mobilise, develop and commodify these capacities and attributes through processes of recruitment, selection and training, transforming them into 'competencies' or 'skills' which are then aesthetically geared towards producing a 'style' of service encounter.

In other words, different forms of worker embodiment are produced within the workplace as workers are 'made up' (du Gay, 1996, cited in Witz et al., 2003:37) in such a way as to embody the aesthetics of the organisation. In simple terms, this is a process that integrates worker appearance and smile into the overall aesthetic corporate setting, and is often likely to lead to the transformation of the self regarding what the aesthetic labourer comes to think of as himself or herself. Therefore, aesthetics are not disengaged by the issue of feeling and emotional labour. For instance, Hochschild (1983:659) says that as 'deep gestures', including smile and appearance, are bought and sold as labour power, so feelings become a commodity. The so-called management and control of feelings and emotions is discussed in the next sub-section, namely 'emotion in organisations'.

Moreover, in some work sectors, such as luxury hotels, the aesthetic components are so important in the labour processes that they are central to the economic calculations of the setting. To put it differently, in these work contexts, “aesthetics are not something ‘added on’ as a decorative feature or afterthought once a product has been defined; *they are the product/s* and, as such, are at the centre of the economic calculations of the practice” (Entwistle, 2002:321). In a similar vein, Crang (1997:152) emphasizes the role of tourism workers not just as producers of the product, but as ‘part of that very product, producing themselves as part of their jobs’. This is a process in which aesthetic labourers, including their presentation, image, style, and smile, are blended into the aesthetic style of an hotel’s landscape and physical space (Strati, 2000).

From a similar point of view, based on a pilot study that included a hotel chain, Witz et al. (2003) argue that aesthetic labourers are part of the materialization of the corporate idea, along with the architecture and interior design. In this context, ‘the aesthetic labourer is a figure in the scenographic aesthetic of a service organisation experienced by the customer’ (46). Also, Nickson et al. (2001) describe how workers in a retail store were obliged to discuss cutting their hair in advance with the management and that one employee was sent home to shave her legs. In another company, the regulation of appearance and adherence to aesthetic standards was monitored by a ‘grooming standards committee’, responsible of controlling employees’ skirts, shoes, stockings and jewellery to ensure they all conformed to the company aesthetics.

Furthermore, in a study on the culture of Disneyland, Van Maanen draws attention to the fact that to gain and retain a job in Disneyland workers should obey an exacting set of appearance rules. Amusingly, he highlights that:

Even the patron saint, Walt himself, could not be hired today without shaving off his trademark pencil-thin moustache. These rules are put forth in a handbook on the Disney image in which readers learn, for example, that facial hair or long hair is banned for men as are aviator glasses and earrings and that women must not tease their hair, wear fancy jewellery or apply more than a modest dab of makeup. Both men and women are to look neat and prim, keep their uniforms fresh, polish their shoes and maintain an upbeat countenance and light dignity to complement their appearance – no low spirits or cornball raffishness at Disneyland.

(1991, 1543)

At last, contributions that examine worker resistance to aesthetic labour are relevant to this study. Intentional violations and breaches of an organisation's aesthetic standards are often considered practices of misbehaviour (Thompson, 2000) or resistance (Hochschild, 2003). I recognise that my current review of theories of aesthetic labour is extremely biased towards practices of control, as opposed to practices of resistance. However, this is a fair reflection of the literature. These issues are revisited, nevertheless, during analysis of the findings in Chapter 5. In addition, I discuss worker resistance in much more depth in Chapter 3.

In the next sub-section, I present and discuss a number of additional theories such as emotional and affective labour. These enable a more detailed analysis of hotel work,

and they also incorporate serious analysis of workplace resistance and non-compliance with managerial control.

2.7.2 Emotion in organisations

Like aesthetic labour, emotions and feelings in organisations have been a vital ingredient of the capitalist labour process, as well as central to academic debates, for the past 20 years. One of the first commentators on emotional labour, Arlie Hochschild, says the “management of feelings is to create a publicly observable facial and bodily display ... sold for a wage” (1983:7). This is indicative of how labour processes attempt to regulate and blend workers’ appearances, feelings, emotions and personalities, regardless of their internal feelings (Grandey, 2000), towards producing emotional labour for the service sector. As a consequence, emotional labourers often become core competencies for service organisations, adding value to their exchange value. Bolton and Boyd (2003:289-290) suggest that:

It is now widely recognised that ‘organisations have feelings’ (Albrow, 1994; 1997), that they are sites of ‘love, hatred and passion’ (Fineman, 1993) and that the ‘commercialisation of feeling’ (Hochschild, 1979, 1983) is a common occurrence. Employers are openly engaging with hearts and minds (Warhurst and Thompson, 1998) and, some would say, souls (Willmott, 1993) as the management and manipulation of employee’s feelings is securely tied to the idea of competitive advantage.

In other words, workers' expressions of positive emotions (e.g. enthusiasm, willingness, happiness), in luxury hotels for instance, are likely to produce customer satisfaction during face-to-face service encounters, and influence guests' attitude toward returning to the hotel in the future as well as recommending it to others (Parasuraman et al., 1988).

Hochschild's *The Managed Heart* (1983) is widely accepted as the greatest contribution to emotional labour (Bolton and Boyd, 2003; Van Maanen, 1991; Sturdy, 1998). Her empirical study on flight attendants linked work and emotion, and developed the concept of emotional labour as a vital part of the capitalist labour process. Specifically, "[e]motional labour is the dimension that attempts to reinforce, manage and control workers' emotions and feelings to fulfil organisational goals" (Hochschild, 1983). This labour requires service employees to "induce or suppress feelings in order to sustain the outward countenance that produces the proper state of mind in others" (1983:7). According to Hochschild, workers can display the emotions desired by the organisation through two different forms of acting. The first is 'surface acting' that involves presenting emotions without actually feeling them (e.g. faking). The second form is 'deep-acting' that transforms workers inner feelings to match an organisation's emotional requirements.

In an attempt to understand how emotions are controlled both by workers and employers, writers have theorised emotional labour in different ways. For instance, departing from Hochschild's emotional labour thesis, Bolton and Boyd (2003) suggest that it is time to move on from *The Managed Heart* to seeing 'organisational emotionality' by categorising emotional self-management into a number of distinct types.

Similarly, a number of accounts departing from theories of immaterial and affective labour discuss the role of feeling and emotion in the workplace (e.g. Virno, 2004; Dowling, 2006). Affective labour is an important component of immaterial labour¹³. It "involves the production and manipulation of affect and requires human conduct excitement or passion" (Hardt and Negri, 2000:292). The goal is to affect the emotions and feelings of guests, which requires that hotel workers control, manage, and if necessary, suppress their own emotions and feelings (Harvie, 2009). In other words, affective production moves a step further and commodifies the worker so that certain characteristics such as charm, poise, courtesy and character become associated with their performance (Gottfried, 1994).

Furthermore, Hochschild's emotional labour thesis received criticism for being absolutist in its implementation and consequences (Korczynski, 2002, 2003; Bolton and Boyd, 2003; Tolich, 1993). More specifically, when 'deep acting' alters a worker's self and when feelings become 'commoditised' (1979:659), feelings then become 'transmuted' by the organisation and "come to belong more to the organisation and less to the self" (1983:198). As a result, there is no space left for employees to control their feelings or resist emotional labour. For many, this transmutation and commoditisation of emotion is problematic. According to Sturdy and Fineman

¹³ The concept of immaterial labour refers to *two different aspects* of labour (Lazzarato, 1996). Important to my analysis of the hotel labour process is the second aspect. The second aspect regards immaterial labour as the activity that produces the "cultural content" of the commodity. That is, "activities involved in defining and fixing cultural and artistic standards, fashions, tastes, consumer norms, and, more strategically, public opinion". Similarly, although hotel work includes material, aspects (such as making drinks, preparing food, cleaning rooms, and washing dishes), hospitality is a type of labour with many emotional, aesthetic, and affective (thus immaterial) aspects.

(2001:135), it attempts to institutionalise the ownership of emotion and often “limits individuals’ social choices over what they should feel and emotionally express at their work and beyond, a potentially oppressive extension of the deployment of power and the locus of management control”.

But Hochschild sometimes refers to workers who resist the emotional order by reclaiming control of their own smiles as slowing down, rebelling against consumers by influencing their personalised service and distancing themselves from regulations. On one occasion, Hochschild (1983:127) mentions:

The company exhorts them to smile more, and ‘more sincerely’, at an increasing number of passengers. The workers respond to the speed-up with a slowdown. They smile less broadly, with a quick release and no sparkle in the eyes, thus, dimming the company’s message to the people. It is a war of smiles.

Although Hochschild's analysis mostly focuses on the harm of emotional labour for flight attendants and the damaging psychological processes within the individual worker (Korczynski, 2003), there are instances in her analysis where emotional labourers resist the emotional labour process.

Other researchers have also evidenced worker opposition to emotion. For instance, Sturdy and Fineman (2001:142) argue that “[i]n their different ways, the literature on emotion, the labour process and consumerism reveal that emotional arenas are contested and resisted with unpredictable and sometimes self-defeating outcomes”. In other words, emotional labourers are not always passive. Similarly, Sturdy (2001:8) highlights that the responses to emotional labour and customer service “are often

varied and unpredictable or paradoxical and complicated". Also, Ashforth and Humphrey (1993:95) describe how a flight attendant, provoked by a very rude passenger, responds directly and sharply, and argue that 'by selectively breaking rules, one effectively steps "out of role" to communicate the nature and depth of one's (actual or apparent) personal convictions'.

Therefore, the issue of whether emotional labourers resist the emotional labour process is fundamental to this thesis. Of equal importance is the extent to which worker resistance challenges or reproduces domination. In addition, the role of organisational culture is an important determinant of the emotional labour process and, therefore, is analysed in the next section. All these are important elements and are discussed in Chapter 5. But first we need to focus our attention on the role of organisational culture in the labour process, and how it becomes a determinant of worker resistance or consent.

2.8 The role of culture in the labour process

Following the analysis of aesthetic, emotional and affective labour, this section provides a review of the theories of organizational culture and their role in the structural and subjective dimensions of the labour process. This section is purposely put here because emotional and affective expectations appear to be important components of the so-called 'revolution' in strategies of managerial control (Lash and Urry, 1994, cited in Spicer and Bohm, 2005) and thus generate a number of implications in terms of worker resistance or consent in contemporary organizations.

Central to this change has been the shift from bureaucratic control through rules to normative control through culture (Barker, 1993). So the main line of investigation here is whether there is still space for resistance under the era of normative control and immaterial labour. And if there is space for opposition, what kind of opposition is this? For instance, earlier accounts assumed that corporate normative control produced an absence of workplace resistance (Sewell and Wilkinson, 1992). Other researches support that resistance continues to play an important part in the contemporary workplace (Ackroyd and Thompson, 1999) but that it is largely expressed through the disorganized direct action of employees (Fleming and Sewell, 2002). Therefore, the following analysis is engaged with the role of culture in the labour process and its implications for resistance and/or consent.

By the end of the 1970s and start of 1980s, the success of Japanese companies caused a turn towards Japanese policies, ideas and ways of thinking (Torrington et al., 2005). Brewis and Jack (2009) explain how western managers had to face up to the success of Japanese and other Asian economies and corporations compared with the decline of western organisations. They viewed Japanese success as the product of a more holistic organisational approach based on cultivating and maintaining shared values, rather than the rational and quantifiable approaches of the west. In addition, western managers and theorists were closer to the realisation that the canon of management science, including mathematical formulations and rational strategic planning models, appeared ineffective (Alvesson, 2002, cited in Brewis and Jack, 2009:2). In fact, the first organisations to subscribe to the Japanese way of working have been characterised in orthodox management theory as *J* organisations.

Commitment, teamwork, motivation, empowerment and participation were part of this wider advent of corporate cultural turn. Workers' commitment to internalising values – including mission statements, job descriptions, rises, training, promotions, team-working, cross-functional groups and meetings – towards productive cooperation was also expected to happen through a number of internal mechanisms affecting workers directly and indirectly (Thompson and Findlay, 1999; Lazzarato, 1996).

Within this framework, organisational culture has been theorised as something the organisation 'has' and which exists in a measurable and quantifiable way (Smircich, 1983, cited in Brewis and Jack, 2009:2). It focuses on organisational values, beliefs and norms and creates workplace homogeneity about *the way we do things around here*. The assumption here is that:

"Employees internalise 'appropriate' values and norms and subsequently behave according to this interior script at all times, without the need for a watchful supervisory eye."

(Brewis and Jack, 2009:2)

Similarly, Thompson and Findlay (1999:162) describe culture as "a paradigm shift from technical or bureaucratic modes of workplace regulation to culture and the management of meaning; from treating employees in a regimented and calculative manner to winning their hearts and minds".

Many aspects of this have been well-established critiques of LPT, i.e., an attempt to control employees through normative control. Normative control is a common concept in theories aesthetic, emotional and affective labour where aesthetic and emotional expectations are major components of the labour process. Within this

framework, organisational culture programmes became mechanisms aiming to 'engineer' or 'transfigure' emotion (Gagliardi, 1986; Sturdy and Fineman, 2001:135) and feelings to appropriate affective tones, such as being passionate, enthusiastic and enthralled (Carizon, 1987; Hopfl and Linstead, 1993; Kunda, 1992; Peters, 1989; Van Maanen and Kunda, 1989).

Thompson and Findlay (1999) argue that the concept of organisational culture has been initially introduced to the public domain through its association with a number of companies, such as HP and IBM. Based on vision and value-driven messages, rather than direct command and control, and supported by techniques of reward and distinctive recruitment, a common strategy in large companies was the attempt to undertake change programmes "wrapped up in changing the culture" rhetoric (1999:163). These changes required some degree of management of self and mobilisation of emotional labour (Sosteric, 1996).

Moving from the all-purpose change process, cultural transformation then engaged with a number of initiatives associated with normative and behavioural scripts with customers (Thompson and Findlay, 1999). These supporting strategies and managerial mechanisms included total quality management (TQM), 'excellence', business process re-engineering (BPR) and other quality initiatives (Sewell and Wilkinson, 1992). Culture, moreover, is a spectrum of mechanisms, techniques and strategies and even conspires on the management side to regulate worker behaviour and performance.

Furthermore, based on the early works of Burawoy (1979) and Clegg and Dunkerley (1980), who focused their research efforts on attempting to understand how workers

become "the principle of their own subjection", post-structuralist ideas mostly turned towards analysing consent through 'engineered' corporate cultures that reconcile workers to antagonistic employment relationships (Casey, 1995; Kunda, 1992; Du Gay, 1996). In other words, how engineered organisational cultures produce engineered souls, engineered selves, designer selves (Casey, 1995) and/or enterprise selves (Du Gay, 1996), which are compatible with the productive demands of post-industrial organisations and asymmetrical relations of power (Fleming and Spicer, 2003). In this context, workers' forms and practices of resistance are marginalised (Willmott, 1993). Some LP theorists even show that organisational culture and its supporting techniques can blur the line between cooperation and resistance (Burawoy, 1979; Hodson, 1995). In the same way, Hodson argues that "even when resisting specific procedural details ... workers still participate in the system and in so doing reproduce the system of control rather than transform it" (1995:98).

In addition, from a post-structural perspective, workers can draw on organisational culture to form a stable and fixed sense of self-identity. Knights and Willmott observe that:

"The identity of the worker bears the marks of the contradictions of the institutions and social relations in which identity is constituted and solidified. Through their involvement in relations of power, workers invest in and depend on the material (e.g. security, status) and symbolic privileges provided by identities. Similarly, workers develop a sense of subjectivity, or self-consciousness, which is generated from their own conceptions of identity."

(1989:542)

Through the cultural programmes mentioned above, workers are expected to become 'active subjects' instead of being subjected to simple commands of the labour process. In other words, cultural programmes produce individual, autonomous and knowable identities, whose subjectivities are constructed socially and publicly (Rose, 1990). Culture does not require replacing traditional forms of regulation and restructuring. The 'way we do things round here' engages "directly with aspects of people's sense of self" and creates "an exchange that is more than economic" (Kunda, 1992:209, cited in Thompson and Findlay, 1999:163). It invites workers to learn to love the company. In return, the company enables them to celebrate their important physical and mental involvement in work operations and production processes.

According to Lazzarato (1996), what modern management techniques look for is for a worker's soul to become part of the organisation. "The broad tendency is to make 'as if natural' certain corporately controlled emotions" (Alvesson and Deetz, 1996; Giddens, 1979). Hochschild (1983) first argued that organisations identify further aspects of workers, such as personality and emotionality, in order to enhance productivity (cited in Mulholland, 2004:716). In other words, employers shape labour for productive ends by emotion control (Sturdy and Fineman, 2001). The worker's personality and subjectivity must be made susceptible to organisation and command. Supervision becomes more delicate and through 'learning' mechanisms, the weight of some managerial responsibility is transferred to employees, aiming for the internalisation of control and its transformation to self-control (Carls, 2007).

However, do workers have the capacity to act, or more specifically react? What are workers' responses to culture? Do they have a choice? Can they resist?

2.8.1 Resisting organisational culture

The previous analysis showed organisational culture and its programmes as mechanisms designed to maintain consent (at workers' own volition or otherwise) and limit worker resistance. But is this always the case? How do employees respond to various cultural programmes in different work contexts? Do they consent to this psychological, practical and emotional intervention unconditionally? Do they cope with conflicting and unfair working conditions? In the literature, there are many different perspectives on worker opposition to emotional control and cultural engineering.

First, there is a body of literature questioning the use of culture as an intermediary for controlling workers' emotions in organisations. According to Grey (1996) and Hassard and Parker (1994), using workers' emotions and feelings as a means to an end raises questions about the morality of such ventures. Second, some writers suggest that issues such as subjectivity, identity, self-belonging and security remain problematic, theoretical attributions based on insecure analytical and empirical foundations. For instance, based on a shop floor ethnography in an English lorry-making factory, Collinson reveals workers' non-compliance to workplace norms. Thompson and Findlay (1999:172) also suggest that "the idea that current managerial initiatives and organisational change processes are producing a 'productive subject' is unsustainable". In many instances, there is little or no direct evidence, and assumptions about employees often derive from managerial subjectivity. Third, evidence suggests that workers themselves tend to be suspicious and sceptical about a range of organisational goals, and calls for increased worker participation and

cooperation are often met with suspicion (Jackall, 1978; Schrank, 1983, cited in Hodson, 1995:100).

For Thompson and Findlay (1999:173), even the post-structuralist emphasis on surveillance and electronic panopticons is problematic: "Even if we accept the notion of increasing personal and collective surveillance as part of contemporary organisational restructuring, it is a much bigger leap to sustain claims that the panoptic gaze 'operates directly on the subjectivity of individual members'". This argument is evident in Fuller and Smith's work, which reports a 'smile strike' (2001:147). According to the authors, hotel desk clerks were angry at being managerially monitored by mystery shoppers. Such techniques have become a speciality of market research. But the authors argue that the fear, discomfort, mistrust and apprehension created in workers by such surveillance produces collective and confrontational resistance from below.

According to Thompson and Findlay (1999:1770), "it is striking how much of the evidence indicates employee awareness of management motives and the rhetoric-reality gap". For them, believing corporate success must be driven by culture change is merely a managerial illusion. In their analysis of the control of affect, Sturdy and Fineman (2001:135) emphasise that "the literature on emotion, the labour process and consumerism reveal that emotional arenas are contested and resisted with unpredictable and sometimes self-defeating outcomes'.

In some occupations, employee-guest relationships remain unsupervised. In this work context, according to Carls (2007:46), workers act "as mediators between the customer and company's interests and, therefore, their interactive and emotional

competencies become central for the company's market success". As a result, organisational control over employees' affects and subjectivity is increased (Korczynski et al., 2000).

The next chapter provides a full account of the forms, practices and strategies of worker resistance, and examines whether resistance can substantially challenge or even reproduce managerial domination. Doubts about the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of cultural programmes targeted at attaining consent will also be tested during my ethnographic study, and analysed in the following chapters. In the next section, I discuss my own viewpoint about a number of debates, as well as my position on using Foucault in LPT.

2.9 From Theory to Ethnographic Research

As has been mentioned in the foregoing analysis, Foucauldian theories are central in the LPT debate between structuralists and Foucauldians and are used to conceptualize my ethnographic research. However, all these concepts need to be examined in specific work contexts. Therefore, contradictory arguments around power, identity, subjectivity, control, Panopticism and other Foucauldian concepts have been tested during my participant observation in a luxury hotel, and they are discussed in Chapters 5 and 6. But, in response to the question of whether it is appropriate or not to use theories of Foucault in LPT, my viewpoint is that we cannot adequately analyse a workplace by reference only to structural issues. At the same time, nevertheless, we should not marginalize important aspects of structural antagonism. Therefore, I

believe that both structuralist and Foucauldian theories are important for research in the organizational context.

However, what is problematic in LPT is the sharp response of structuralists to all those attempting to incorporate theories of Foucault in the LP framework. As Knights and Vurdubakis (1994) effectively put it, for some researchers (e.g. Knights and Willmott, 1989), 'Foucault is seen to provide a way out of crisis, for some others, Foucault is the crisis itself' (e.g. Ackroyd and Thompson, 1999). In other words, structuralists simply abolish any idea of discussing theories of Foucault in LPT. But, on the other hand, Foucauldians do not abolish structural antagonism. On the contrary, they support that LPT provides a good departure for analysing the management-workers relationship in organizations, including important insights into the structure and dynamics of work organization. At the same time, Foucauldians add that incorporating the theories of Foucault is a way of overcoming the theoretical limitations of LPT, towards a more *adequate* and *sufficient* body of theory that would serve as the base for future research. Following this line of thought, I consider my position closer to the Foucauldian perspective. I consider that aspects of Foucault's work are important for the examination of the labour process in organizations and they are central in my effort to investigate workplace control and resistance in a luxury hotel.

For instance, if we focus on the issues of power, subjectivity and identity, Foucauldian theory enables a more in-depth analysis of the development of the Cypriot hospitality industry through the years (Chapter 1) and the subjectification of Cypriot workers up to the present day. More specifically, since the early 1950s, Cypriot hotel workers were subjected to and were caught up in symbolic systems.

Their subjectivity, which is both a medium and an outcome, was complex and shifting experience was produced, transformed and reproduced through a number of social practices. It was an organized attempt by the British colonists to develop the hospitality industry and promote it as the ideal alternative to paid labour. In the course of transforming more self-producing Cypriots to paid labourers (see primitive accumulation in Chapter 1) they established hospitality schools, institutions, institutes of foreign languages; they changed the way of work, the way of thinking and the way of Cypriot life. In a very short period of time Cypriot workers have been convinced to abandon the mines and self-producing fields and became proud, skilled workers in prestigious and clean environments. They began to wear bow ties instead of peasant jackets and became able to speak English and French. The idea of the new *prestigious* work alternative reached to the very core of individuals and formed their actions, attitudes and everyday lives. It enabled them to dream and form their lives and identities around the hospitality industry. This was a process in which workers' subjectivities changed and became bound up with their sense of their own identity. Hotel workers started thinking of themselves differently. As Foucault put it, the state of being a subject is an effect of the relationships of power, where power produces, it produces domains of objects and rituals of truth. This is how Cypriot hotel workers experienced themselves as people. Gradually, this is how they felt they naturally were (Foucault, 1977).

At the beginning, power was flowing from the British colonial centre of domination. After the independence of Cyprus in 1960, it was coming from everywhere. It was not merely an institution or a structure. Instead, there were productive relations which were embodied in a whole set of micro-political techniques that were distributed throughout society via forms of knowledge (Fleming and Spice, 2007). Cypriot

workers fully subscribed to a subjectification which is linked to the immaterial and emotional requirements of service work and ‘the principle of their own subjection’ (Foucault, 1977:203). Through power and knowledge they got sucked into a specific way of thinking, acting and instituting up to the present day. In this sense, power control and subjectivity is a characterization given to a certain set of social relations. Following this line of thought, I find it difficult to think of a workplace, and mostly a hotel workplace, that does not contain characteristics of subjectification.

Furthermore, Labour Process Theory is not indifferent from the previous analysis. The effect of the relationships of power, workers’ transformed identities, surveillance, control techniques and disciplinary mechanisms, and resistance are all part of the same dynamic. In this same dynamic, subjectivity can also be a source of worker resistance. Resistance is conceptualized within an agonistic power/knowledge regime, where opposition arises from managerial attempts to regulate identities (Symon, 2005) and occurs in expressions and/or defence of these managerial attempts (Knights, 2002). Therefore, Foucauldian theory is important for an investigation into the work context and all these theories are tested during my ethnographic study in a luxury hotel.

2.10 Conclusion

Within the framework of LPT, I have reviewed well-established discussions of power, control and resistance in organisations. Starting with the main Marxist terminology, analysis moved to a discussion on the debates and differing viewpoints about worker

resistance in the workplace. Older and more recent accounts illustrated that LPT remains the focus for many researchers and "students of workplace resistance ... [who are] attracted to labour process analysis as a means of bringing to bear a critical edge to their work" (Knights and Vurdubakis, 1994:167).

My analysis also incorporated the theories of aesthetic, emotional and affective labour. These theoretical frameworks share parallel characteristics and their major ideology begins with the critical and political understanding that workers' subordination and exploitation are endemic in today's organisations (Martinez Lucio and Steward, 1997). Following a similar line of thought, I agree with Burrell (1990), who maintains that labour process provides a theoretical basis upon which analysts of differing disciplinary backgrounds can ponder.

In addition, this chapter examined the theories of organisational culture and the commoditisation and homogenisation of emotion and affect (Sturdy and Fineman, 2001:149). Of particular importance was the question of whether there is space for worker autonomy and resistance.

Furthermore, a number of research questions emanate from this literature review. For instance, what aesthetic, emotional, and affective expectations characterise the particular context of luxury hotel? What managerial strategies of control support the hotel labour process? Can emotional and aesthetic labourers resist? What is the role of subjectivity, *panopticon* surveillance, and structural antagonism in the hotel labour process? These questions depict my ethnographic research process. However, the conceptualization of my fieldwork research requires addressing workers' resistance in much more depth. The next chapter examines how resistance is classified in different

literatures? What issues generate and restrict resistance? What are the effects of resistance? In addition, it provides an extensive review of the forms, practices and strategies of worker opposition.

Chapter Three

An A to Z Catalogue of Workplace Resistance

3.1 Introduction

Consistent with the Labour Process Theory (LPT) concerns, which have been discussed in chapter two, this chapter aims to describe and discuss various forms and practices of worker resistance. More specifically, drawing on various theoretical frameworks and using existing empirical case-studies, its purpose is to collect, categorise, and construct an extensive catalogue of forms, strategies, and practices of workplace resistance within a single chapter. This A to Z catalogue is by no means exhaustive; I believe that in no way can a single catalogue of workplace resistance ever be complete. However, it is extensive enough to review and cover a very wide spectrum of literature and practices, which have been recorded in a diverse range of work contexts. At the same time, the chapter's purpose is to inform my ethnographic study through exploring questions such as: what specific practices of resistance might look like in the workplace? What issues generate or restrict opposition in the workplace? What resources are available to those who resist? And what are the effects of worker resistance? These questions locate the thesis argument within a specific theoretical framework and show how workplace control and resistance relate to previous research studies.

This work does not intend to celebrate the ineffectiveness of systems of power, or to test the limits of managerial control. Neither does it wish to privilege and romanticise the opposition of workers to management, or to suggest that resistance is untouched by organisational control efforts (Mumby, 2005). Rather, what follows is a text that, despite the complexity of its subject matter, attempts to communicate key matters that exist in the contemporary workplace. Managers and professionals may perceive workplace resistance as actions of troublemakers and/or irrational workers (Fleming and Sewell, 2002). For academics of the critical tradition, resistance may be an ongoing struggle against control and domination. For students, it may be a research challenge. For workers, it may be a way to balance workplace injustices and unfair working conditions, or perhaps simply a way of dealing with boredom and monotony at work.

The idea of producing an extensive catalogue of forms of resistance may be of interest to a broad audience, including workers, students, professionals, researchers, and academics. The significance of cataloguing and categorising forms, practices, and strategies of workplace resistance has been recognised and highlighted by many commentators in the past (e.g. Davidson, 1994; Friedman, 1977; Littler, 1982; Littler and Salaman, 1984). Nevertheless, it has not yet been attempted by other researchers.

The opening section of this chapter is the ‘A to Z catalogue of workplace resistance’. I make a case for major distinctions of characteristics of different forms, strategies, and practices of resistance. Under each opposition heading, there is a classification such as *uncovered*, *hidden*, *organised*, *official*, *unofficial*, *rational*, *deliberate*, and others, aiming to provide the unique characteristics of each practice. Also, forms and strategies of resistance, which have been given distinctive names in the literature –

such as ‘resistance through distance’ (Collinson, 1994), ‘decaf resistance’ (Contu, 2008), and ‘careful carelessness’ (Prasad and Prasad, 2001) – are categorised and discussed exactly as they appear in each critical work. Then the chapter discusses how workplace resistance is classified in the literature, including the introduction of some basic categories as well as the challenges/problems that are linked to this classification attempt.

3.2 A to Z Catalogue of Workplace Resistance

What follows is a collection of forms of workers’ resistance listed in a single catalogue. The analysis under each heading is not extensive, but it is indicative of each practice’s nature and supplies some theoretical background. As I mentioned in the introduction, the significance of cataloguing and categorising forms, practices, and strategies of workplace resistance has been recognised and highlighted by many commentators in the past (e.g. Davidson, 1994; Friedman, 1977; Littler, 1982; Littler and Salaman, 1984). This catalogue aims to fulfill this need.

A

Absenteeism

Characteristics: individualistic or collective, uncovered

Absenteeism or quitting is a common practice of opposition that relates to the degree of workers’ dissatisfaction. It can cause obvious disruption to the work process (Dubois, 1979), mostly at times when the job market is tight (Hodson, 1995). Hodson

argues that it requires, nevertheless, duplicity and careful usage. Based on a study in a privatised British utility, Davidson explains in her analysis how higher rates of absenteeism appeared to be employees' way to resist management's plans to introduce multi-functional teamwork. In the study, it was revealed that over 60 per cent of staff said that they would leave if they could find an equally well-paid job elsewhere (1994: 92).

Acquiring Company Products (or Appropriation)

Characteristics: individualistic, hidden, non-confrontational. See also 'theft'

Davidson (1994) describes in the same analysis as mentioned above how, on at least one occasion, a clerk was taking job vouchers home and hiding them in order to resist the change process. In a similar vein, she explains that temporary workers who believed they had been mistreated were acquiring company products to express their dissatisfaction, to punish management, and even to supplement their wages (Tucker, 1993).

B

Bitching

Characteristics: common-place struggle, informal, opportunistic

Sotirin and Gottfried (1999: 57) use this term to focus attention on 'struggles carried out through a widely denigrated form of mundane talk among working women', mainly in corporate secretarial positions. Rather than categorising bitching as a mode of control or resistance, they deal with it as an ambivalent communicative practice that contributes to the construction of gendered organisational identities. The two

writers are in agreement with Jones (1990), who discusses ‘bitching’ as a sub-category of ‘gossip’. This is an informal, intimate, and opportunistic way of expressing personal and privatised anger, which is characterised by feelings and reconstruction of events, retelling and highlighting personal affronts, injustices, and violations. To illustrate the major difference between gossip and bitching, Sotirin and Gottfried employ Tannen’s argument: gossip is ‘talking about’, whereas bitching is ‘talking against’. In other words, bitching is more specific (1990: 120, cited in Sotirin and Gottfried, 1999: 58), and although both women and men engage in bitching, it derives from its association with women’s talk (Bergmann, 1987/93, cited in Sotirin and Gottfried, 1999: 58). Nevertheless, this practice’s force is both appropriated and denied by the secretarial female workers themselves, producing ambivalent dynamics of struggle, and in some instances reproducing their own oppression.

Bottleneck Strike

Characteristics: organised, trade unions. See also ‘unionism’ and ‘strikes’

This is a form of action usually controlled by trade unions. It works through halting the production of one section, service, or workshop in order to halt the entire firm or industry (Dubois, 1979). A bottleneck strike is not necessarily a decision to seize production. It can also serve as an occasion for trade unions to adopt additional strategies. For instance, during the Renault strike in the spring of 1975, unions adopted the practice of ‘go-slow’, which proved an ‘action especially effective in lowering production’ (Dubois, 1979: 116). Workers carried out a ‘go-slow’ for nine months, during which they slowed their work to half-speed.

C

Careful Carelessness

Characteristics: deliberate, planned, sabotage, hidden

Based on the findings of an ethnographic study in a health maintenance organisation in the eastern United States, Prasad and Prasad (2000: 397) discuss 'careful carelessness', a term used by some supervisors to define a set of employees' actions. Careful carelessness is similar to the expression 'accidentally on purpose'. A number of careless actions by workers, such as damaging computer terminals (wittingly or not), sticking pieces of chewing gum on the terminals, 'forgetting' to save or misfiling important information, and a flood in the organisation's basement that was regarded by management as an unquestionable act of sabotage, were regarded by supervisors as intentional practices of workers' routine opposition.

Although no official accusations of resistance were made, careless acts were classed together by supervisors and named as 'careful carelessness', and the flood was interpreted as 'sabotage'. In other words, supervisors interpreted acts of negligence, which employees passed off as carelessness, in addition to the flooded basement, as deliberate and carefully planned opposition, aiming to disrupt the organisation and annoy the administrators. However, private talks and workers' casual conversations did not only generate in the organisation a sense of workers' routine resistance; they also elevated the person who was believed to be responsible for the flooding to the status of workplace hero. Finally, Prasad and Prasad conclude that 'intention' does not always characterise workers' resistance. Also, it is very important to note that the

power of talks and murmurs in organisations can take various forms and bring about different outcomes.

Collective Bargaining

Characteristics: organised, official, trade unions, collective bodies, institutionalised and legal procedures. See also ‘unionism’

Within the framework of unionism, ‘collective bargaining’ is a form of formal, organised struggle of trade unions and other collective bodies with the aim to ensure employees’ welfare at work. This type of opposition is usually formally constructed and guarded by a code (e.g. the Industrial Relations Code, IRC), and is applied by both employers and trade unions. Hostility between employers and trade unions, and tensions during negotiations, may sometimes lead to direct practices of protest and defiance, such as long-term strikes. The chances of hypothesising or romanticising this type of resistance are limited, since actors’ intentions, actions, and sets of behaviours are specified a priori.

Collective bargaining produces collective agreements, which cover annual holidays, wages, and other terms of employment. If provisions in agreements are not satisfactory for workers (demonstrating a negative influence via the general socio-economic context), or not applied in the approved manner by employers (sometimes due to weak trade union inspections or breaches by employers), then workers are likely to oppose such provisions through hidden and routine practices of workplace resistance.

Creation

Characteristics: identity, self-narratives

Based on the Foucauldian notion of subjectification¹⁴, Fleming and Spicer (2007) discuss a practice of workers' resistance through creating alternative identities, self-narratives, and discursive systems of representation. For instance, although managerial power aims to shape workers' identities towards meeting organizational imperatives (e.g. consent), workers do not necessarily internalise organizational culture or initiatives of 'autonomy', 'self-management', and 'trust' (Kondon, 1990; McKinlay and Taylor, 1996; Parker, 2002a, all cited in Fleming and Spicer, 2007:43). Instead, through practices of 'creation', workers use the function of power by 'turning it back' to create something that was not intended by management. Also, another practice of creation is the *over-identification*. This is a tactic in which workers resist by applying a 'cultural working to rule'. That is, taking the discourse of cultural management too seriously and over identifying with certain beliefs and norms (Fleming and Sewell, 2002).

Cynicism

Characteristics: mockery, irony, sarcasm, teasing. See also 'satire' and 'humour'

Cynicism is a very varied practice of workers' resistance, applied through a number of different strategies, and especially debatable in terms of its contribution. For instance, Ackroyd and Thompson (1999) argue that cynicism's practices, such as 'ironic, sardonic and satirical commentary on managerial initiatives ... have become, in the

¹⁴ Within the system of power, a series of productive relations are embodied in multiple micro-political techniques. Together, they are widespread throughout society in the form of knowledge, and influence the way we experience ourselves as people. 'Power, therefore, produces the kinds of people we feel we naturally are' (Fleming and Spicer, 2007:23). '[I]t produces reality; it produces domains of objects and rituals of truth' (Foucault, 1977:194, cited in Fleming and Spicer, 2007:23). In other words, the way workers think about themselves; and the identity to which they become attached, is the very product of the relations of domination.

current context, significant forms of misbehaviour' (103). Cynicism can also serve as a defence mechanism to escape managerial logic and provide inner 'free space' for workers (Casey, 1995, cited in Fleming and Spicer, 2003: 160; Kunda, 1992). This is achieved through 'maintaining a feeling of autonomous self, while also defensively preserving the necessary motions of role prescriptions' (Sturdy and Fineman, 2001: 146), mostly in workplaces where emotions, feelings, and appearance are central labour process components. It is also a practice through which workers sarcastically ridicule organisational values and culture (Collinson, 1992).

On the other hand, there is a considerable body of research supporting the view that cynicism is a conservative force that preserves, reproduces, and reinforces the structure of domination, and diminishes the efficiency of more effective and permanent forms of opposition (Burawoy, 1979; Du Gay and Salaman, 1992; Fleming and Spicer, 2003; 2005; 2007; Kunda, 1992; Leidner, 1993; Willmott, 1993). This notion is very common in post-structural accounts, highlighting the fact that some forms and strategies of resistance favour management control strategies (Ezzamel et al., 2001). Cynicism is one of those practices, and is characterised as 'the inadvertent success of corporate power relations rather than their failure' (Fleming and Spicer, 2007: 160). Commenting upon the self-defeating character of cynicism, Willmott concludes that

In the absence of a well-organized, supportive counterculture, the very process of devaluing corporate ideals tends to produce confusion and emptiness, thereby making employees enduringly vulnerable to the (precarious) sense of stability and identity provided by a dramaturgical, cynical, instrumental compliance with corporate values.

(1993: 538–539)

This is because, although employees are locked into their pessimism, they are given the impression that they are autonomous agents; however, they actually consented to what seemed to be the object of resistance in the first place. I agree with Sturdy and Fineman (2001), who assert that ‘this view is often overstated’.

Instead of partial and temporary practices, the dimension of resistance suggested by these writers in the workplace is a wider, permanent, and more effective struggle against capital to transform society. Cynicism is commonly used as the defense of selfhood and distancing of selfhood (Fleming, 2005). Within this framework, the majority of these researchers examine cynicism as a tactic of ‘transgression’ used by employees in order to preserve their cultural identities from the corporate culture, and to distance themselves from organisational values and the company’s philosophy. However, most of them conclude that this kind of worker disbelief and distance, which is manifested through cynicism, undermines effective resistance. They empathise with Žižek (e.g. Du Gay and Salaman, 1992; Fleming and Spicer, 2003), who believes that cynicism ‘is just one way to blind ourselves to the structuring of power of ideological fantasy: [and] even if we do not take things seriously, even if we keep an ironical distance, we are still doing them’ (1989: 32). Based on Sloterdijk’s (1987) critique of cynicism, Žižek (1989) explains that the cynic insists upon the mask despite his awareness of the distance between the ideological mask and the social reality. As he writes,

The formula, as proposed by Sloterdijk, would then be: ‘they know very well what they are doing, but still, they are doing it’. Cynical reason is no longer naïve, but is a paradox of an enlightened false consciousness: one knows the

falsehood very well, one is well aware of a particular interest hidden behind an ideological universality, but still one does not renounce it.

(1989: 29)

This is what Žižek refers to as the paradox of an enlightened false consciousness.

More specifically, he argues,

Cynical distance is just one way – one of many – to blind ourselves to the structuring power of ideological fantasy: even if we do not take things seriously, even if we keep an ironical distance, we are still doing them.

(1989: 33)

D

‘Decaf’ Resistance

Characteristics: cynicism, humour, offstage discourse. See also ‘dumb’ and ‘passive’

‘Decaf’ resistance is used by Contu (2008) to describe ‘underground’ and offstage practices of opposition such as cynicism, parody, humour, and scepticism. She supports the view that this resistance comes without a cost of changing effectively power relations or economic reproductions. Humour, fun, and ‘all that’ are ‘carnavalesque’ practices that do not constitute any serious threat to dominant authorities in the workplace (2008: 368). Also, these transgressive acts comprise a kind of risk-free decaf resistance, which changes very little for the subjects who live this way. It supports and sustains workers’ fantasy of functioning as liberal, autonomous,

and free human beings who can also supposedly exercise control over work processes and managerial power.

Indicative of this is the following statement: ‘decaf resistance, just as decaf coffee, makes it possible for us to enjoy without the costs and risks involved. We can have the thing [coffee] without actually having it’ (Contu, 2008: 374). However, real acts of resistance, according to the writer, would be those for which workers must bear the cost associated with having the real thing.

Defiance

Characteristics: unconventional practices, pilferage, rule-breaking

This is a conceptual category rather than a single practice of opposition. According to a number of labour process theorists, such as Ackroyd and Thompson (1999), Analoui (1992), and Analoui and Kakabadse (1993), defiance constitutes purposeful and calculative actions of resistance, including pilferage, rule-breaking, non-cooperation, and forms of sabotage. Each of these practices is analysed under different headings or separately.

Deviant Dressing

Characteristics: open, confrontational, intentional

This practice concerns the intentional violation of an organisation’s dress code as a way of expressing opposition and dissatisfaction. For instance, Gottfried (1994) explores how temporary service workers often dress aberrantly in order to express resistance. Similarly to other forms and practices of resistance, not all violations of

dressing codes can be interpreted as workers' resistance (Prasad and Prasad, 2000). This action is a practice of resistance if it can be recognised as a part of deliberate and mundane behaviour.

Distance

Characteristics: resistance through distance, everyday routine opposition, covert

Keeping at a distance from an organisation's job processes and managerial demands is a common practice in empirical accounts of workplace resistance. Workers distance themselves not only physically, but also mentally. For instance, although the workers in an engineering company verbally ascribed to the company's ideology, they tempered their enthusiasm with rituals of role-distancing (Kunda, 1992). Distancing may not aim to challenge the dominant order. Rather, 'it tailors it to the person's preference or defensive interests, so camouflaging and partly ameliorating fears and anxieties' (Sturdy and Fineman, 2001: 144).

Moreover, for Hodson, keeping distance in contemporary workplaces is similar to procedures of lifelong servants of the past. He writes, 'Lifelong indentured servants most characteristically expressed discontent about their relationship with their master by performing their work carelessly and ineffectively. They could intentionally or unconsciously feign illness, ignorance, or incompetence. Driving their masters to destruction' (1995: 79). In a similar way, workers these days may keep their distance through a number of analogous practices, varying from working slower to calling in ill.

A sound example of maintaining distance from workplace processes is Collinson's (1994) 'resistance through distance'. Collinson explores the way in which subordinates try to 'escape or avoid the demands of authority and ... "distance" themselves either physically and/or symbolically' (28) through the construction of differentiated identities. Workers' 'strategy to distance' (Goffman, 1959) symbolically and physically from managers and the organisation's job requirements constituted a reaction, rooted in a 'deeply embedded counter-culture on the shopfloor' (Collinson, 1994: 32). Such a counter-culture is capable of widely rejecting any idea that could lead to any kind of incorporation, compromise, and conformity.

For a number of writers, distance is not a meaningful challenge to the structure of power relations in the workplace. Following this line of thought, Ezzamel et al. (2001) assert that 'resistance through distance is a form of self-subordinating consent and compliance' (1070). In other words, it reinforces workers' position of subordination. Collinson (1994) also concludes, 'resistance through distance and the concealment of information had only limited effectiveness as a means of dissent. It failed to challenge and thus actually reinforced the commodification of labour and managerial control' (37).

'Dumb' Resistance

Characteristics: non-intentional, non-calculative, spontaneous, routine. See also 'passive' and 'decaf'

Prasad and Prasad (2001) discuss an ethnographic study where managers in a health maintenance organisation interpreted workers' actions as disruptive, but with no intention to harm. Managers referred to these actions as 'dumb resistance' and

‘passive aggression’. Prasad and Prasad highlight additionally that, even on occasions of employees’ emotional discomfort with technology, managers tended to view this as ‘dumb resistance’ simply because of the problematic connotations produced in the organisation’s everyday discourse. At the same time, ‘dumb resistance’ was troubling managers because they felt helpless in the face of what they interpreted as unintentional resistance. Therefore, workers’ punishment or disciplining could not take place.

Duplicity

Characteristics: hidden, gestures

Although duplicity may not appear to be a practice of resistance per se, according to Hodson (1995) it remains important as a cover for many forms of opposition. For instance, employees may pretend to be working right under their employer’s nose, and when the boss is not around workers may stop production, criticise, and gesture. Hodson states, ‘without the practice of duplicity, many acts of resistance would be perceived and challenged by management’.

E

Escape

Characteristics: distancing, cynicism. See also ‘distance’

Fleming and Spicer (2007) use the term ‘escape’ to describe the way in which workers can distance themselves from work processes through cynicism, irony, and humour. Among others, Fleming and Spicer discuss Collinson’s (1994) expression ‘resistance through distance’, where employees distance themselves from aspects of

the work process. They also acknowledge Cohen and Taylor (1992), who suggest that escape attempts are opposition practices used by workers to disengage from the world of work. However, the writers conclude that ‘escape’ and cynical distance appear to comprise a partial, ineffective, and meaningless form of resistance, limiting workers’ otherwise radical resistance practices (Collinson, 1994; Fleming and Spicer, 2007; Willmott, 1993).

F

Fantasy

Characteristics: offstage opinion

Fantasy is for some writers a practice that leads to workplace resistance and for others a practice that leads to exactly the opposite, which is reinforcing domination. For instance, Scott (1990) questions whether fantasy soothes workers’ anxiety and calms their intention to resist, or whether it can provide the ground for worker resistance. He concludes that fantasy is the basis of the ‘hidden transcript’ (see hidden transcript) and a practice of *offstage* opposition:

Without the sanctions imposed by power relations, subordinates would be tempted to return a blow with a blow, an insult with an insult, a whipping with a whipping, a humiliation with a humiliation. It is as if the ‘voice’ ... they are refused in the public transcript finds its full-throated expression backstage. The frustration, tension, and control necessary in public give way to unbridled retaliation in a safer setting, where the accounts are symbolically at least, finally balanced.

(Scott, 1990: 38)

Fun at Work

Characteristics: irony. See also 'jokes', 'humour' and 'satire'

This type of subversion includes jokes, humorous comments, irony, rule-breaking, and other practices that lead to 'funny' and 'playful' moments at work. Some writers, such as Fleming and Spicer (2007), have gone so far as to suggest that, among other practices, fun includes farting in front of team leaders, enjoying mating rituals during work time, and even culture jamming (Kane, 2004, cited in Fleming and Spicer, 2007).

Additionally, for some writers, this form of routine and systematic misbehaviour is what makes workers able to continue functioning in unfair and oppressive workplace environments (Fleming and Spicer, 2007).

G

Gestures

Characteristics: hidden, glances

Unseen gestures are for some writers a practice of hidden resistance. For example, Scott (1990) explores gestures and glances as part of 'hidden transcripts'. He also captures this act of opposition in a Malaysian proverb: 'When the great lord passes the wise peasant boys deeply and silently fart'. Nevertheless, for other writers, this kind of opposition depends on authority; it becomes possible through domination; and 'it remains its shadowy double, its retroactive effect' (Žižek, 1994: 56). These actions pose no threat to the system that supports them, and change very little for the subjects who live this way.

Gossip

Characteristics: sarcasm, irony, hidden discussions, critical talks. See ‘bitching’ ‘murmurs’ and ‘humour’

H

Hidden Transcripts

Characteristics: offstage

Within the open power interaction between subordinates and dominators (in Scott’s words ‘public transcript’, 1990: 2), there exists another discourse. Within this second discourse, the weak produce another, *offstage* transcript, beyond direct observation by power-holders, namely *hidden transcript* (1990: 4). The hidden transcript is, according to Scott, derivative in nature. In other words, it might include a worker performance that supposedly confirms public transcripts, performing closely to how power-holders would wish to have things in order. Workers may even seem to be enthusiastically engaging with the terms of their own subordination. At the same time, however, hidden transcripts include all those offstage gestures and speeches that dominators cannot see or hear, and that reflect what appears in public transcripts. “[A] hidden transcript is produced for a different audience and under different constraints of power than the public transcript” (1990: 5).

At the same time, in order to examine what lies beneath the surface of public transcript, or any other public behaviour, careful attention needs to be paid. Therefore, Scott (1990: 14) clarifies that:

first, the hidden transcript is specific to a given social site and to a particular set of actors; a second and vital aspect of the hidden transcript [...] is that it does not contain only speech acts but a whole range of practices ... includ[ing] poaching, pilfering, clandestine tax evasion [and others]; [f]inally, it is clear that the frontier between the public and the hidden transcripts is a zone of constant struggle between dominant and subordinate – not a solid wall.

Humour

Characteristics: jokes, sarcasm, irony, hidden discussions, safety-valve theory, overt expressions, critical talks, metaphors. See also ‘murmurs’, ‘joking’, and ‘gossip’

Apart from providing relief from routine and boredom (e.g. Bradney, 1957; Roy, 1958), a number of writers argue that humour at work has the potential for subversion and resistance, and may convey serious messages (Ackroyd and Thompson, 1999; Rodrigues and Collinson, 1995; Smith, 2008). For instance, Smith mentions that humour occurs when ‘an honest thing is said in jest ways’ (2008: 7). Based on his study at a civil service department, Smith (2008: 7) describes how joking was a practice uniting workers and revealing a sub-culture of resistance against specific unpopular managers and their methods. In another case, in a Brazilian telecommunications company, Rodrigues and Collinson (1995) suggest that humour can be an effective practice of workplace resistance, mostly when in overt form, which may provoke managerial reprisals.

Ackroyd and Thompson (1999: 17) also suggest that humour can be effective as a form of workplace opposition (in the 'misbehaviour' sense). They talk about 'applied humor', and identify three different types, namely 'clowning', 'teasing', and 'satire'. The types vary according to a number of different elements, among others their objects, audiences, and content.

However, there are a number of writers who assert that humour is not an effective practice of resistance. They believe that humour and jokes act as a safety valve, preserving the existing power hierarchy and obscuring the social relations of production: 'In this sense, humor is a vital factor in obscuring the social relations of production, and suppressing the alienating tendencies of work' (Noon and Blyton, 1997: 159–60). As mentioned in the analysis of cynicism above, this notion is very common in post-structural accounts, highlighting that some forms and strategies of resistance favour management control strategies (Ezzamel et al., 2001). Humour appears to be similar to other partial, temporary, distancing, and transitory practices of resistance that maintain the structure of domination; diminish the efficiency of more effective and permanent forms of opposition (Fleming and Sewell, 2002; Fleming and Spicer, 2007); and make workers easier to monitor and control (Powel, 1988, cited in Rodrigues and Collinson, 1995).

Nevertheless, independent empirical cases, from different work contexts, countries, and continents, uncovered considerable subversion through humour, irony, and satire. These findings contradict the conservative version of the 'safety-valve' theory, which suggests that humour preserves domination and makes managerial control easier. For example, in one case examining the informal joking culture of builders and bakers,

Linstead (1985) highlights the potential of humour with serious content to generate substantial social change.

In another account that openly questions the safety-valve theory, Rodrigues and Collinson (1995) draw a clear distinction between oppositional humour and managerial humour. The collaborative work of the two writers, who conducted research independently in two different organisations, countries, and continents, suggests that oppositional humour cannot be used as a tool to reinforce managerial power. In other words, it does not reduce social tension and does not lead to organisational stability, harmony, and consensus. The practice of humour analysed in this work is a more overt and formalised form of resistance, through publishing satirical cartoons in *The Goat*, a trade union newspaper of a Brazilian organisation. When the discrepancies between the engineered organisational culture and actual practices widened, *The Goat* increasingly criticised management through comments, satirical images, and metaphorical representation, and encouraged employees to do the same. These practices ‘challenged the legitimacy of the established order and organizational order by emphasizing its inherent injustices and rigid bureaucratic rules’ (Rodrigues and Collinson, 1995: 750). Humour and satirical images provided the means through which resistance was expressed.

Another study in two different call centres in the UK revealed that humour can contribute to the development of vigorous counter-cultures, which conflict with corporate aims (Taylor and Bain, 2003). This case highlights that employees were not only struggling for better working conditions and wages, but through humour and satire were consciously promoting trade union organisation. The relationship between humour and union organising has not been extensively covered in the literature of

workplace resistance; it is interesting that this form of resistance took place in an organisation with great antipathy to unions. Part of this strategy involved copying hundreds of union leaflets (as well as membership cards) and satirical poems during night shifts and slipping these under keyboards, persuading management to solve important issues. Thus, humour was related to an open appeal to join unions.

Collinson (1988) warns about the thin line between humour as resistance, through the romanticising of resistance, and humour that may take sexist, racist, and other divisive forms.

I

Intentional Resistance

Characteristics: conscious, purposive

‘Intention’ helps researchers to distinguish workers’ resistance and daily oppositional practices from other ‘seemingly self-evident’ actions of opposition. As it is mentioned in the first part of this chapter, opposition is not always driven by an intention to resist (Merton, 1939, cited in Campbell and Heyman, 2007). Therefore ‘intentional resistance’ distinguishes that a specific practice is not a kind of boredom or misbehaviour, but a worker’s purposive choice to oppose.

Irony

See ‘satire’ and ‘cynicism’

J

Joking

Characteristics: humour, satire, fun. See also ‘humour’

Joking may consist of relief from boredom and routine (Taylor and Bain, 2003). It can also be a practice of sustaining social order, through enabling the articulation of “‘a mutually permitted form of disrespect” in an otherwise potentially conflictual social situation’ (Radcliffe-Brown, 1965, cited in Collinson, 1988). Alternatively, it may constitute a serious practice of resistance through irony and sarcastic comments. Or, on the contrary, joking may constitute a ‘regulatory function by providing a means of expression that assists group cohesion, deflects attention from the dehumanizing aspects of work and acts to preserve the existing power hierarchy’ (Noon and Blyton, 1997: 159–60). In other words, it may work on behalf of managerial power and domination rather than against it. For instance, Rosen (1985) and Kunda (1992) conclude that jokes may act as ‘time outs’, warding off any serious or more impactful expressions of dissatisfaction (both cited in Brewis and Jack, 2009).

However, joking is to a large extent part of humour, and therefore a more extensive analysis may be found under ‘**humour**’.

K

Knowledge Restriction

Characteristics: hidden, information, distance

A number of commentators highlight the use of knowledge and information as key aspects of power in organisations (e.g. Clegg, 1989; Collinson, 1994; Foucault, 1977), and how the possession of particular information becomes a resource of workplace resistance. For instance, Collinson (1994) argues that ‘knowledge restriction’ is a form of *routine* and *subjective* resistance, concentrating on restricting the information flow from and to managers. This tactic is another way of workers’ ‘distancing’ from the job’s requirements. (Also see ‘resistance through distance’).

L

Leavin’

In an article that examines conflict in a call centre in Belfast, Mulholland (2004) describes *leavin’* as an informal collective response, linked to high levels of resignations and labour turnover. According to Mulholland (2004), particularly in this call centre, the practice of resignation has been institutionalised as an important strand of resistance. Workers’ overall involvement in this practice of opposition emerged out of mutual understanding, exemplified by their common adoption of denial and disengagement strategies. *Leavin’* shares common characteristics with *resignations*, which is analysed in this catalogue, its difference nevertheless is that *leavin’* was

taking place on a collective basis in the particular firm, indicating a prior pre-planning among the members of the workforce.

M

Murmurs

Characteristics: hidden discussions, critical talks, conspiracy. See also ‘gossip’, ‘humour’, and ‘critical comments’

In a study of temporary and short-term employment in a number of different industries and sectors, Tucker (1993) explores how the social environment, which is associated with temporary employment and in which workers are tied loosely to the organisation, makes workers in transient positions resist. Temporary employees are ‘individuals employed in organizations for specific, limited periods of time’ (Tucker, 1993: 26). Their practices of opposition are usually concentrated on discussing their problems secretly with fellow employees. Tucker describes this form of resistance as non-aggressive, non-confrontational, and noticeably restrained. Under the title ‘Gossip’, Tucker (1993) notes:

The aggrieved and other employees often engage in gossip, where they discuss the problem, sometimes at great length. Grievances are commonly pursued no further than the gossip network. Gossip functions as a type of settlement behaviour; participants pass judgement on the case, determining fault and assigning blame.

This practice of hidden resistance is like a secret trial ‘in absentia’ (Black, 1989: 76, cited in Tucker, 1993: 31), where in most instances the employer is unaware of the employee’s grievance.

Workers discuss their grievances secretly in order to reinforce their position before taking further action, trying to attract fellow employees to support them in the conflict. The result of this practice of opposition usually has two different sides. One side is limited to a discussion between workers, and suggestions that in most cases stop short of any uncovered practice of resistance. The other side is related to the shift of simple discussions to more uncovered practices of resistance; according to Tucker (1993: 31), this happens only rarely.

From a different point of view, Prasad and Prasad (2001: 111) highlight that murmurs and hidden discussions constitute effective everyday practices in organisations. They believe that resistance can be ‘constituted through a series of linguistic practices within specific organizational contexts’. In this case, ‘routine resistance’ has emerged as based solely on managerial beliefs, official conversations in meetings, and workers’ casual talks and murmurs, without any concrete evidence produced by participants.

N

Non-cooperation

Characteristics: refusal, non-performance, hidden, uncovered. See also ‘distance’

This comprises refusal to cooperate or, as Holloway puts it, ‘refusal to do, in a world based on the conversion of doing into work [...] as an effective form of resistance’

(2002: 5). In the literature, it is evidenced that 'non-cooperation' is a characteristic of both covert and uncovered practices of workplace resistance. In short, non-cooperation consists of refusal to perform the required tasks openly or non-performing covertly. According to Tucker (1993: 37), this kind of refusal is 'a response to perceived injustices by not performing the required tasks'. It also includes avoiding tasks, arriving at work late, calling in sick, and other ways of acting in a way different to that desired by the management.

For example, Tucker presents primary data concerning a stockroom worker who decided to deal with conflicts, misunderstandings, and injustices personally by not cooperating. His practices included concentrating on not doing anything unless specifically asked to work; listening to music for hours; doing nothing during night-hours with no managerial surveillance; and goofing around, but pretending to work in the presence of managers. On another occasion, a salesclerk who was not given a raise as promised began to do less and less work, arrive late on Fridays, and take longer breaks when the manager was not there. Tucker successfully highlights that non-cooperation is a practice of opposition that can be used in settings where managers depend highly on specific employees and thus tolerate their non-cooperation.

These practices are similar to the findings of Davidson (1994), which include resisting through working slowly and taking more frequent breaks. Even in service occupations where the work process takes place face to face with customers, working slowly can be achieved 'by ignoring or incorrectly filling out required paperwork' (Hodson, 1995: 96). Go-slow is a practice of non-cooperation that enables workers to take control over the work process and retain autonomy.

O

Open Negotiations and Complaints

See also ‘uncovered’

Tucker (1993) articulates cases in which workers chose to raise their problems or injustices to their managers or supervisors directly. Although Tucker discovers that employers rarely admit they are wrong, interestingly, his findings show that some workers managed to work out mutually acceptable compromises. He believes, nevertheless, that this type of resolution is uncommon.

Organised Non-compliance

Characteristics: organised, conflict, trade unions, institutional bargaining, formal.

See also ‘collective bargaining’ and ‘unionism’

Ackroyd and Thompson (1999) argue that non-compliance is a term largely understood within social sciences as the predominant behaviour of the dimension of conflict. Actors of ‘organised non-compliance’ are trade unions and other collective bodies that struggle through collective bargaining to oppose employers’ logic within the state’s legal framework of normative and procedural rules. Common practices concern collective bargaining, labour rights courts, strikes, ideology, and other mechanisms, all of which aim to institutionalise conflict inside and outside the workplace.

Output Restriction

Characteristics: distance, hidden, effort bargaining, collectivity, refusal

Restriction of output is described frequently in accounts of resistance (e.g. Collinson, 1994; Hodson, 1995; Roy, 1954). Workers undertake this practice through controlling their own pace of output and production. Usually collectively, they produce up to a sufficient level, but not excessively or surplus to the base rate. According to Hodson, restricting production requires that workers ‘bank the fires of their enthusiasm’ (1995: 91). He adds that this practice is also related to ‘working to rule’, which is discussed in the analysis that follows.

P

Playing Dumb

Characteristics: pretending ignorance, intentional

According to Hodson (1995), ‘playing dumb’ is a common tactic, involving claiming ignorance of correct procedures and rules. He indicates that ‘making careless or intentional mistakes can be equally effective under the right circumstances’ (90). In addition, Hodson argues that worker uncovered and direct refusal to work may cause dismissals and it is therefore unlikely to happen. Nevertheless, through playing dumb, the goal is to retain work.

Q

Quasi-collective

Taylor and Bain (2003: 1489) use the term ‘quasi-collective’ to refer to practices such as humour, teasing, satire and joking (all analysed in this catalogue). However, although one may try to link ‘quasi-collective’ to other passive, ‘decaf’ or ‘below the radar’ practices, it is worth mentioning that this form of resistance involves trade union action. Its practices have contributed (including satire and humour) to a wider collective union organizing campaign at the workplace level. Humour and satire were practiced through hundreds of union leaflets, photocopied by workers during night shifts, slipped under keyboards or placed in mail bins, and, as Taylor and Bain argue, in the morning managers would ‘go ballistic’ (2003:1504). The leaflets had a serious purpose, calling on management to solve service problems, unfair conditions, or raising demands over pay. In other instances, many leaflets contained confidential data on company profitability or turnover and information appropriated from managers’ desks, which is an example of pilfering for collective purposes. At the same time, the distribution of serious leaflets was combined with sarcastic satire in the form of poems. In the same way, although the company was profoundly anti-union and hostile to dissent, union membership cards were placed by workers under the same keyboards and in the same mail bins, as the workers consciously linked their satirical attack on management with an open appeal to join the union.

R

Refusal

‘Refusal’ is a term used by Fleming and Spicer (2007), and it consists of simply the blocking of power by saying ‘no’. According to the same writers, its aim is to block the effects of power by undermining the flow of domination rather than changing it, and by not following superiors’ commands and the rules of a corporate culture programme. They describe ‘refusal’ as a quite visible and risky strategy, since it activates the eye of authority. In addition, forms and strategies of ‘refusal’ initially comprise passive resistance through non-compliance, but they subsequently may involve a more active articulation of opposition.

Resignations

Labour turnover and resignations are practices institutionalised as important strands of resistance by many researchers (Mulholland, 2004). For Davidson (1994), staff turnover is usually an open practice of resistance, which is based on ‘external, structural forces’ (92). For instance, if they succeed in finding equal or better working conditions elsewhere, workers may leave their current job. However, this does not seem to be an option at times of high unemployment. In some cases, workers indicate their dissatisfaction simply by walking out unofficially, and sometimes even without prior warning. When unemployment is rife, such worker actions increase costs and have a negative effect on the volume and quality of production (Dubois, 1979: 54). However, turnover may increase because of other external sources, not related to workplace opposition.

In her analysis based on a study in a privatised British utility, Davidson explains how higher rates of staff turnover appeared to be the employees' way of resisting management's plans to introduce multi-functional teamwork. The study reveals that over 60 per cent of staff said that they would leave if they were able to find an equally paid job elsewhere (Davidson, 1994: 92). Nevertheless, the worker who leaves unexpectedly and deliberately, maybe because he/she has been offered a job in another organisation, for a time disrupts the work process to some extent (Dubois, 1979).

Also, based on a study at National Savings, a civil service department, Smith (2008) mentions that computerisation, spending restrictions, and a planned public-private partnership (PPP) caused 'voluntary' redundancies that reduced the overall workforce from 4,100 to 2,000 workers. Turnover in this instance was programmed, and 'volunteering' redundancy payments made this option more attractive to employees. Nevertheless, according to Smith, dissatisfaction and dissent with the direction of the organisation after PPP was one of the main reasons for the large number of volunteers.

Routine Workplace Resistance

Characteristics: part of everyday working life, 'below the radar', hidden

'Routine resistance' (Scott, 1985) takes place within the everyday worlds of workers (peasants in Scott's work). It can be spontaneous, unplanned, indirect, sporadic, and covert (Prasad and Prasad, 2000), or even open, tactical, and persistent (Prasad and Prasad, 1998, 2000). Predominantly, nevertheless, routine resistance has been characterised as a form that operates 'below the radar' of formal organisational life

(Mumby, 2005), mostly because it takes place on an everyday and hidden basis. The major characteristic of this form of opposition is concerned with workers' *mundane* (Scott, 1985: 273) actions and activities, which indicate an ongoing struggle against managerial control, domination, and/or unfair working conditions, which may be described as a kind of defensive routine (Argyris and Schon, 1978).

Additionally, routine resistance can be opportunistic and constituted by what Hodson (1995) characterises 'alternative procedures'. Following Hamper's thought (1991, cited in Hodson, 1995), Hodson argues that 'in some situations, resistance takes place through developing alternative procedures that may run counter to management rules but that are easier on the worker' (89). In other words, routine resistance involves alternative, opportunistic practices, which occur according to the situation.

S

Sabotage

Characteristics: intention, non-confrontational, hidden, damage, technology skills, planning, knowledge. See also 'intentional'

Sabotage may be viewed as a conscious and deliberate action or set/continuum of actions (Clegg, 1994), aiming to damage and/or destroy premises, work processes, or the product itself (Taylor and Walton, 1971; Tucker, 1993). Dubois (1979) distinguishes three types of sabotage. The first concerns destroying machinery, goods, and services, by causing direct damage to machines, computers, and premises, and

stealing goods. The second aims to stop production, but without actually destroying anything, such as an organised, peaceful strike. The third relates to reducing the amount of work through absenteeism, go-slow, reducing quality, working to rule, and working without enthusiasm. All three types aim to paralyse, disrupt, and/or slow down production.

Additionally, according to Tucker (1993), sabotage is not only concerned with abusing and wrecking work tools and other physical property: it can be as simple as ‘bad-mouthing’ customers. In today’s organisational environment, where competitive advantage is human-incentive, these practices of sabotage are likely to ruin a company’s service or product.

Sabotage can also be based on technology skills and knowledge. Davidson (1994) investigated in a privatised British utility how employees carried out conscious acts of sabotage individually by overloading their computer screens with information, up to the point that they could retain no information at all. According to Davidson (1994), employees found out that certain screens could be overloaded ‘by assiduously filling in all the details of a customer request, instead of using abbreviations or summarizing’ (91). At the same time, ‘they [intentionally] experimented with various other ways of making the system lose information’, and damaging in this way the overall flow of work.

In a similar vein, through a complete historical analysis of sabotage among the Luddites, Wobblies¹⁵, and GM Workers at Lordstown, Jermier (1988) rejects the

¹⁵ Wobblies’ is the popular name of members of the US-based industrial union, the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW).

notion that acts of sabotage can be emotional or irrational responses to workplace frustrations. On the contrary, he believes that these kinds of actions are carefully orchestrated, requiring knowledge and skill on the part of workers. Contradictorily to some of the Marxian and/or neo-Marxian writers such as Braverman (1974), who relate workplace resistance directly to class consciousness, Jermier (1988) asserts that, even where it is absent, workers still act consistently with class interest.

Furthermore, Prasad and Prasad (2001) see workers engaged with sabotaging activities as *cunning actors* who carefully assess their workplace's *local* situations and 'resist in ways that are typically either circumspect or clandestine' (108). These writers also mention that 'the kind of resistance that is enacted, or its absence, are both results of careful consideration and prudent planning on the part of the worker'. However, although planning and careful consideration might be present on some occasions, I believe that workers' knowledge, skills, and their familiarity with their workplace setting can enable them consciously to sabotage the work environment secretly and without planning.

Another case of employee sabotage concerns the ambiguous flooding of a basement storage room containing new video display terminals in a health maintenance organisation in the eastern United States in order to resist the computerisation of the workplace. Based on the findings of their ethnographic study, Prasad and Prasad (2000) explain how managers referred repeatedly to the flooding incident as a clever act of sabotage, which delayed the process of computerisation by several weeks.

Satire

Characteristics: irony, teasing, black humour. See also ‘cynicism’, ‘joking’, and ‘humour’

Satire (similarly to irony) is a practice that reveals a critical attitude towards management, which is not necessarily individualistic. For instance, Ackroyd and Thompson (1990: 110) mention:

Another apparently paradoxical aspect of this joking is that, although it features distinct elements of individualism, in that it is usually one individual picking on and trying to belittle another, these nonetheless embody a group sentiment. A robust sense of the individual self, which is defended and promoted by teasing, is not incompatible either with a cynical attitude towards management or significant degrees of agreement between workers about the appropriateness of cynicism.

In this sense, satire shares similar characteristics with humour, teasing, and joking, that may even generate a degree of solidarity between workers. In ‘workplaces where such satirical traditions are well entrenched, there is competition between satirists to develop their informal status by being effective critics of management’ (1999: 111).

Scammin’

According to Mulholland (2004), *scammin’* is a term used by workers to describe work avoidance, absenteeism, sickness, leaving work without permission, and smoking during working times. These practices, she argues, are the product of harsh managerial decisions. Harsh measures encourage a sense of grievance amongst workers, and make them support each other through empathy and sympathy.

Interestingly, *scammin'*, or 'phoning in sick', 'became a reasonable and collective response to stressful work' (719), rather than an individualistic and seldom practice.

Slammin'

Slammin' is according to Mulholland, a kind of sales sabotage in an Irish call centre, concerned with 'talk time' (time on the phone). In this instance, telesales workers were pretending to be involved in a sales encounter, and cheating during transactions. Workers had direct contact with customers, and could cause an immediate impact on profitability. Mulholland (2004: 714) explains that to cheat, opportunistically, individualistically, and collectively, workers 'pretend to be involved in a sales encounter, when they re-deploy "talk time" and the technology to fake sales'. This practice was a kind of collective 'distancing' strategy (e.g. Collinson, 1994), covered up by the co-workers who were responsible to record the telephone calls.

Slow-Down

Characteristics: intentional. See also 'distancing'

Slow-down is a practice similar to 'output restriction' and 'distancing' from the work process. However, it is more than that. Indicative is the finding of Newsome et al.: '[b]ut you can also have a very slow walk to the toilet and then you can sit on the toilet for a couple of minutes [laughs]' (2009: 156). In this instance, slow-down may intentionally be a practice of reducing productivity and efficiency through the reduction of speed, or simply an act of entertainment and/or boredom.

Smokin'

Smokin' is a description of 'idle time' (time between calls) in sites of protest through work avoidance and attrition. Mulholland (2004: 719) mentions that 'smoking is established custom and practice, providing an opportunity for an extra break, regardless of whether people smoke or not'. Meeting to smoke, in an Irish call centre, was important because it was encouraging group identity and a shared sense of grievance: workers were discussing the staff shortage, disappointments over pay, excessive monitoring, and other employment issues.

Soldiering

Characteristics: Taylorism, misbehaviour, deliberate, organised, working slowly

Taylor named 'soldiering' a form of misbehaviour on which he based his system of scientific management. Soldiering consists of a set of organised and deliberate actions by craft-skilled workers towards restricting output and limiting the flow of knowledge to managers. His rationale was that, when compensation comprises the same amount, workers work slowly and productivity is low. In a paper that was prepared originally for presentation to the American Society of Mechanical Engineers, he writes:

Underworking, that is deliberately working slow so as to avoid doing a full day's job, "soldiering," as it is called in this country, "hanging it out," as it is called in England, "ca canae," as it is called in Scotland, is almost universal in industrial establishments ... this constitutes the greatest evil with which the working-people of both England and America are now afflicted

(Taylor, 1911).

However, according to Ackroyd and Thompson (1999), although soldiering was a rational response by workers, it did not prove so rational and effective for raising wages or maintaining job security.

Strike

Characteristics: picketing, organised, uncovered, official, trade unions

There are many forms of strikes (see bottleneck strike). Planned and directed by trade unions, a strike is a collective and confrontational practice of resistance, aiming to stop production or service. Strikes occur for many reasons, varying from structural injustices, to a managerial lack of ethics as monitored by mystery shoppers (e.g. ‘smile strike’ by Fuller and Smith, 2001: 147). More detailed analysis about the nature of this form of resistance appears under ‘**unionism**’.

Svejkism

Characteristics: covert, cynicism, humorous disposition

Derived from the novel *The Good Soldier Svejk*, and inspired by the protagonist character who resists the discipline of the Austro-Hungarian Imperial Army through subtle forms of subversion, Fleming and Sewell (2002) produced the term ‘svejkism’. Fleming and Sewell recognise svejkism transgressions in the contemporary workplace ‘as possible [alternative] ways of undermining or dissolving organizational power relationships’ (2002: 859). Within complex and dynamically asymmetrical power relationships, where overt opposition is not likely to succeed, svejkism is the ability to disengage actively, being able to comply without conforming. The aim is not necessarily to bring about serious reform; rather, this practice of resistance depends

on domination's own presser vation. The fictional character Svejik always worked just enough so that he seemed to be accomplishing his duties and tasks, but at the same time he was fulfilling his own interests without drawing attention to his actions. Fleming and Sewell note also that Svejik's practices are similar to those of cynicism and humorous disposition, as discussed by Collinson (1994) and Ackroyd and Thompson (1999).

T

Technological Resistance

Characteristics: technology, computing, software, chat-rooms, sabotage, informal

This analysis concerns workers' resistance as made possible through the use of technology. Workers' interaction with technology enables them to exercise control over and resist labour processes.

One case of workers' resistance through the use of technology relates to intranet chat-room conversations among employees in a university. According to Huzell (2008), the chat-room initiative was part of management's attempt to facilitate the dissemination of information among employees. However, anonymity in the chat-room enabled large numbers of employees to proceed to critical discussions, previously held secretly behind closed doors. Huzell asserts that enhanced communication facilitated resistance to management's ideas and initiatives, injustices, and bad working conditions. Additionally, chat-room discussions were not the only practice of resistance, but also mobilised other forms of resistance, such as sabotage, restriction of output, absenteeism, cynicism, irony, and gossip.

Theft

Characteristics: hidden, consuming goods, sabotage, pilferage. See also ‘acquiring company products’

For some, theft is one of the most primitive forms of protest (Scott, 1990). This practice offers a balance between effort and reward. Hodson (1995) argues that, besides financial gain, theft and pilferage are a source of psychological empowerment for workers, as well as creating a sense of a shared community. It can also be a form of thrill and fun (Terris and Jones, 1982).

Ackroyd and Thompson (1999) make a distinction and highlight that ‘theft’ is a term that usually appears in what they call ‘deviance studies’. While in different theoretical frameworks such as LPT this practice may be described as acquiring or appropriation of goods, in deviance studies this activity is a kind of informal and ‘abnormal’ behaviour.

U

Unofficial Walkouts

Characteristics: uncovered. See also ‘turnover’

Unofficial walkouts can consist of individual or group resignations. Sometimes, it appears that workers cannot stand the labour process any more, and just walk out. For Tucker (1993), this kind of resignation ‘involves abandoning the conflict and fleeing the setting rather than actively seeking redress’ (35).

In her study, Davidson (1994: 90) explores various practices of resistance that emerge from the response of clerical workers to the restructuring of office work in a privatised British utility. Under the title 'Organized Resistance: Unofficial Forms', her analysis begins with examples of two unofficial walkouts, and then another two during the following month in two different district offices. She could categorise these unofficial walkouts under 'uncovered resistance'. In my opinion, an unofficial walkout is an open form of opposition, and if a key worker walks out during the peak season, this may cause extensive operational 'discomfort' to the organisation. Also, I assume that the reason that Davidson names this practice 'organized' is because two employees on two different occasions resigned at the same time. Therefore, it can be considered a collective resignation, involving more than one individual on each occasion, and as a result an organised unofficial practice. This also leads to the assumption that this practice was based on previous hidden resistance, such as a hidden discussion prior to resignation. One can even suggest that it was an extension of it: a plot where a number of workers decided to walk out at the same time without warning and therefore unofficial, but 'organized'.

Also, in another two instances, Tucker (1993) describes how a group of cutlery salesmen quit in response to what they called continuous harassment by their supervisors; and how a number of pizza restaurant workers resigned en masse when they found out that the store manager had been taking money from their pay cheques. These two occasions of opposition are unofficial, but still collective and uncovered.

Unionism

Characteristics: trade unions, labour unions, collective bargaining, legitimate representation, formal opposition, persistence, information. See also ‘collective bargaining’, ‘formal resistance’

Other than services such as free legal information and assistance in employment rights, unionism is for some a form of struggle on its own. Claiming to speak for the majority through collectivism, for some it is the last frontier of formal resistance to unfair working conditions and injustices, occurring from the economic system that serves employers’ rule. ‘Collective settings ... move beyond liberal pluralism and challenge the very structures of capitalism’ (Sturdy and Fineman, 2001: 150).

In some countries, mechanisms such as collective bargaining, strikes, and union representation to labour courts can be considered important formal resistance to employers’ power and control. However, not all workforces are equally well unionised and supported by a strong collective bargaining tradition. Additionally, in some instances, unionism not only facilitates, but also ‘inhibits certain forms of resistance’ (Davidson, 1994: 96) due to factors internal to trade unions and/or the labour market structure.

Although ‘many industrial relations theorists were reluctant to accept that significant changes have taken place in the basic mechanisms of representation and bargaining’ (Ackroyd and Thompson, 1999: 146), it is acceptable now that union recognition, membership density, and action in most EU countries have faced a rapid decline during the previous decades. As a result, some unions applied tactics to increase their membership numbers through attempts to organise immigrant workers. Also, strike activity fell to record levels (Taylor and Bain, 2003). However, some strike actions in

the European Union (e.g. United Kingdom, 2008) indicate that striking remains an important collective option. At the same time, a number of researchers highlight that those workers who act through unions, rather than through individual and sporadic acts of resistance, gain a better status alongside managerial strategies (Symon, 2005). Through union representation, their resistance is more 'reasonable', legitimate, and collective (Symon 2005: 1651).

In some countries, trade unions and their campaigns remain effective. For instance, with the slogan 'lifting one another above the poverty line', UNITE HERE is a very successful example of a trade union fighting for workers' justice across North America (see <http://www.unitehere.org/>, accessed 4 April 2008). UNITE is the former Union of Needle-traders, Industrial, and Textile Employees, and HERE is the Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees International Union. They merged in July 2004, forming UNITE HERE. Their members number more than 450,000 active, and more than 400,000 retired people. UNITE HERE leaders work very closely with employers to resolve issues in the workplace; however, on some occasions, their campaigns become very innovative and unusual. For instance, one of their efforts, namely 'Hotel Workers Rising', invites hotel guests to stand by the side of hotel employees and help them raise their working standards. With the slogan 'sleep with the right people', the organisation has produced an extensive catalogue of hotels that guests should boycott, as well as hotels patronised by the organisation for their good practice (see http://www.hotelworkersrising.org/HotelGuide/boycott_list.php, accessed 4 April 2008).

V

Voice

Characteristics: union authority, legitimate and organised representation

Fleming and Spicer (2007) use the term ‘voice’ to discuss legitimate and organised representation within the realm of formal power relations such as trade union authorities or alternative organisational structures. Among others, they explain that this is a way of raising one’s voice and participating on the level of authority where decisions are taken. However, the two writers point out that resistance through distance may also not be overt, identifiable, and organised. They explain how sporadic acts of sabotage, for instance, constitute a less obvious ‘voice’ that sends a message to authorities, and are unlikely to gain legitimacy in the organisation.

W

Walkouts

Characteristics: uncovered, individual or collective

A walkout is an unofficial and uncovered practice of opposition. It indicates the degree of workers’ dissatisfaction: they walk out unexpectedly because they just cannot work under existing conditions any more, or because they have found equal or better working conditions elsewhere. In some instances, a walkout is the point where a worker decides to leave a specific industry and choose another profession. A walkout is also based on external structural forces analysed under ‘**turnover**’. This practice of opposition can be individual, or even collective (Tucker, 1993).

Whistleblowing

Characteristics: exposing, uncovered, 'go-public'

Whistleblowing is widely accepted as a practice of worker resistance (e.g. Glazer and Glazer, 1989; Hodson, 1995; 1980; Rothschild and Miethe, 1994; Sturdy and Fineman, 2001), where a worker publicly exposes organisational faults. These actions, according to Perry (1998: 235), 'dramatize the more general issue of the relation between politics and truth, between power and knowledge, and the institutions which sustain them'. For instance, through associating subordinates with political behaviour, Rothschild and Miethe (1994) analyse whistleblowing as a method of bottom-up resistance through revealing organisational deception and abuse. The authors explore the way in which individual workers challenge managers, and conclude that 'it is in the process of opposing misconduct and fighting unjust reprisals that individual whistleblowers come to distance themselves from what they see as elites' corrupt practices and to assert their own dignity and integrity' (252). Whistleblowing is also evident as resistance in Sturdy and Fineman's (2001) account. For these writers, 'the apotheosis of individual, open resistance can be found with the whistleblower. Here, the persistence and passion in refusing to be dominated or "not heard" by the employer can be regarded as a moral/political act aimed at concrete change' (149).

Working to Rule

Characteristics: repetitiveness, structured procedures, defensive strategy

'Working to rule' can be very disruptive (Dubois, 1979; Mulholland, 2004). Following and applying precisely laid-down regulations contradicts managements' mechanisms and strategies that encourage workers to make rational and 'just the right' choices. In the same vein, Fleming and Spicer (2003) assert, 'when employees

disingenuously follow every single rule of the labour process or corporate philosophy, the work regime inevitably breaks' (172). Hodson (1995) argues that this practice is effective in slowing production, and at the same time it limits managerial ability to sanction those involved.

In a similar vein, Gottfried (1994: 119) mentions that 'refusal to make adjustments (insisting on "work-to-rule") constitutes a withdrawal of cooperation since workers suspend adaptation games (like Burawoy's making out) that maintain productivity levels'. In other words, working to rule often contradicts the right choices and expected adaptation, ending in non-compliance. It implies, however, that workers possess detailed knowledge of organizational policies and procedures, one would say, according to the code book. Remarkably, according to Gottfried (1994), this practice of resistance cannot be directly a case of legal punishment, and enables workers to remain on the job, continuing to slow down work intensity. He argues, nevertheless, that this is a defensive strategy, which fails to challenge the rules of the game.

Z

Zapatismo

This form of resistance is an open opposition to oppression. Its practices are not only applicable to national struggles, such as that of EZLN in Mexico, on the contrary, Zapatismo can be used for all aspects of life, through all legal means, towards bringing about change. One of these aspects is the workplace. In general terms, Zapatismo opposes sexism, patriarchy and violence, and supports the preservation of the environment, decentralization of power, and fairness (Marcos, 2004). Also,

Zapatismo is reminiscent at times of some aspects of Hardt and Negri's (2004) *Multitude*. An analysis of the concept of '**multitude**' appears above. However, the writings of Sub-commander Marcos (e.g. Ya Basta, 2004) are even more specific in terms of suggesting practices of resistance.

Moreover, Zapatismo allows anyone, anywhere and at any time to stand up and fight against the new order which, according to Marcos, aims to standardize the world, generate cheap wage labour and unfair workplaces. Although rooted in Mexico's past, this kind of resistance can serve the globe's future, since the situation in Mexico 'is simply a more advanced version of something happening all around the world' (Klein, 2001:19). However, Zapatismo 'is possible only from outside the system of the party-state' (Marcos, 1995:163, 1997:256, 1998:299). In other words, this struggle is not for power. On the contrary, Zapatismo can be performed at the workplace through practices of deviance, protest or organized strike, among others. This resistance has no specific model. It can be any practice towards gaining workplace justice, dignity and honesty. At the same time, Zapatistas invite everyone to get involved both inside and outside the workplace because 'Another World Is Possible'. Specifically, Marcos supports that opposition should be present, even when one chooses what soft-drink brand to drink, what TV programme to watch, whether to join a trade union or not, and whether to eat genetically processed food or organic produce. Indicative of this approach is the quotation, 'You can try this at home' (Klein, 2004:21).

3.3 How is Workplace Resistance Classified in the Literature?

The purpose of this part is maybe one of the most difficult tasks I encountered throughout my thesis, which is to examine how workplace resistance can be classified in literature. The difficulty derives from commentators' well-built contradictory views, rejections, dichotomies, and blurred lines between practices of resistance and what really counts as worker resistance. For instance, what is considered as resistance by Foucauldians (e.g. Knights and Willmott, 1990), for traditional labour process theorists is just misbehaviour¹⁶ (Ackroyd and Thompson, 1999), or, in a different setting, for Scott (1990), '[w]hen the great lord passes the wise peasant bows deeply and silently farts' as a practice of resistance. For Thompson (2009), however, farting is not resistance but subversive behaviour, and the term resistance has been ridiculously violated because commentators suddenly start seeing resistance in every fart, every humour, and every instance of absenteeism.

In another example, from a different theoretical perspective, there is a group of writers who challenge the idea that certain workers' activities are 'abnormal'. For example, deviance studies would describe a practice of acquiring goods or time as 'theft', while a labour process theorist would describe it as appropriation or acquisition (Ackroyd and Thompson, 1999).

Also, a number of labour process commentators became engaged in workplace resistance through dualistic classifications such as *direct* and *hidden*; *organised* and *unorganized*; *formal* and *informal*; and *individual* or *collective*. Let us focus for

¹⁶ Within the traditional labour process framework, 'misbehaviour' is not used as a new generic framework to *replace* worker resistance (Ackroyd and Thompson, 1999).

instance on the *hidden/direct* dualism. *Hidden* opposition is characterised by informal, secretive, subtle, less obvious, non-direct, and non-confrontational practices. Based on these distinguishing characteristics, a number of writers refer to these practices as ‘hidden transcripts’, ‘dumb’, ‘below the radar’, ‘decaf’, ‘offstage’, ‘hidden infra-politics’, or ‘passive resistance’ (e.g. Davidson, 1994; Scott, 1990; Tucker, 1993).

For instance, based on peasant workers’ calculative and conscious acts, Scott (1985) named practices with common characteristics such as non-obvious, less visible, and mundane nature ‘routine resistance’. Also, Prasad and Prasad (2001) refer to employees’ open expressions against computers and difficulties to adapt to technology as ‘passive’ or ‘dumb’ resistance, signifying that no harmful or disruptive outcome was intended by employees. However, they conclude that routine resistance holds significant consequences for organisational order, disrupts daily routines, and questions existing narratives of power and control. On the other hand, *direct* resistance includes more confrontational practices, which are more likely to end in formal resistance, as opposed to hidden, which is more likely to remain informal.

Similarly, a body of literature is linked to the formal//informal dualism. Formal resistance refers to organised and collective opposition, planned and directed by trade unions, with the use of information. Discussions of workplace resistance distinguish ‘formal’ opposition (Prasad and Prasad, 2000) from any other informal, hidden, non-confrontational, and routine resistance by emphasising its visible, uncovered, and organised role. Among others, practices of this open form include collective bargaining, persistent and lengthy struggles in employment courts, organised strikes, protest, and output restriction. A good example of formal resistance is the lengthy procedure that Collinson (1994) describes as ‘resistance through persistence’ and is

analysed later in this chapter. This is because the worker challenges managerial decision-making successfully, through the use of information and trade union support. On the other hand, informal resistance is a conceptual category that involves practices of resistance that lie outside the legal framework of trade unions and private or governmental policies. These practices may be hidden or routine opposition, but also confrontational as well as collective. Legal on the other hand refers strictly to resistance that is planned and directed by trade unions, within the framework of legislation. Trade unions, however, may sometimes suggest that members oppose informally, outside the legislation framework, such as in the case of ‘quasi-collective’ practices, which are discussed in this chapter’s catalogue. Legal resistance, nevertheless, concerns ‘formal’ and legislative struggle, varying from union officials’ struggle to apply the guidelines of collective agreements, to legal prosecution of employers in a workers’ rights court. This is an open form that includes persistent and lengthy struggles.

Then, another dualism is the one between *collective* and *individual* resistance. Collective resistance, or what Tucker (1993) names collective action, comprises the unified efforts of workers to make demands and/or oppose collectively at the workplace. This form of resistance can be both uncovered and hidden. It requires, nevertheless, cooperation among its members. In the instance of open, formal and organised efforts, collective resistance is planned and articulated through trade unions¹⁷ (Davidson, 1994). This type of union opposition is analysed in this chapter’s ‘glossary’ under different sub-headings such as Collective Bargaining and Unionism.

¹⁷ Although union recognition and membership density in most EU countries have faced a rapid decline during the previous decades, trade unions have represented the interests of workers particularly

Harvie (2006), for instance, talks about collective struggle within education. According to Harvie, various teacher and student unions, such as AUT and NATFHE, have been at the forefront of campaigns against the modernisation of universities' pay structures. Practices of resistance through unions include bargaining, negotiations, boycotts, and strikes. For example, following strike actions, 'AUT negotiated a "memorandum of understanding" that gives some protection to existing "old university employees"' (2006: 21). In another case, following employers' attempt to introduce performance-related pay at the University of Nottingham, AUT responded through a collective action strike and global boycott ('greylisting') of that university.

However, collective resistance is not only formal and organised by trade unions. Besides, as it has been mentioned in the very first part of this analysis, different categories and forms overlap and blurring is common in almost every category. For example, Mulholland (2004) explains how workers engage in informal collective practices and attitudes, in an Irish call centre. Her work criticises post-structural accounts for failing to recognise workplace structural issues such as employment relations and wages, and for their overemphasizing of managerial individualising strategies that rule out important accounts of collective practices of workers' resistance, despite their concern about the notion of autonomy. Moreover, although almost half of the call centre workers were unionised, and collective agreements over a number of labour issues were in place, issues such as pay and productivity

in tripartite struggles (employers, labour, state as mediator) for a very long period of time. It seems to be significant, however, that in some countries, unionism remains strong and influential. With institutional bargaining and employer prosecutions, the union is acting *on behalf of* the worker who is not required to take any action. Strikes however, require some form of worker participation, an active decision to withhold one's labour.

nevertheless appeared to be reasons for informal opposition. In other words, the workers' resistance emerged out of issues that remained management's prerogative. The practices of informal collective resistance included traditional patterns of opposition such as cheating, work avoidance, absence, and resignation. According to Mulholland (2004: 714), their resistance strategies may be described as 'Slammin', Scammin', Smokin', an' Leavin'' and a more in-depth analysis of these practices can be found in the 'A to Z glossary'.

In a similar vein, through a study of temporary workers, Tucker (1993: 37) explains another case of informal collective opposition. As he explains, although in his findings only 2 per cent of employees complained collectively to management, in one case where employees took collective action, it was successful. This case involved three saleswomen working in a clothing store department. They decided to resist after a number of new employees were hired at higher wages, as the saleswomen had been working in the store for a longer period of time yet were still being paid less. According to Trucker, on this occasion, the workers approached the assistant manager, who was their friend, and she in turn liaised with the general manager, explaining the situation and the workers' feelings, and then arranging a meeting with them. The three saleswomen clarified that if they did not receive a sufficient rise, they would collectively resign. The Manager decided to give them each a 20 per cent rise because, as the saleswomen said, "they could not afford to lose all three of us" (cited in Tucker, 1993: 38); this shows that the fact that they decided to complain collectively and in an organised way led to their success.

However, *collective* opposition is only the one side of this dualistic classification. On the other side is the so called *individual* opposition. Individualistic resistance or,

according to Hochschild (1983), resisters who 'go it alone' is a non-collective and usually less confrontational kind of opposition. For instance, in a study, Davidson (1994) explores the response of clerical workers to the restructuring of office work: protest forms such as sabotaging the computer system and taking job vouchers home and hiding them appeared to be individualistic practices. These individualistic acts of sabotage were not numerically large, but were 'rational choices' (1994: 91). However, individualistic resistance can also be open in nature. Within the framework of emotional labour, Hochschild (1983) discusses a flight attendant who, contradictory to the rule book, stopped smiling at her customers.

But number of commentators suggest a different approach to the worker struggle. For instance, Fleming and Spicer (2007) reject the dualistic classification of resistance between organised and unorganised, formal and informal, and individual or collective. They believe that these dualisms unfortunately miss some important elements of commonality that blur these categories. In other words, some practices of opposition may be present in more than one category. These traditional terms, and the absence of open conflict, have also been accused of being the reason resistance was missed in the past (Fleming, 2005; Fleming and Sewell, 2002).

Mumby (2005) also opposes the dualistic accounts that exist in the literature of workplace resistance. Critical organisational studies have evolved fundamentally during the last two decades around the dualistic approach of control and resistance. Mumby finds this dichotomy problematic, because it reinforces the opposition that privileges either managerial control or employee resistance to organisational mechanisms of control. He suggests a dialectical perspective, where resistance is understood as a socially constructed category, existing in everyday organisational life.

From a totally different point of view, however, orthodox labour process theorists do not necessarily observe dualism as problematic. Indicative is the quotation by Ackroyd and Thompson, who argue that the debate on dualism serves different kinds of interests:

Post-structuralists make it doubly hard for themselves and everybody else by raising a cry of 'dualism' whenever they engage with an opposing argument. As a stick with which to beat their opponents, it is we would suggest, a blunt instrument which adds nothing to the capacity of researchers to identify and explain actors and actions in the workplace. Of course, in practice, power or control and resistance interpenetrate rather than mechanistically produce one another. But separating them, as in labour process theory, has been a necessary heuristic device that enables us to 'see' the reciprocal actions. Without such separation one merely collapses into another ...

(1999: 158)

The position of Ackroyd and Thompson is just another indication of the sharp dichotomy between differing viewpoints. However, as it is mentioned at the beginning of this part, the dichotomy is not only about the practices, forms, and strategies of workplace resistance, but also about the term 'resistance' itself. In other words, what counts as resistance and what does not? Therefore, in the next section I attempt to answer the question 'what is resistance?'.

3.4 What is Resistance?

In aiming to explore the question ‘What is resistance?’, this chapter is open to a range of different perspectives. It attempts to analyse each form and practice in its own work context, and through precise empirical cases. It is mindful that resistance varies in nature across space and time (Knights and Vurdubakis, 1994). Using this method, it is implicit that each practice or strategy would not necessarily have the same applicability in diverse industries and organisations, where the dependence of managers on workers as well as workers’ capacity to resist are different. ‘Resistance is likely to be enacted in very different ways in different work contexts’ (Prasad and Prasad, 2000: 389). For instance, Collinson’s findings from an all-male factory workforce (1988) would not necessarily be applicable to a mixed-gender service-work context.

Workers’ opposition takes many forms that do not always share similar characteristics. It may be a particular action or inaction (Brower and Abolafia, 1995), or an intentional act of commission (defiance) or omission (Ashforth and Mael, 1998). Among others, researchers name such opposition as struggle, deceit, protest, autonomy, inertia, misbehaviour, transgression, conflict, and/or wrongdoing. They relate it to specific industries, movements, trade unions, or even to social and wider class struggles. In the literature, similarities as well as contradictions and differing viewpoints and debates exist in abundance.

Moving to the definitions, Jermier et al. (1994: 9) define the concept as ‘a reactive process where agents embedded in power relations actively oppose initiatives by other

agents'. For Edwards et al. (1995), resistance has two distinct oppositional functions. Firstly, it allows workers to voice dissatisfaction, and secondly it enables them to create space to exercise autonomy and therefore to increase their ability to accommodate and survive control and domination.

Ackroyd and Thompson (1999: 2) distinguish resistance and emphasise the definition of misbehaviour. For them, misbehaviour includes a set of non-compliance actions and behaviour, varying 'from failure to work very hard or conscientiously, through not working at all, deliberate output restriction, practical joking, pilferage, sabotage and sexual misconduct'. The lines nevertheless are blurred, and some of these practices may end in so-called worker resistance (Thompson, 2009), which must be both *intended* and *effective* to qualify as such. Which begs the question, *what does 'intended' mean, i.e. what is the intend?* And *what does 'effective' mean?* We can assume then that a worker strategy or practice is 'resistance [if] imposes limits on power' (Barbalet, 1985: 531).

From a different point of view, Collinson (1994: 49) argues that 'workplace resistance may seek to challenge, disrupt, or invert prevailing assumptions, discourse and power relations. It can take multiple and symbolic forms ... resistance constitutes a form of power exercised by subordinates in the workplace'. For Hodson (1995: 80), it is an 'individual or small group act intended to mitigate claims by management on workers or to advance workers' claims against management'. Worker resistance thus includes sabotage (Jermier, 1988; Taylor and Walton, 1971: 219), but it also includes less destructive acts that have been referred to more generally as the 'withdrawal of cooperation' or as part of an 'effort bargain' (Edwards and Scullion, 1982: 154; Wardell, 1990).

More simply, for Gottfried (1994: 118), resistance is ‘everyday acts rooted in, and directed against, power relations experienced on the shopfloor’. It involves actions taken on by subordinates in capitalist firms, such as slow-downs and work stoppages, aiming to challenge and disrupt the managerial objectives of capital accumulation.

At the same time, many believe that broad and catch-all generalisations of resistance are in danger of becoming clumsy and misleading (e.g. Ackroyd and Thompson, 1999; Fleming and Spicer, 2007). Additionally, Davidson states that resistance is a problematic term and a residual category. She mentions that workplace opposition has come to include ‘anything and everything that workers do which managers do not want them to do ... resort to such an essentially residual category of analysis can easily obscure a multiplicity of different actions and meanings that merit more precise analysis in their own right’ (1994: 94). Indeed, what is often labelled resistance is in fact merely reluctance (Piderit, 2000). Therefore, workers’ resistance cannot be defined as a single definition, nor summarised in a list of universal bullet points, fixed actions, and meanings. On the contrary, as Rodrigues and Collinson point out, ‘the disguised and subterranean nature of many of these resistance practices renders their examination a highly complex task’ (1995: 740).

Therefore, forms and practices should constantly be open to further clarification through fresh empirical findings. In addition, I strongly support Hodson’s consideration that ‘forms of worker resistance should not be seen as unalterable reflections of forms of the organization of management control at the workplace’ (1995: 81). The forms of resistance that follow in the catalogue (3.6) are empirical findings, which can provide the basis for consideration and future research. Therefore,

rather than trying to classify resistance or design a universal categorisation, it might be better to accept that in practice these forms are less clear-cut than the literature suggests (Jack, 2008). After all, most commentators agree that different categories and actions overlap (e.g. Ackroyd and Thompson, 1999; Fleming and Spicer, 2007; Hodson, 1995) and the lines between what counts as resistance are blurred (Thompson, 2009). Therefore, this analysis highlights the problems of such an attempt, and suggests a broader analysis of worker struggle, considering a wide spectrum of different workplaces, and a detail examination of the causes and consequences of worker opposition in specific work contexts.

Finally, for me, resistance comprises a wide range of covert, uncovered, formal, individual, and/or collective set of practices, which are disruptive to management, power, and control, and exist in different work contexts and labour processes. Workplace resistance concerns acts (including inaction), practices, strategies, and behaviours, which can be interpreted in several different ways. However, I will move a little further and suggest that resistance is not only a form of practice. It is not only the functional misbehaviour and practices aiming at the contestation of work processes. It also involves genuine processes and strategies, involving prior thought, which exist on a mental level where workers internally think, feel, plan, conspire, visualise, and balance their reactions and struggle against discursive managerial logics. It is characterized by consciousness and intention. We should not bypass the fact that workers' resistance may often not be a product of consciousness and lacking intent. For instance, Edwards, Collinson, and Della Rocca (1995) argue that there are occasions where employees do not consciously recognise their actions as resistance, although their practices do involve aspects of opposition. Therefore, if intended, even practices of misbehaviour can be resistance. Although some practices may not be that

effective, conscious practices of misbehaviour may well be workplace resistance because they are intended to resist. We should be in the position to recognise and interpret each act accordingly. Last but not least, this takes us back to the necessity of ‘deciding’ what is worker resistance, what generates resistance, and what restricts resistance through empirical study (Jack, 2008).

3.5 Sources and Generators of Resistance

This part of the review explores the body of theory that focuses on the reasons for workers’ resistance in organisations. Employee resistance occurs for a number of different reasons, according to different workplace conditions, and in a variety of settings. For instance, workers hold their employers liable for a range of structural aspects that cause frustration and dissatisfaction. As it is analysed in the following part, these aspects include excessive demands and labour process expectations, low staffing levels, power inequalities, unfair distribution of resources, and wage-related injustices. Other aspects may include workers’ attempts to retain their autonomy, identity, and control against managerial attempts to bring change (e.g. technological and/or reorganisation to standardise aspects of work), or even simply because employees do not believe in and sometimes oppose the organisation’s official culture, philosophy, and values. There is also a possibility that resistance occurs as relief of boredom, entertainment, and pleasure. The following analysis is not an exhaustive catalogue. However, an attempt is made to examine and discuss key reasons that appear in the literature of resistance. To start with, *change* in the following subsection appears as an important resistance generator in a vast spectrum of literature.

3.5.1 Technological Change

One of the most common reasons for workplace opposition, mostly in the management orthodox textbooks, is related to technological and organisational change. It has been argued that resistance to change has not significantly altered during the last three decades, and this is sometimes taken as fact by industry professionals and orthodox theory academics (Dent and Goldberg, 1999). Do people resist change per se? Is change alone enough to cause workers' opposition? Workers may resist unfair working conditions, low wages, and other injustices at the workplace that may relate to change directly, indirectly, or not at all.

For example, Symon (2005: 1653) mentions an occasion when technology itself (and, more specifically, computers) was portrayed as a 'plaything'. In this case, computer technology was positioned as a toy, which computer enthusiasts were using for play instead of work. This type of resistance was disassociating workers from collective and legitimate forms of resistance. However, Davidson (1994) discusses a more collective and organised opposition to technology. In her analysis, which is based on a study in a privatised British utility, workers resisted the introduction of a new BETA¹⁸ structure and the idea that change will enable profit to take priority over service. In another case, after an ethnographic study that lasted for nineteen months, Prasad and Prasad articulate how the corporate decision to computerise several administrative operations in an organisation in the eastern part of the United States, despite not involving any input from employees, generated certain intentional actions and

¹⁸ 'BETA Structure' was the introduction of a multi-functional team-working. 'Under the BETA Structure, clerks were to be attached to a particular 'Geographical Team', which would deal with all the clerical work arising in a particular geographical area, instead of being attached to a particular function. Thus, clerks would no longer simply undertake a narrow range of function-specific tasks' (Davidson, 1994:73).

mundane events, which ‘were discursively constituted [by supervisors and managers] as being resistance in nature’ (2001: 114). Although they are all concerned with resistance to technological change, they are indicative of how technology and change may be encountered and opposed by workers. In these cases, technology is encountered as a threat to labour’s existence, as a means to achieve profit, as a ‘plaything’, and/or as a tool. These reactions and realisations provide a rich array of conceptual usages.

In another case, an organisational change took the form of privatisation and commercialisation. Smith (2008: 7) discusses how, at National Savings, a civil service department, a series of management initiatives with the aim of changing the organisational culture through privatisation and commercialisation caused trade union opposition. Also, after the completion of the public–private partnership, and since trade union effort remained ineffective, a mass wave of ‘volunteering’ redundancies reduced the workforce from 4,100 to 2,000 workers.

3.5.2 Other Structural Issues

Common reasons for resistance relate to structural issues, such as wage injustices and unfair working conditions, which occur due to the constant attempt for profit maximisation. For instance, Edwards (1979) describes the workplace as a contested terrain because employers are driven by the need of profit maximization to seek the cheapening of the costs of production and control over the labour process. Among

others, structural issues include wages, productivity, employment conditions, and employment relationships (Mulholland, 2004).

Another reason for workplace opposition, as it appears in the literature, relates to the provision of temporary and short-term employment. According to Tucker (1993: 26), temporary employees are ‘individuals employed in organizations for specific, limited periods of time’. According to the same writer, the social environment, which is associated with temporary employment and in which workers are loosely tied to the organisation, makes workers in transient positions more likely to resist. He states that these workers are likely to complain quietly to their co-workers, or even resign from the company without even addressing their problems. Also, according to the same source, other main categories that constitute sources of resistance include the manner in which employees are disciplined (Tucker, 1993), in addition to disagreements regarding compensation and/or scheduling and/or the assignment of tasks (Tucker, 1993).

3.5.3 Dignity

Dignity at work is discussed in some research contributions (e.g. Bolton, 2007; Hodson, 2001; Newsome et al., 2009) as a fundamental element of workers’ social being and psychological well-being. In these accounts, systematic inequalities of power and unfair treatment lead to a lack of recognition and absence of respect. In turn, much of this leads to resistance, as a ‘compensation mechanism that substitutes for the absence of respectful treatment’ (Newsome et al., 2009: 147).

More to the point, Hodson (2001) regards dignity at work as the power relations from which derive purposeful, strategic actions of workers to maintain their dignity, and the management-influenced conditions that destroy or deny it. Within this antithetical dynamic, a range of behavioural strategies, goals, and attitudes lead to citizenship or resistance.

3.5.4 Disbelief in Shared Values

Furthermore, as has been mentioned above, employees may resist because they have no affinity with the official culture of the organisation. The issue of ‘engineered corporate cultures’ that reconciles workers to antagonistic employment relationships has been central to LPT accounts during the last three decades. Topics addressed in this category include how ‘engineered organisation cultures’ produce engineered selves (Kunda, 1992), designer selves (Casey, 1995), and/or enterprise selves (Du Gay, 1996), which are willing to participate and cooperate productively, even in ‘asymmetrical relations of power’ (Fleming and Spicer, 2003: 158). However, Fleming and Spicer believe that not all workers accept the ‘cultural colonization’ of their identities. More specifically, the writers mention that there are workers who ‘could “see through” the hollow promises of human resource departments and did not really “buy into” the hype of the corporate culture pundits’ (2003: 159). Corporate culture, organisational values, and a company’s philosophy often cause workers’ disbelief in their employment, and opposition through a number of different practices such as cynicism, distance from the labour process, absenteeism, and others.

3.5.5 ‘Simply Bored’ or Maybe in the Mood for Having Fun at Work?

This final sub-section is about a range of additional reasons for workers’ resistance that exist in literature, which relate to entertainment, pleasure (Hodson, 1995), relief of boredom, individualistic ethical principles (Modigliani and Rochat, 1995), and other personal reasons. For instance, Collinson (1994: 55) argues that there are those who resist ‘for a multiplicity of different, often individualistic reasons’. This is indicative of how important it is to examine each practice of resistance delicately, by its own merits, and within its own labour process before we conclude on what counts as resistance and what not.

In addition, through a guiding image that examines the organization as *playground*, Fleming and Spicer (2007) highlight that much research on worker resistance now focuses on ‘fun at corporation’. Practices include practical jokes, ironic wordplay and even farting in front of a team leader or a supervisor. At the same time, they argue that if we consider these practices as ‘play time’ or ‘pleasure’, then we may better describe as organizational misbehaviour (see Ackroyd and Thompson, 1999) rather than worker resistance. In addition, they underline that overemphasizing on the playfulness of corporate life is not necessarily fruitful because it ‘runs the danger of ignoring the fact that, despite our everyday challenges, systems of control and domination continue to whirr on’ (Fleming and Spicer, 2007). In other words, by overemphasizing on *play*, we gradually ‘lose sight’ of important political processes that make up organizations.

3.6 Reasons why Resistance may be Difficult

According to Thompson and Newsome (2004; also in Newsome et al., 2009), the so-called second wave of LPT, which has been underpinned to a large extent by the control-resistance model, can be more effectively named as the ‘control-resistance *and consent* model’. Particularly, they mention that

Burawoy’s (1979) hugely-influential theorization of consent expanded our vocabulary of worker behaviour and restored a certain kind of agency through a focus on active participation in workplace games and organizational choices. However, the consent concept was elaborated primarily to solve the puzzle, why don’t workers resist, or at least resist more than they do?

Following the same line of thought, a number of empirical accounts of resistance, conventional forms of worker resistance such as strikes, labour disputes, output restriction, forms of sabotage, and so on have been steadily disappearing from the workplace (Prasad and Prasad, 2001: 107). Reasons why workers’ opposition may be difficult vary. Among others, researchers find responsible the high levels of non-coercive, hegemonic organisation control; the decline of labour unions (Barker, 1993; Burris, 1986; Heydebrand, 1981); unobtrusive forms of electronic surveillance; management of emotional labour; ideological incorporation into organisational cultures and manifestations of self-management (Fleming and Sewell, 2002; Knights and McCabe, 2004; Mulholland, 2004) as the main reasons for limiting workers’ capacity to resist.

In addition, other methods include the managerial coercive individualisation strategies (Frenkel et al., 1998; Kinnie et al., 2000) and the erosion of long-term employment and its replacement by short-term, temporary employment (Tucker, 1993). These reasons have fragmented workers' resistance, either because workers feel threatened, which means that it is too risky for them to resist, or even because workers cannot be bothered to resist intentionally, willingly, and consciously.

For example, Fleming and Sewell (2002) discuss the contemporary Western ideological regime of commitment and unitary interests, where 'employees and employers are part of a family', and teamwork and high commitment cultures predominate. They recognise that, in this contemporary work framework of ideological incorporation, not only 'class' politics and conflicting interests seem to be irrational, but 'it is easy to see why some analysts may prematurely herald the end of resistance' (861).

In a similar vein, management techniques such as Total Quality Management (TQM), 'excellence', and Business Process Reengineering (BPR) can be viewed as strategies that eliminate resistance. This is achieved either through managerial decisions or systems that intensify work, and are supported by 'panoptic' (Sewell and Wilkinson, 1992, cited in Ezzamel et al., 2001: 1059) means of managerial control and surveillance. According to Knights and McCabe (2000), these techniques are viewed by many commentators as the passage from 'bureaucratic' approaches that used to stimulate resistance and ways of escaping managerial control, to organisation and creation of a staff's self-disciplining. These techniques and mechanisms enable a more 'complete' and 'totalizing' mode of managerial control (Sewell and Wilkinson, 1992: 279) through which management gains access to workers' subjectivity aspects

that previous regimes, such as bureaucracy, were unable to reach (Knights, et al, 1994).

3.6.1 Labour Markets and Immigrant Workers

Another factor that makes resistance action difficult is the structure and operation of labour markets. The labour market structure sets the agenda of the control relationship, determining wage rates, employment relations, and providing to managers ‘the power to threaten loss of employment’ (Bray and Littler, 1988: 569). In other words, the conditions of labour markets (‘external’) shape managerial control (‘internal’), which in turn impacts upon workers’ capacity to resist. This is consistent with Friedman’s (1977, cited in Ezzamel et al., 2001: 1073) interrogation with regard to the changing relationship between markets for labour and goods, and managerial strategies of control, ranging from ‘direct control’ to ‘responsible autonomy’ (e.g. empowerment).

For instance, workers from cheap labour markets may be a threat to local workers, making their resistance difficult. Towards this end, Hodson mentions that ‘workers are increasingly laboring under the implicit or explicit threat of losing their jobs to lower paid labor overseas’ (1995: 100). More to the point, Newsome et al. (2009: 157) describe a parallel case from the work context of three different fruit and vegetable processing factories, in which the growing number of migrant workers (across each of the case companies) ‘appeared to create tensions and divisions among

relationships between co-workers'. Indicative of how threatening this might be to workplace resistance is the following comment of a Polish worker:

I've noticed that we just really want to work because that work is very important for us, especially because you've got five times more money than in Poland for that kind of job, so we really work hard and you want to work but it is different [laughs] lazy you know. I have got nothing against the British people but we work even more hard than them ... it's not fair.

(2009:157)

3.6.2 Monitoring

Furthermore, monitoring can be a strong factor that makes resistance less viable. This method varies from using electronic surveillance circuit systems, guest questionnaires, or mystery shoppers (such as undercover diners at restaurants) to recording every stroke made by individual clerks on their computer keyboard. Post-structural accounts advanced the term 'panopticon' for performance-monitoring technology (Symon, 2005). For Sturdy and Fineman (2001: 147), monitoring is the extension of the arm of surreptitious managerial control, and some mechanisms such as managerial-planted 'mystery guests' have achieved something of the status of a specialism within market research.

Finally, as I mentioned in the introduction to this section, various accounts address quietness in resistance and the disappearance of conventional forms of opposition. An

attempt has been made to convey and discuss the reasons that make workplace resistance a less attractive option for workers, and to explore the notion of ‘quietness’. However, as a final point, it seems to be important to mention that the reasons analysed above may not necessarily be correct in every case. The introduction of inappropriate methodological approaches that scare away participants with traditional business school research methods such as semi-structured interviews, rather than the use of, for example, ethnographic studies and participating observations, may also be responsible for the disappearance of resistance from the workplace. In other words, although resistance exists in some workplaces, a number of ill-advised methodological approaches may not be successful in revealing it.

3.7 Concluding Remarks

Based on different theoretical backgrounds, approaches, and labour process contexts, this chapter demonstrates the importance of workers’ resistance through an extensive catalogue of forms of opposition. The chapter explored the fundamental question of ‘what is resistance?’, and examines how it emerges, how it is restricted, and when it can be considered effective or ineffective, through real empirical cases. The overall sense that occurs from this analysis is that worker resistance exists; it takes many forms, and continues to play an important role in contemporary workplaces.

To continue, this is based on individual empirical cases that reveal unique information about workers’ subversion in specific workplaces, and can be the basis for future research. We should stress, nevertheless, the important of avoiding universal

applications of resistance practices. The more one moves away from the locality of each industry, organisation, and labour process, the more one tends to fall into dangerous generalisations. In a similar vein, Thompson and Findlay (1999) write, ‘too often [are] the specificities of organizations and sectors underplayed or ignored’ (177). Therefore, each case should be treated carefully on its own merits.

Not dissimilar is the fact that worker opposition adapts according to its environment. To achieve their objectives, management teams will always be experimenting and applying new technologies for monitoring workers, processing information, and disciplining employees. However, we can argue that new control will also cause new versions of worker resistance because opposition constantly evolves according to the conditions that exist in different workplaces. As Harvie (2006) asserts, capital develops in response to struggle and in turn, new forms of struggle develop in response to capital. So, control initiatives are indicative of the presence of worker resistance.

Also, there are a number of ongoing debates concerning the *effectiveness* of particular practices and theories of workplace resistance, mostly in accounts of LPT. Through careful accounts that combine theory and empirical findings, each side of the debate aims to support the effectiveness of its theories and prove the ineffectiveness of contradictory accounts. However, based on the catalogue’s different cases, resistance practices are often blurred and do not enable us to reach fixed conclusions. Some practices often cause huge disruption between employees and employers. Other cases end up in labour courts or result in instant layoffs/resignations. Some other practices of opposition lead to mutual agreement between employers and workers. On other occasions, opposition practices may even preserve domination. So, as the bottom line,

we can argue that ‘resistance is not a singular phenomenon, but manifests in a number of different modes’ (Spicer and Bohm, 2005: 2). Resistance cannot be fixed, right or wrong.

Finally, this review prepared the theoretical conceptualization of my ethnographic study and generated questions that chart my research exploration. For instance, what issues generate resistance in the luxury hotel? How are power, control and resistance undertaken in the particular workplace? Can emotional labourers resist? What are the consequences for hotel employees? What are those lines that separate an act of resistance from an act of boredom, fun, or misbehaviour? In the next chapter, I discuss the methods chosen for my ethnographic study and how they are linked to these research questions.

Chapter Four

Methodology

4.1 Introduction

This chapter sets out to describe and justify the methods chosen for an ethnographic study in Cyprus, in which I participated and observed the work process of a hotel organisation for four months, and then conducted respondent validation for another eight months. I discuss how the ethnographic course was planned, applied, adjusted, and re-adjusted within the distinct setting of a leading luxury beach hotel. My rationale and decision-making on issues such as access, ethics, obstacles, the methods I used for gathering first-hand knowledge, my data interpretation, and other research principles are all discussed and justified in the analysis that follows.

Beginning with the study's research questions, I expand on the philosophical and theoretical framework underpinning the research, including a justification of my epistemological position. Then, the analysis continues with my research strategy, starting from a discussion on ethnography and an analysis of my participant observation study. After that, I discuss the methods used for the collection and analysis of data, namely, observation, interviews and discussions, note taking, and the collection of documents. Next, the analysis continues with data collection, including some practical and procedural issues such as consent, the stages of the research from covert to overt, and the length of stay in the organisation. Towards the end, the

analysis engages with research ethics, an analysis of limitations and obstacles, and finally I discuss my interpretation of the data.

4.2 Research Questions

The objectives and research questions of a study are usually the cornerstone and the guide to a researcher's effort. This part presents and discusses the research questions of my study, and how they charted my research exploration in terms of serving as a map in the field. This study asks questions like:

What issues generate worker resistance in the hotel? How is power exercised and experienced in the luxury hotel as workplace? How do managers control, and workers resist in a hotel workplace? What issues limit worker autonomy? What are the consequences of worker opposition for employees and employers, respectively? What resources are available to those who resist in a hotel workplace? Can emotional labourers resist?

These questions lie at the heart of this study and guide the entire research process in the field.

But what counts as resistance? What are those lines that separate an act of worker resistance from an act of boredom or misbehaviour? To what extent can a researcher apprehend worker 'resistance'? Or, to put it differently, why would a worker want to reveal/confess her/his resistance or misbehaviour practices to a researcher? If

‘[i]nformants routinely lie to their anthropologists’ (Stoller and Olkes, 1987: 9), then, possibly, they would lie about sensitive issues such as *last night’s hidden sabotage*. All these questions raise various implications, which are analysed in the methodological text that follows. At the same time, they highlight the sensitivity of the notion of ‘workplace resistance’.

Worker resistance and misbehaviour is a sensitive and complicated matter, not only when it comes to research, but even simply to talk about. Arguably, to answer questions that involve this kind of social experience and to give meaning to this kind of workers’ actions, it seems that research should be undertaken from within *the natural world*, within the workplace/field. ‘... [T]he observational field of the social scientist - social reality - has a specific meaning and relevance structure for the human beings living, acting, and thinking within it’ (Schutz, 1962b: 59, cited in Heritage, 1984: 46). At the same time, my presence in the field, the research questions, the appropriateness of the collected information, and my interpretation are all linked to my own past experience in the hotel industry (see chapter 1). The following viewpoint of Denzin and Lincoln can summarize my own understanding of qualitative research:

all research is interpretive; it is guided by the researcher’s set of beliefs and feelings about the world and how it should be understood and studied ... Each interpretive paradigm makes particular demands on the researcher, including the questions the researcher asks and the interpretations he or she brings to them.

(2005: 22)

In other words, my beliefs and work history influence the ethics and politics of my study (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005) and guide my research actions (Guba, 1990). All these issues combine beliefs about epistemology and methodology, and are analysed in the following section.

4.3 Research Philosophy

While ‘one engages in the “practical” activities of generating and interpreting data to answer questions about the meaning of what others are doing or saying and then transforming that understanding into public knowledge, one inevitably takes up “theoretical” concerns about [the way we think of the world,] what constitutes knowledge and how it is to be justified, about the nature and aim of social theorizing and so on’ (Schwandt, 2003: 295). Similarly, this study starts with the epistemology, which is what I think can be known about the world, and then the methodology and research techniques, which is how I can investigate the world. All these are linked to and influence the way I construct and undertake my research questions; my political and policy stances (Fleetwood, 2005: 197); and the final outcome of the study. This analysis, moreover, aims to communicate the epistemological grounds of my study, and justify my methodological decisions.

But, is there *one best* epistemological way?, or can the *one best* way, if there is such a thing, ‘silence too many voices’ (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005: 12) or blind us to alternatives due to the commitment to ‘view the world in a particular way’ (Burrell and Morgan, 1979: 24). To me, it is most appropriate to hold that there ‘are competing

philosophical assumptions that lead us to engage with management and organizations in particular ways' (Johnson and Duberley, 2000: 4), rather than *one universal best* way. I do examine and recognize the importance of differing positions, however, as Bernstein notes:

Labels in philosophy and cultural discourses have the character that Derrida ascribes to Plato's Pharmakon: they can poison and kill, and they can remedy and cure. We need them to help identify a style ... a set of common concerns and emphases ... [b]ut we must also be wary of the ways in which they can blind us or can reify what is fluid and changing.

(cited in Schwandt, 2003: 292)

Therefore, I subscribe to what I believe to be the most *appropriate* way to examine the chosen 'organismic'¹⁹ (e.g. Burrell and Morgan, 1979) workplace and workers' practices of resistance: *appropriate* in terms of morality, suitability to uncover, and politically explicit (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005).

My epistemological position is constructivist, interpretive. The constructivist line is an epistemology through which 'the knower and known interact and shape one another' (2005: 22). It creates findings through a transactional and subjectivist interpretation, which is based on the presence of the researcher in the lived experiences of participants. It provides 'the philosophical background for deciding what kinds of knowledge are legitimate and adequate' (Gray, 2004: 16) and 'what are to count as facts' (Hughes, 1990: 5), through a naturalistic set of methodological

¹⁹ In contradiction to the 'machine' metaphors that see organisations as sealed boxes, with the term 'organismic', I mean that hotel workplaces are open to the external environment in many ways.

procedures. Differently, it questions what kind of qualitative research is legitimate and how we can justify the knowledge that we produce. (An in-depth analysis of *legitimate* research follows in the section ‘interpretation of findings’.) All these issues are analysed in depth in my analysis of the study’s ‘research strategy’ (4.4) in the following part.

To continue, with the word naturalistic I mean that the methods deployed do not limit, but on the contrary reinforce, my involvement in the natural world I study. Rather than observing them from outside and interrogating them through intermediates, to investigate matters of workplace resistance, you need to become engaged with the participants as well as the workplace that you study. These issues nevertheless raise questions about the role as author. My interpretation is not based on positivistic objectivity, probabilities, and universal generalisations, but on credibility confirmability and trustworthiness. All these issues, within the constructivist epistemology, are linked to innate beliefs, perspectives, and principles. These perceptions and beliefs seek meanings from the interaction of the researcher with the ‘world’. ‘Truth and meaning do not exist in some external world’ (Gray, 2004: 17), and meaning is constructed rather than discovered. In a similar vein, Chapman (2001: 24) asserts that ‘truth is socially created, socially relative, and multi faceted’.

Moreover, methodology can be defined as ‘a theory and analysis of how research should proceed’ (Harding, 2001: 71, cited in Carter and Little, 2007: 1317). Methodologies do not comprise the method themselves; they justify methods and have an epistemic content (Carter and Little, 2007). At the same time, a researcher’s epistemology crosses the entire research design. In this thesis, for instance, constructivism influences my research questions and the information yielded. At a

later stage, however, my epistemological stand is put into motion by the strategies of research inquiry, which is the main theme of analysis in the following part (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005).

4.4 Research Strategy: Ethnography

This section of the analysis discusses the research strategy of the study, namely ethnography. The emergence of ethnography within the anthropological context, or, as some researchers prefer, the discovery of ethnography as a method by social anthropology, began as the study of the non-modern in marginalised societies without organisations by close immersion and observation (Behar, 2003; Gellner and Hirsch, 2001). During the same period, on the other side of the Atlantic, the work of the Chicago School in sociology involved using observational techniques to explore groups on the margins of urban society in the United States (Brewer, 2000). The researchers called it ‘participant observation’. Both ethnographic developments may be traced back to 1920. Since then, ethnography has moved into other social sciences, gradually emerging as a way of telling stories about native populations and fragmented population groups in their own settings, and eventually proliferating as a method of field research, an epistemology, and a form of writing (Clifford and Marcus, 1986; Geertz, 1988).

Eight decades later, and by considering earlier and recent ethnographic works, my opinion is that ethnography has long since been explored, yet at the same time it remains unexplored. Ethnography remains a kind of storytelling; however, it is not

just that. For me, ethnography is a particular way of conducting qualitative research that is separated into two levels: the practicalities of the method in the field, and its qualitative objectives, which are related to participants' social meanings. It ties together the 'lived experience of space and time [which] is structured as such through particular concepts, ideas, statements, and the way these are realized in particular social relations' (Gellner and Hirsch, 2001: 6).

In the same vein, a definition that is closer to how I understand and make use of ethnography in this study is best summarised by Brewer (2000: 148):

Ethnography is the study of people in naturally occurring settings or 'fields' by means of methods which capture their social meanings and ordinary activities, involving the researcher participant directly in the setting, if not also the activities, in order to collect data in a systematic manner but without meaning being imposed on them externally.

This definition has been selected because it points out that ethnography is both a method and a methodology, not just a data collection method.

Furthermore, as far as the practical level of insight with regard to the organisation is concerned, I believe that each researcher can design his/her own ethnographic study by choosing the practical and technical elements that appear in ethnographic literature, which will assist towards producing an appropriate research design. For instance, my personal understanding of ethnography at this level, and a summary of the main lines that guided my research course, point towards a minimum set of characteristics concerning the nature of ethnography. These characteristics comprise:

conducting empirical work over a period of time in the researcher's natural context; becoming an insider, not a strange researcher from outside; living within the context of the daily lives of those under study and empathising with them; being a member of the team during the work process, not just asking questions, filling in questionnaires, or observing; and drawing upon different methods of collecting data, if this is necessary, to share participants' understanding as deeply as possible. Towards this end, Bishop (2005: 111) suggests that "insiders" might well undertake research in a more sensitive and responsive manner than "outsiders". In a similar vein, Merriam et al. (2001) argues that it enables the researcher to have easy access to a wider range of data, to ask more meaningful questions, read non-verbal cues, and develop 'a more truthful, authentic understanding of those under study'. These benefits I found important for research that makes necessary the identification of practices that are somewhat related to worker concerns, sensitivities, work insecurities, and even hidden or deviant behaviour, namely resistance or misbehaviour.

However, being an insider also involves appreciating the opportunity that accompanies the method of giving the researcher time to remember and return to find out what (s)he has failed to spot throughout his/her last shift, or forgotten to ask at his/her last discussion; it includes the task of simply returning again and again to the same people concerning the same issue until the researcher has satisfied the data collection criteria set; and it involves recognising the fact that '[the] boundaries of relevance are never clear cut' (Chapman, 2001: 27). Last but not least, ethnography is a type of research whose design evolves continuously (Oommen, 1997).

Finally, throughout the ethnographic study, I had to move backwards and forwards, refreshing what I already knew in terms of theory, recalling where this knowledge

came from, and pondering what other details I could examine in order to re-build on my findings and the existent body of theory. For instance, on 7 August 2007, I had to retreat from the field for a week to compare my findings with theory and rethink my participant strategy. I also made time to consult the literature of others who had been involved in this type of research to try to resolve practical and technical dilemmas similar to mine. However, all these became possible and were supported by the study's strategy of research inquiry. 'Strategies of inquiry put paradigms of interpretation into motion ... [and] ... connect the researcher to specific methods of collecting and analyzing empirical materials' (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005: 25). The study's strategy of research inquiry is analysed in a following section (4.6), but first I introduce the research setting.

4.5 Choice of Hotel

My choice for this specific hotel category, namely 'luxury hotels', was their unique labour process and nature of operation. These kinds of establishments are quite unique workplaces to study because of their labour process's emotional and aesthetic characteristics and expectations. At the same time, some elements of their function of labour control make these workplaces quite attractive for a labour process researcher to study. My initial intention nevertheless was to undertake my participant observation in a unionised hotel. At the beginning, two hotels were approached and agreed to my employment, but then I ruled them out due to the fact that they were not unionised. The third hotel was not unionised either, but by this point I realised that, unexpectedly, only one luxury hotel was unionised within the entire tourist area. At

the same time, the peak tourist season was approaching and time was exercising pressure on my research schedule. Therefore, I came to a decision to enter the third hotel, and although it was not unionised, it proved to be fruitful in terms of the collection of findings (see chapter 5).

4.5.1 Length of Stay in the Organisation

Gellner and Hirsch (2001) raise the question, ‘is only sustained participant observation in an organization for at least one year necessary before research can be called ethnography?’ (p. 6). They assert that this question is central to the current debate between anthropology and fields such as cultural studies that advocate ethnographic research. However, my research not only supports the position that each case is unique and different, but also reveals that some qualitative characteristics of the labour process should be taken into consideration before deciding the length that may be appropriate for an ethnographic study. For instance, one must consider issues such as the seasonality of tourism and minimal guest occupancy during winter; the current economic and productivity crisis of the sector even during summer months; and the long timetables and intense labour process during the peak season due to short-staffed rosters. It is important to indicate how asymmetrical a fixed length might be, and provide a sort of indication about the time required for being inside the organisation. These characteristics enable no possibility of full-year employment, and indicate at the same time that *ethnographic time* is and should be related to what is possible, as well as to the general social and power relations of each case.

The sense of being inside the organisation is an important characteristic of good ethnography (Bate, 1997; Geertz, 1988; Gellner and Hirsch, 2001), and it has been encountered as such. Based on this good practice, the plan was to be inside the organisation from the beginning of the peak season, when the occupancy rate was rising steadily from around 30 per cent, and to cover the total number of fully booked months. Therefore, I decided that a reasonable length of time studying the organisation from inside might be about four months. In turn, the management was informed that the length of employment would be four months, and this was agreed. Note, however, that the management was informed about four months of employment, not research. The research and its focus were explained to the management in painstaking detail, exactly three months after I had begun my participant observation.

4.6 Participant Observation

This part examines this study's strategy of inquiry, which is participant observation. "Being there", spending months carrying out participant observation, is premised on the notion that researchers can get "more" this way than by relying on people's accounts of what they do' (MacDonald, 2001: 86). Being part of the hotel's workforce made visible to me certain events, practices of opposition, conflicts, and misunderstandings that may not have been so easy to uncover were I not 'being there'. I strongly believe that, for difficult issues such as workplace resistance and opposition, which is a topic not easily discussed, insightful data can be collected out of context and only as such they should be committed to paper. This argument, and

my overall participant observation experience, are analysed in the following sub-sections.

4.6.1 Balance of ‘Self’

During my participant observation months, every day in the organisation was a real performance: a performance of balance. You have to pretend on the one hand, and be yourself on the other, always according to the situation. You have to be yourself in order to enhance the qualities and originality that are necessary to make the people around you trust you and speak to you. You have to pretend in order to fit in with every occasion and in every department, and you must be able to approach every kind of character. O'Reilly's (2005: 69) similar thoughts with regard to 'pretending' underline, 'you have to kind of pretend you know nothing, but also enough to fit in'. Your own ideas are not as important at the present moment, even if you are right about what is really happening. What is important is not to scare away 'the phenomenon of interest' (Van Maanen, 2001: 240). Pretending, nevertheless, generates issues of subjectivity and objectivity.

The issues of subjectivity and objectivity are often central in methodological discussions. For instance, in the many texts that are collected in the *Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research* (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005), which is considered by many researchers as the bible of qualitative research, every author refers (some of them extensively) to issues of subjectivity and objectivity. In a similar way, the current analysis engages with these issues through a critical consideration of the necessity for

‘being there’. For instance, in attempting to examine how worker resistance is generated, undertaken by workers, and restricted by labour control, it seems that there is no space for ‘objective observations, [but] only observations situated in the worlds of – and between – the observer and the observed’ (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005: 21). Within this participatory framework, a researcher listens and participates in a process that privileges sharing, personal knowledge, and the specialised knowledge of oppressed groups (Bishop, 2005). At the same time, within this framework, ‘each telling by a speaker is a new telling, a new event in the history of the event being recounted’ (Denzin, 1997: 43) and the researcher is maybe the ‘source of data in and of themselves’ (Alvesson and Deetz, 2000: 10).

With this, I am not saying that I did not try to control my subjectivity where necessary and possible (see the next analysis on balance); however, I would suggest that, in my case, positivistic objectivity is rather problematic. In other words, how can intentional or hidden opposition be addressed ‘unless those who perpetuate it become aware, through a participatory consciousness, of the lived reality of those who’ undertake it? (Bishop, 2005: 130), not to mention that, for some, a researcher trying to control his/her subjectivity is as problematic as objectivity due to unnecessary distance in the research relationship where the knower is separable from the known (e.g. Bishop, 2005). But another difficult issue, was my effort to maintain a balance between participation and observation, as this is analysed in the next subsection.

4.6.2 Balance between Participation and Observation

During work, you have to perform so as to maintain a balance between participation and observation. I must admit that on some occasions I did catch myself purely participating rather than observing, mostly during times of intense work pressure. My conscience, however, was always reminding me that I could not just participate or just observe. On this, O'Neil (2000) mentions, 'the demands of the moment can prevent the researcher from casually surveying the surroundings' (p. 228). The balance between the two is so important that many researchers may have to retreat from the field for a while in order to rethink their participant strategy or identify a clear balance between observation and participation (see O'Neil, 2000). It is difficult but not unachievable to maintain balance. The level of difficulty, however, differs from time to time. For instance, for me, it was more difficult to maintain this balance towards the end of my participant observation study. I believe this is because, towards the end, *you think* that you have listened and observed everything. Or maybe it is a matter of *routinisation* and conventionality. Nevertheless, I have tried hard to keep my eyes and ears open till the last minute in the hotel. I was 'in there' for research and this how I behaved till the very last instances.

Moreover, my own participant observation did not simply require the ethnographer to participate in and observe the daily struggle and routine of co-workers as they went about their daily employment. Nor was the research confined to the organisation's physical borders and its culture. The emphasis of my research also went beyond the particular job framework. I was interested to see and listen to accounts of the lives of those with whom I was having day-to-day work contact outside the hotel. All the

material encountered proved relevant, and only by collecting an ‘adequate’ volume of data could I proceed to a holistic analysis. Since the meaning of ‘adequate’ in my mind was just an abstraction, I was trying to satisfy my research criteria by collecting and trying to interpret a broad range of information. Besides, the broader ethnographic framework does not restrict a participant observation course from incorporating in a flexible manner a number of additional research tools, such as interviews and casual conversations. Macdonald (2001) states, ‘the aim is to bring together whichever methods seem appropriate to try to understand the social life and cultural assumptions of those being studied’ (p. 78).

4.6.3 Practicalities and the Sensitivity of *Resistance*

However, these issues relate to other, practical issues of the research. For instance, although the information that could be lost if I were employing other traditional research techniques instead of participant observation is hard to credit, I believe that I avoided practical problems that usually occur when traditional research procedures such as face-to-face interviews and questionnaires are used as sole research techniques. As I explain in the following part, I undertook ‘flash interviews’²⁰ while on the job and casual discussions at taverns, but mostly as supportive methods to the overall participant observation technique. These practices usually include difficulties with time for interviews, repetitiveness, access, low return, or neglected response rates of questionnaires that end up in the recycling box, low concentration during

²⁰ By the expression ‘flash interviews’, I mean speedy discussions on the job, most of the time in the middle of intense work pressure (without, however, disturbing the work process). These short discussions provided quite different information compared with other face-to-face interviews in pubs, because they were supplemented by the researcher’s ability to record non-verbal cues during intense work.

interviews, and low quality of responses. Additionally, the ethnographic nature of the study proved to be a research technique that avoided the growing resistance within organisations to traditional research procedures of business academia, such as personal semi-structured interviews (Chapman, 2001). Considering my findings, which will be presented and analysed in the next chapter, I believe that participant observation also added to my research time, although it covered a continuous period of four months.

Moreover, as I mentioned above, the information that could be lost were I employing other traditional research techniques instead of participant observation is hard to credit. I will make use of Erving Goffman's (1967) distinction of people's behaviour between their social life 'frontstage' and 'backstage' in order to justify my decision for participant observation, and I will show how this distinction is linked to the hotel's labour process. His 'impression management', consisting of 'frontstage', where every word must be weighted in consequence and managed for an exoteric audience, and 'backstage', with more casual and comfortable relations, reminds one of the difference in behaviour between the 'back of house' and 'front of house' concept, which has long been established in orthodox contemporary hotel management textbooks. However, in the hotel sector's management textbooks, this difference in behaviour is simplistically and openly connected to the division between the back- and front-of-house tasks that make up hotels' work processes. To clarify, a technician of the maintenance department belongs to a 'back-of-house unit', whereas a receptionist in the front office department occupies a 'front-of-house' post. The nature of their tasks and their exposure to guests are different. Nevertheless, if we take into consideration Erving Goffman's 'impression management', then the same technician is expected to, and ought to, produce the best possible behaviour when called to take a

look at a guestroom's heating with the guest present. At the same time, the same receptionist may express different behaviour during her break in the staff cafeteria, which is situated at the back of house.

Macdonald (2001) and O'Neil (2001) agree that Goffman's account enables us to understand the way in which diverse participants may act differently in different circumstances and in different contexts. According to Macdonald (2001), the ethnographer is interested in both front- and back-of-house behaviour, 'and the interplay between them' (p. 86). Similarly, O'Neil's participant observation in the ambulance service identified the distinction between the crews' behaviour 'backstage', such as the station or while they were alone in the ambulance, and 'frontstage', where they had to perform in front of their audience, such as the public or other health care workers. According to the same source, this behaviour may be referred to as 'watching your back', and since workers in a particular organisation wish to minimise the possibilities of negative consequences, then it seems less possible to reveal information to researchers, owing to sensitive matters such as resistance to the labour process. This is indicative of the type of information that could be lost when more traditional tools of inquiry such as personal interviews and questionnaires are used. This I took in conjunction with the fact that resistance, and its cultural implications, is so protean a practice that it is unpredictable, and almost impossible to record in a single questionnaire or interview, when I was finalising my decision to proceed to an ethnographic mode of inquiry and become able to 'I-witness' (Geertz, 1988: 73).

Finally, following my discussion about the study's strategy of inquiry, it is necessary to move to the analysis of the methods that supported my participant observation. The next part expands on these research methods.

4.7 Research Methods

The advantages of this ethnographic strategy, such as the opportunity and privilege of 'being there', convinced me to rule out a single research technique, even personal semi-structured interviews, which had been my initial intention. I strongly support O'Reilly's contention that 'it is only by being in context, being there to [observe,] talk with and listen to the people you are researching as they experience things and as they go about their daily lives, that you can get them to tell you about how they feel and think' (2005:10). Besides, in questionnaires and interviews, what people say they do is not necessarily the same as what they really do. People under study 'may actually wish to dissemble or at least to "tidy up" an account ... [and] what they say may be shaped through their own expectations of what they think we want to hear, or what they think we should not hear, or what they want us to hear' (Macdonald, 2001: 86).

By the same token, I find very interesting Geertz's (1988) expression about the 'anonymity of a murmur, in the interest of the depression of power' (p. 7). Murmuring critical comments appeared to be a common practice of hidden resistance in various cases (Jermier et al., 1994; Scott, 1990). However, unless a critical comment or a confession of resistance reaches your ear, any kind of interpretation or assumption is

formed in the dark. This conjunction locates the weakness of personal interviews, strengthening at the same time the idea of being there to observe and listen yourself.

This part discusses the methods employed to collect empirical material. My participant observation study relied on methods such as interviewing/discussions, observation, and collecting artifacts and documents. During my research, many different sources of information appeared to be relevant, but not all sources could be researched using a single research technique. Table 4.1 below presents various sources and the type of material gathered. The analysis that follows discusses each research technique I employed in order to collect my data under the following categories: ‘Observation’; ‘Interviews – Casual Discussions’; ‘Found Documents’; and ‘Note-taking’.

Table 4.1: Categories of Information Sources			
Observation	Interviews	Note-taking	Found Documents
→Key events →Work process (preparation/service, meetings, etc.) →Conversations →Meetings	→Casual conversations at work or not →Casual interviews during nights out	→Labour process (including work process, meetings, key events, nights out, breaks →Conversations	→Office file documents →Board announcements and memos →Other printed material (questionnaires)

4.7.1 Observation

Throughout my participant observation course, observation was an element in every stage of data collection. It occurred at all times and in all settings, such as during the work process, during meetings, and during every gathering and every event. Observation was the first and last thing to do every time I was on the job. Even by the very first instance I had established visual contact with the hotel premises, I was trying to observe the general surroundings. By the time I had taken the turn to park my car in the hotel's parking slot, I was already collecting data. The first thing that tended to occupy my attention was cleaners and gardeners working around the parking slot, which was attached to the hotel's main entrance, cleaning the area and taking care of the plants, flowers, and trees. I used to arrive at the hotel at least 15 minutes in advance, in order to have time to walk through the departments across the establishment for an initial observation.

Furthermore, for the continuous process of observation, a researcher may decide in advance his/her positioning in relation to the activities set, data collection techniques, and/or narrative strategies. For instance, my own positioning was divided into two objectives. The first was to keep a healthy balance between observation and participation, and the second to maintain an 'open approach' towards the collection of a large range of possibly relevant data. In relation to the first objective, Gold (1958) classifies and describes four positions of the participant observation oxymoron: complete participant, participant as observer, observer as participant, and complete observer. However, I shall not elaborate on the distinctions here, since my research shows how I was able to move between the different roles.

As far as the second objective is concerned, I decided to maintain an ‘open approach’ towards the collection of possibly relevant data, by following the line of thought that ‘anything in the research context can be relevant and could potentially be taken into account’ (Gellner and Hirsch, 2001: 7). In the same context, despite my previous experience in the hotel sector, I attempted to conduct my field research from scratch. By this, I imply that I left behind previous experiences and participated in the labour process with an open mind, an intention to attend as many events as possible, and without prejudice. The ‘open approach’ made necessary a more active role during observation, and I do not mean in terms of rules. I needed to adopt the curious kind of cross-eyed vision, which Gellner and Hirsch (2001) describe as ‘one eye rolling ceaselessly around the general context ... the other focusing tightly, even obsessively, on the research topic’ (p. 7), along with ‘learning from looking elsewhere’ (Miller, 1997: 17). I wish to make clear at this point that my tactic did not consist of aiming at a simplistically inductive approach to research, which is one ‘where the researcher begins with an open mind and as few preconceptions as possible, allowing theory to emerge from the data’ (O’Reilly, 2005: 26).

On the contrary, I agree with those researchers who assert that this is impossible. My research was inductive, but I was always taking into consideration the line of theoretical contextualisation, which concerns labour process theory as well as theory concerning resistance and immaterial labour. At the same time, both the term ‘inductive’ and the ‘open approach’ towards data relevancy indicate that data collection was not restricted by the theoretical framework, but only supported by it, by following through the thought that ‘ethnography and theory are mutually informative in that theory focuses and sharpens ethnography while ethnography

grounds theory in the richness of social life' (Prus, 1996, cited in Snow et al., 2003: 182).

4.7.2 Interviews – Casual/‘Flash’ Discussions

All the conversations and talks throughout the ethnographic course were made on the basis of casual relationships and friendships. Casual interviews outside work, ‘flash’ talks on the job, and other discussions appeared to be a very useful research tool, and very different from traditional face-to-face, semi-structured interviews. This kind of opportunistic chat in the middle of the work process, arising under the pressure of the moment, combined with daily observation, made it possible for me to start collecting data from the very first day in the organisation. Even the arranged one-to-one interviews I was conducting every time I revealed my research to a co-worker (by asking him/her to meet at other times and places) were mostly seen as ‘a chat, as a conversation, where you gather data and it doesn’t have to be transcribed, just important things taken from it’ (Anonymous, cited in O’Reilly, 2005: 77). Therefore, there was no clear distinction between participant observation and these interviews or chats, either inside or outside the organisation’s premises.

One of the purposes of this kind of casual context relates to flexibility. For instance, the conversations tended to begin within the hotel’s premises, and soon moved to different locations and times outside the organisation. I discovered that I could collect information just by chatting. Even inside the organisation, informal talks enabled me to move from department to department and from section to section, talking to and

obtaining the views of as many co-workers as possible, from the whole range of ages and both genders. I have to mention at this point that my previous experience in the \$hotel sector was of use in helping me to frame instant questions during direct conversations. At the same time, casual conversation was a matter of not scaring away the subject and developing a more positive comfort zone for both co-workers and myself. Another important point is that this type of chat makes it easier to expand to other aspects of related material, such as to employees' past relocations.

O'Reilly (2005) asserts, 'in the ethnographic research you should participate to the extent that people get used to your presence and start to act naturally around you' (p. 96). I strongly believe that this is an important precondition of good participant observation, and it is highly related to the time factor. It took me almost three weeks to settle in and start to converse with employees about the labour process and opposition practices. I needed time to become part of the setting and let the workers become used to my presence. Also, you have to generate friendship, or maybe a kind of companionship, before they start to act naturally in front of you or share their experiences with you. The friendship should be allowed to grow steadily and expand outside the organisation. Only at the point when you become a 'pal' and establish trust are you ready to open discussions about events of opposition, to see acts of resistance taking place in front of you, and then proceed to opportunistic, arranged, or other kinds of interviews. If we consider that I used to hear repeatedly the expression, 'many people in this place are Judas, betraying our actions to the management', this is then not a difficult issue to understand. The fact that many co-workers betray actions and practices of resistance makes the workforce unwilling to talk, requiring time to establish adequate trust.

However, even when I progressed to the level at which I was able to have daily conversations with co-workers, I was always ready to abandon a specific place or discussion if the 'atmosphere' was becoming too 'heavy'. This has to do mostly with being diacritical, and knowing the time when you have to 'disappear'. In other words, it is better to avoid going between 'hot zones', such as conflicting discussions of co-workers. At the same time, you have to be close enough to listen to what they are talking about because you may use it as the basis for future discussions and/or increase your existing contextual knowledge of the organisation and its culture.

I also believe that the kind of 'electric speed' discussions under on-the-job pressure provide no time for co-workers to pretend or pre-plan their actions and behaviour, and therefore are considered peak time in terms of information flow. It is worth mentioning, however, that many times we had to end our conversations immediately and return to work. Discussing matters with employees while in the middle of the work process has never been comfortable in terms of time. Nevertheless, I was always taking notes in my 'captain order' (a duplicate or triplicate notebook that waiters use to write customers' orders) to return and finish this conversation with the co-worker at a later time. During some occasions, a conversation that ended and then resumed could last for two or three days, until it had satisfied my data collection criteria. Sometimes the talking would begin within the hotel premises and finish in a tavern or coffee shop after work.

Furthermore, very often I used to return to the same colleagues again and again to discuss similar or even the same topics and incidents. The aim was not only to listen to the whole story if this had not been possible during previous discussions, but also to reconfirm previously collected information. Similarly, Chapman (2001: 24)

believes that, in the anthropological theoretical context, where the truth is socially created and multi-faceted, what a member of the organisation says to you on Tuesday about his relationship with another employee may be rather different from what he says on Wednesday, resulting in different understandings, new realisations, and ‘faulty reflections’.

Also very advantageous towards understanding behaviours and learning about occasions of hidden resistance were my arranged informal discussions with co-workers outside the organisation, sometimes after hours, and most of the time in taverns or pubs. According to Gellner and Hirsch (2001), ‘the ethnography of organizations may have been ignored by anthropologists in the past because it appeared to capture only one part of people’s lives, instead of the “full” view supposedly attained in a village setting’. This kind of prearranged one-to-one discussion constituted an opportunity to talk with co-workers in depth and join in with their daily lives. Most of the time, during discussions, I used to ‘throw in’ open-ended questions in order to find out what participants were thinking and to understand their views. At the same time, my questions adopted a hypothetical style, were expressed using a specific tone, and were demonstrated with particular body language. In this way, informal questioning was part of the conversation, and at the same time conversation was directed towards issues of interest. These discussions are also called ‘narrative’ interviews, where interviewers allow responders to tell their own story, their own ‘narrative’ (Mishler, 1986).

Moreover, another ideal place and time to be was after the end of my shift in the hotel’s main lobby, talking to after-hours personnel, and discussing the day’s work until early morning hours. These shifts involved the night-shift waiter, who was

responsible for after-hours room-service, the after-hours receptionists, and the security personnel. During the long nights, everything was quieter and relaxed. Not one of the management team was around, nor were our colleagues. Most guests would be upstairs in their rooms or in an after-hours nightclub somewhere in the tourist area. The lighting in the lobby was very low due to the energy-conservation programme, and the conditions were ideal for relaxed conversations. Very soon, I realised that staying around for discussions with after-hours personnel made for a very important contribution to my research findings. It was like reading the hotel's news in an imaginary newspaper, including all the murmurs and humorous comments about the management and/or employees in various departments. It proved the fastest way to learn what was going on in the hotel in terms of conflicts, misunderstanding, promotions, refusals, layoffs, and secret relationships. This kind of information was sometimes related to resistance, but most of the time was complementary to it, supporting the formation of a wider research context.

Finally, in terms of recording my interviews, I decided not to use a digital recorder for any of the discussions or interviews. Obviously, since my research began as covert, recording could become possible only after I had gradually started to reveal my research to co-workers. Even after this point, I decided not to record any conversations. I strongly believe that tape recording could have breached my co-workers' comfort zone. Besides, I was approaching every discussion or interview casually, as a member of staff, and not as a researcher.

4.7.3 Note-taking

My 'captain order' was my permanent notebook. A 'captain order' is a duplicate or triplicate notebook that waiters use to write customers' orders. Direct observational work involved writing up in my captain order while performing any kind of task. The aim was to stand back mentally, in order to notice things and jot them down. However, many times I chose to visit the toilet, where I could write faster, in privacy, and without anyone asking curious questions; this occurred mostly during nights out with co-workers in taverns, pubs, or restaurants. It was necessary to make mental notes in the presence of managers or co-workers, and then actual notes at a more private location. After each shift or during the day following our night out, I would transfer my field notes from my notebook to my observational diary.

Moreover, although I promised confidentiality and anonymity for both the organisation's name and personnel names during all parts of my research, including my initial methodological plan, during the actual process of participant observation and my findings analysis, I had to write down co-workers' and managers' real names while note-taking on the job. This tactic proved very helpful at a later stage where I had to proceed to the coding and categorisation of information. Apart from the relevant name, I would also note on my captain order the department in which an action or an event was taking place, in addition to the date and the time. However, due to my ethical positioning, which is analysed under the next heading, 'Research Ethics', I had to make sure that my field notes remained secure and that neither the hotel's nor the participants' name/s would be identifiable under any circumstances, which is what I really mean by using the term 'anonymity'. Also, I had to ensure that

what I was collecting throughout the research would go no further, and could not be attributed to any identifiable participant; this is what I really mean when I refer to ‘confidentiality’. To heed this approach, I decided that, after updating my observational diary every day, I would destroy all my actual notes. At the same time, I designed a simple model of anonymising my actual observational diary, by replacing names with alphabetical letters, and having at the same time at another safe location a list with the actual names that matched each letter. In this way, I was the only person able to bring together my field notes and the list of real names.

Additionally, departmental meetings were a very rich source of note-taking. Departmental meetings are part of the labour process and are very powerful in patronising the professional relationship between co-workers and managers, and altering the productivity. In meetings, I mostly took notes on the agenda handouts provided to us by management. Apart from revealing the understanding of co-workers about the work process, meetings appeared to be a good source of unexpected data. For instance, meeting discussions changed my perspective about workers’ resistance to the hotel labour process, since hidden resistance was more widely used than might at first be thought and uncovered resistance was totally unexpected.

4.7.4 ‘Found’ Documents

Under the sub-category ‘Documents’, in Table 4.1, appear the three sole sources of printed documents, which provided important information in terms of labour control as well as the organisational culture of the hotel. These documents include minutes

from managerial meetings, announcement board memos/disciplining letters, hotel promotional material, guest questionnaires, and other printed texts. For instance, in terms of labour control, Morgan writes that:

Organizations necessarily involve conscious monitoring and control of the relationship between means and ends on a fairly regular basis. Such monitoring and control implies a conscious disciplinary process ...

(1990: 5)

In a similar way, hotel managers were circulating this printed material in a way to discipline workers and steer them towards the right way to carry out business. For instance, the hotel's management was publishing on a weekly basis internal memos announcing departmental targets, faults, management decisions, and other information aiming to regulate workers' behaviour.

The sub-category 'Office file documents' included previous organisational achievements; future targets processed and presented in numbers (suggesting measurable goals and showing quantified results); Training Program Plans; meeting notes; internal letters; and ISO 9001 and HACCP inspection progress statements. It is worth mentioning, nevertheless, that specific data I wished to 'find', such as office file documents, were sometimes confidential. This kind of information was concerned with departmental meeting notes between heads of departments, management, and the board of directors, and even included future actions of management. The point of collecting this material was not just to identify information about control, power, and forms of resistance directly from management sources, but also to form a more spherical account of corporate life. Each head of department kept this material in files

in his or her office. However, it was very difficult for me to request access to this information while my research was covert. As a result, I requested this material once my research had changed to overt during the last month, when I could use time to go through these filing cabinets.

‘Found’ data include internal and interoffice memos and notes that I used to find on announcement boards in the hotel’s corridors at the ‘back of the house’. On a daily basis, I visited the announcement boards in order to collect them and make a copy of each. These memos addressed internal regulations and directions; conflict-solving; advertisements; letters; complaints; and warnings. ‘Other printed material’ within the hotel’s premises were usually concerned with results of Guest Questionnaires (metrics); hotel brochures; and event announcements. This information revealed an attempt to control and discipline workers, without direct penalties or warnings, by presenting measurable goals and quantified results, and through reminding employees every now and then what is the ‘right thing’ to do within the hotel and what is not. I would like to highlight here that some management reports and internal memos, despite their numerical analysis, consisted of points that workers and heads of departments could easily understand.

‘Worth calls these pre-existing data as “found” data [documents] in order to distinguish information that you find in the field from data you construct’ (Worth, 1980, cited in O’Reilly, 2005: 162). This information supplements what I saw, heard, and requested in context with other information. In addition, these documents enabled me to compare their content with existing findings and establish connections in terms of how some managerial processes were operating.

4.8 Data Collection

During my participant observation, I was always keen to join discussions, make tea and coffee for co-workers, and accompany them on nights out. I was trying to be as attentive as possible. The aim was to spend as much time as I could with them. Every time we had a casual gathering, such as a day out or a co-worker's birthday party, I was always present. I heeded O'Reilly's (2005) advice that ethnographers should be 'the last to leave and the first to arrive' (p. 97). These gatherings were all considered 'key events' because something revealing to the theme of my research could happen, be it heard or seen. This tactic also served to reinforce a very positive dynamic in terms of getting to know my co-workers.

Additionally, every time someone was required to walk to a different department to undertake a task, I made sure that I volunteered before anybody else. These occasions were an opportunity for me to extend my observation 'coverage' and talk to other departments' employees. The category of 'key participants' was a very broad one, including all first-line employees such as receptionists, waiters, cleaners, gardeners, porters, cooks, chefs, beach boys, and technicians.

Moreover, as mentioned in the earlier 'Participant Observation' section, an ethnographic framework does not restrict a participant observation ethnographer from incorporating in a flexible manner a number of additional research tools, such as interviews, casual conversations, and others. This approach is very important if we take into consideration that the ethnographer's 'list' of possibly relevant forms of data should be sufficiently broad to understand better the group of people under study and

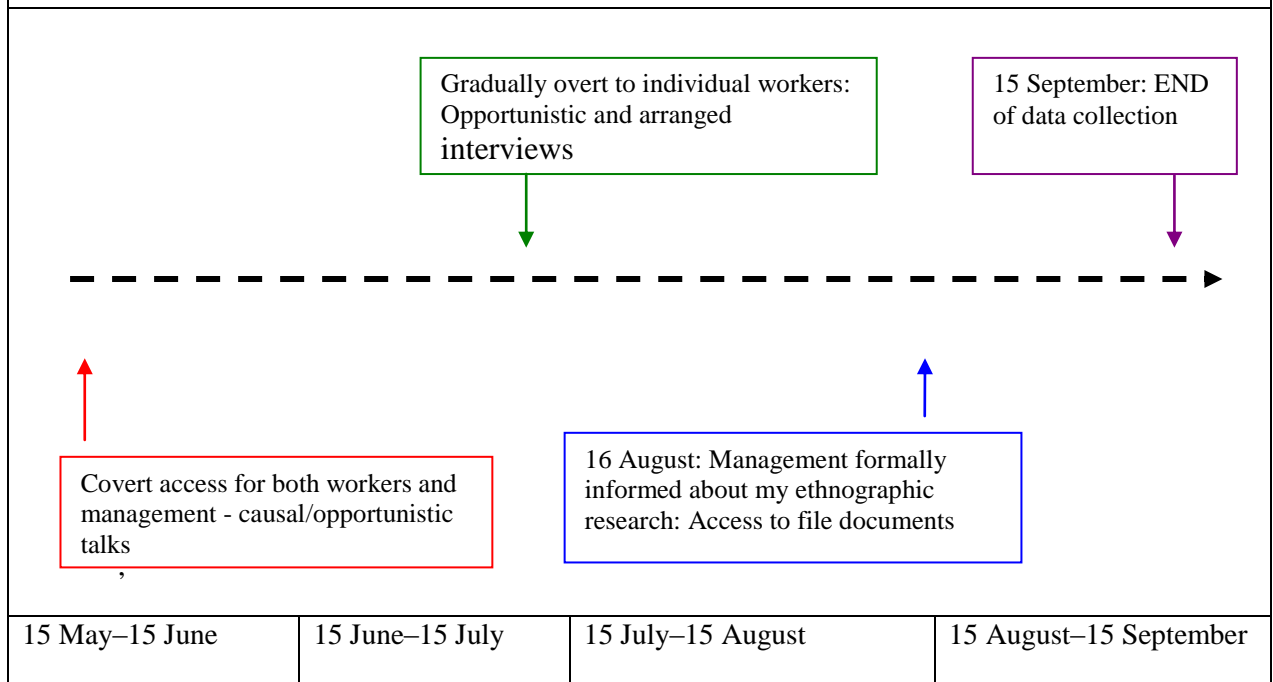
collect as many facets of organisational life as possible (Malinowski, 1967). Naturally, different forms of information sometimes require different research techniques. An important determinant, nevertheless, is how you enter the field in terms of the distinction between covert and overt.

4.8.1 Data Collection from Covert to Overt

Despite the fact that there is no simple dichotomy between overt and covert research, (O'Reilly, 2005), I shall start by saying that my ethnographic study began as covert research on all levels, and then gradually changed to overt. In other words, apart from a simple oral reference to the management that my employment could contribute to my research studies, no formal access was requested or gained prior to the research.

No one from the management, no head of any department, nor the general workforce knew about my participant observation. However, I did mention to the management initially that my four-month employment in the hotel would provide me with ideas and would support some research I was currently working on. I believe that indicating my research intentions in this way was more than enough at this early stage, since it enabled me to gather information about topics not easily discussed, such as resistance. A full analysis about my ethical considerations in relation to consent and covert research follows in part 4.8.

Figure 4.1: Stages From Covert to Overt for the Year 2007



As it is indicative in figure 4.1, I gained formal consent on 16 August 2007 (three months after I had begun my fieldwork inside the organisation), after explaining how promising and significant my suggestions could be. I did not reveal the complete story about the research, but I promised that immediately after I had finished my PhD thesis I would send to the management an analysis suggesting how they could increase communication and understanding between themselves and their employees. At this time, I was already a useful team player in the hotel: as was brought to my attention by the Food and Beverage Manager, a large number of guest questionnaires were indicating that customers' personal satisfaction with regard to my service was high. I believe that these two factors served to play an important part in the management's immediate consent. No negotiations, documentation, or long procedures were involved. A full analysis of my ethical considerations and dilemmas follows in part 4.8, 'Research Ethics'.

At the same time, I used my participant observation as a means of obtaining access (O'Reilly, 2005: 105). Indeed, the first period inside the organisation was not only designed for me to get to know my co-workers, the organisation culture, and the work process; additionally, it helped me to understand my own research technique and decide what questions to ask, when and how to ask them, and how to approach people.

Furthermore, I revealed by mid-July to some floor-level co-workers that I was a researcher, and my employment in the hotel was serving to provide me with useful information. For the first time after two months of mutual work efforts and paid labour on the same front, they knew that our daily work routine, our relationship, and our casual discussions might be recorded for research purposes. In other words, I did not inform the permission issuers, but only my co-workers, and only when I had begun to feel that our relationship was starting to show promise. Trying to uncover behaviours and actions associated with hidden or deviant workplace resistance while being overt is very difficult. Resistance is a topic that is not easily discussed, and involves ambiguity, secrecy, risk ambivalence, and, according to my findings, betrayal within the workforce, which is the part of the actor. That was the main reason I kept my research action covert for so long.

Although my intention and the whole idea for the study was to provide some kind of benefit for the hotel workers and the hotel sector as a whole, by informing the overall hotel workforce about my research I was in danger of being regarded as a potential ally of the management, or even an enemy of the staff. Co-workers might assume that I may reveal hidden behaviour or norms, or expose practices to the management that

could cause redundancies. On this issue, Gellner and Hirsch (2001: 5) point out that ‘everybody expects a report with an executive summary listing bullet points action’.

However, it seems that data collection during a covert course of ethnographic fieldwork, despite its very rich outcomes, has its own two sides of the coin. After two months of participant observation, I believed that I could fulfil my data collection requirements only by revealing a part of my research intentions to co-workers and throwing myself open to discussing important issues with them. This is along the same lines as O’Reilly’s thinking that, although discussions go on all the time and in a variety of contexts, ethnographers might also find it ‘useful to take people aside and try to talk to them in a more predetermined way’ (O’Reilly, 2001: 115).

Finally, my participant observation changed officially to overt on 16 August 2007, when I informed members of the management about my research. The management responded positively when I informed them that I will return after I conclude my PhD study with a two-page analysis, suggesting ways in which their workplace could become more humanistic and a better place for employees. Also, the fact that the majority of the management consists of young and accessible persons between the ages of 25 and 40 was another factor that maintained a positive treatment on their side. That was exactly three months after the research had begun. Apart from the fact that I wanted to question how managerial power and control prevails over hospitality workers and their workplace practices of resistance, I believe that the covert ethnographic type of study was also a research technique that avoided the growing resistance within organisations to traditional research procedures of business academia, such as questionnaires and personal interviews (Chapman, 2001). My

choices, however, need to be justified on the base of research ethics, which is analysed in the following section.

4.9 Research Ethics

Every time I was thinking about ethical considerations during the first stages of preparing and planning my ethnographic study, I had the sense that all kinds of ethical ‘insecurities’ and methodological issues tend to overlap and become tangled up together. For instance, I was greatly stressed about the possible negative effect that the difficult nature of my research topic could have on the issue of access, and what the limits of consent could be. Then, as I explain later in this analysis, I commenced ethnography without the informed consent of the management or the employees. I felt repeatedly that I should not have been doing this kind of covert research. I felt I had no right to examine colleagues’ actions and behaviours of opposition. However, to me it was important to do something about the common good of hospitality (co-)workers, with whom I had worked for years. Therefore, what follows is a justification of why and how I balanced ethical consideration with the benefit of workers.

4.9.1 Benefit

Ethics is one of the most important issues to consider when conducting qualitative research. At the same time, however, ‘ethical considerations should not be a reason not to conduct research, but should keep us reflexive and critical’ (O’Reilly, 2005:

60). To use Burawoy's argument, 'as social scientists we are thrown off balance by our presence in the world we study' (1998: 4). However, each researcher should find her/his own balance: a balance between the research participants and his/herself. Similarly, as a social scientist, I had to hold back my insecurities for the sake of those that my research findings could benefit. This ethnographic research benefits the workers though advancing their struggle, concerns, sensitivities, and examining the hotel labour process from a critical perspective.

4.9.2 Informed Consent and the Covert/Overt Dichotomy

Informed consent is in line with the premise that 'research subjects have the right to be informed about the nature and consequences of experiments in which they are involved' (Christians, 2005: 144). As I mention in the previous analysis, my ethnographic study began without informed consent. I did mention to the management that I was engaged in some sort of research and that my four-month employment in the hotel would provide me with ideas and support. However, no full research consent was requested from the management and the workers were not informed and did not agree voluntarily to participate. In other words, participant observation began covertly.

Although many researchers may be keen to describe the covert commencement of my fieldwork as 'unorthodox', I believe that for studies relating to the investigation of workplace conflict, worker misbehaviour, and resistance, you may not really wish to enlighten the participants fully about what you are doing (O'Reilly, 2005). In the

same vein, I believe that the issue of truthful and honest intention is ethically more pragmatic than a simple separation of overt/covert access. The aim of the covert methodological commencement was to allow the workers to formulate and track their problems and experiences in their own terms, and to enable me to empathise with the real complexities of the hotel's work processes. On this occasion, a strict application of codes may 'restrain and restrict' the attempt to observe and discuss sensitive issues, such as deviance or distancing from work processes.

Also, according to Buchanan et al. (1988), negotiating and gaining access is a game of chance. Additionally, some groups and organisations simply do not wish to be studied, while some others, having initially permitted access, stop being comfortable and start to worry as the research continues. It is very important to take into consideration that research concerning possible forms of resistance, opposition, and unionism may be regarded by both employees and employers as dangerous, and succeed only in scaring participants away. Alternatively, the researcher may be regarded as a management consultant or an authority figure, again arousing the suspicion of his/her 'co-workers'. These are the main reasons that led me to request consent at this stage.

To continue, I do understand that it is very difficult to succeed in covert research over a long period of time, and for this reason it did not last for more than a few months. Besides, with this decision, I had to cope with additional stress. Nevertheless, the initial covert start-up was simply an issue of not affecting the outcome. It is worth mentioning that, when it gradually changed to overt later, most workers being interviewed admitted that it would be hard for them to find time to attend overt research using interviews outside the organisation. Also, some of them expressed the

view that it would be very difficult to reveal the same extent and depth of information and feelings if the research were overt. The fact that my research began and expanded through a covert context reinforced a dynamic during our casual conversations outside the organisation or even inside the hotel after the end of our shifts, where unexpected issues, views, narratives, and reflections could be discussed based on unbiased attitudes.

At the same time, I believe that there is no clear-cut distinction between overt and covert research, and to a certain extent all participant observation courses are more or less covert, simply because you cannot describe fully to every single member of the entire workforce what your research is about. Besides, workers may not even care. Indicative is Burawoy's (1985: 1) argument in *The Politics of Production*:

While at the University of Chicago I again took a job in industry, this time as a machine operator in the engine division of a multinational corporation called Allied ... I told my fellow-workers that I was doing this for my PhD thesis but they either didn't care or didn't believe me. This was certainly not their idea of a university education.

Furthermore, I disagree with O'Reilly's (2005: 60) statement that 'ethical considerations are most likely to be overridden when research is covert'. On the contrary, for every serious social researcher who has no option but to 'go covert', as in the case of studying sensitive matters such as worker autonomy, ethical consideration becomes priority number one. In my opinion, covert research does not comprise a betrayal of trust or dishonesty provided the ethnographer maintains a specific ethical attitude. On the contrary, ethical guidelines 'should serve as a

guideline prior to the fieldwork but not to intrude on full participation’ (Punch, 1994: 90).

For instance, as I said earlier, I mentioned to the hotel’s management upon my hiring that my employment in the hotel could help me with the research I was working on; in my opinion, indicating my research intentions in this way was more than enough at this early stage, since it enabled me to gather information on topics not easily discussed. According to the International Sociology Association (ISA, http://www.ucm.es/info/isa/about/isa_code_of_ethics.htm, accessed 15 June 2007), ‘covert research should be avoided in principle, unless it is the only method by which information can be gathered’. The covert context appeared to be the only way to observe misbehaviour practices and discuss intentional opposition.

At the same time, negotiating access with the management and everyone in the entire workforce ‘would be impractical and futile, as well as completely undermining the behaviour you wish to observe’ (Punch, 1986: 37). It is fairly safe to say that, particularly for topics related to opposition and resistance, it could end up scaring away the research subject or making people feel wary. In a similar vein, Czarniawska (2006) makes a methodological case in research on gender. She contends that some modes of workplace behaviour are too difficult to discern using conventional social science methods (cited in Brewis and Jack, 2009: 8). In addition, she suggests that ‘traditional fieldwork’ does not reveal *enough*, unless performed under cover. Indicative is Sturdy and Fineman’s (2001: 137) argument that “‘resistance’ in particular, is what others – labour process theorists, managers – see as interruptions to the flow of work; it is often not what subjects themselves report’. Therefore, I have proceeded to a framework that enabled the ‘resister’ to act and talk freely.

Moreover, when my research changed to overt on 16 August 2007, the management was fully informed about what I was using the collected material for. I did not explain everything about my research, since I did not want to influence the way in which participants were going to act during the last month of participant observation. In other words, I did not expand in depth on LPT issues. I did explain, nevertheless, my critical intent towards a better hotel workplace, and, as far as my responsibility to other researchers and ethnographers is concerned, I am pretty sure that what I left behind did not close the field off for others to follow, since my research did not abuse or 'give rise to distress or annoyance to individuals' (www.esrc.ac.uk, cited in O'Reilly, 2005: 69). My behaviour in the field left behind happy, rather than upset, participants. Besides, when I returned a year later for my respondent validation study, both managers and workers welcomed me with enthusiasm. Not only did I dine with workers repeatedly in pubs and taverns (for respondent validation purposes), but I also visited the hotel three times, was offered complimentary drinks by managers, and collected additional documents.

At the same time, throughout the research I had a clear ethical position, and this was to do my best to protect the rights of all involved in the process of research in any possible way. For instance, as I explain below, I ensured confidentiality and anonymity for both the organisation and personnel during all stages of the research process.

4.9.3 Confidentiality and Anonymity

According to the International Sociological Association, ‘the security, anonymity and privacy of research subjects and informants should be respected rigorously’ (ISA, http://www.isasociology.org/about/isa_code_of_ethics.htm, accessed 15 June 2007). In this way, people’s identities are protected from unwanted exposure as well as those of the research locations (Christians, 2005). Similarly, confidentiality and anonymity were central concepts of my initial methodological plan, during the actual process of participant observation as well as the analysis of findings.

Also, after I had been given access to office file documents, I fully ‘respect[ed] the privacy conditions under which the data were collected’ (ISA, http://www.ucm.es/info/isa/about/isa_code_of_ethics.htm, accessed 15 June 2007). Thus, the documents and other printed material that had been collected from the hotel’s announcement boards and office files were kept secured, confidential, and ‘made public only behind a shield of anonymity’ (Christians, 2005: 145).

Finally, I believe that the ethical implications of one’s actions in the field are a matter of balance. Every decision should be an attempt to balance the various options with your honest intentions and the outcome. Throughout my ethnographic course, from planning to analysis, I was always thinking along these lines. In order to avoid being regarded as a management consultant or an authority figure, I had to balance my ethical position as a researcher in relation to those with whom I was having day-to-day contact and the satisfactory level of data collection criteria that I had set. With this attempt in mind, I consulted the literature of others who had been involved in this

type of research, and had needed to resolve similar ethical dilemmas. I do not believe that I was following the line ‘the means justify the ends’, for the same reason that most codes of ethics and ethical guidelines highlight that their lists are not rigid or exhaustive, and include phrases such as ‘to an extent’ or ‘within limits’, asking the researcher to consider a number of side thoughts.

4.10 Interpretation of Data

As I discussed in the foregoing analysis, during my participant observation study, I used to collect notes and record them daily in my ethnographic diary. In addition, I assembled printed documents, and at the same time I was developing a kind of ‘researcher’s text’ (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005: 26), which contained my initial attempts to analyse and interpret this material. Afterwards, I recreated this text based on additional notes and interpretations, and then recreated it, and finally I produced what appears in chapter 5, which is a final version open to anyone to read and criticize. However, throughout this process, as a researcher, I was trying to make sense and interpret what I observed, heard, and discussed. This is the main purpose of this part: to discuss how I interpreted my findings and created my final analysis.

Denzin and Lincoln support that ‘qualitative interpretations are constructed’ (2005: 26). In a similar vein, ‘resistance, like power, is a socially constructed category. Resistance (power) consequently should not be treated as being simply “out there”, empirical data to be gathered and made available through value free enquiry. To treat resistance as self evidence is to miss the actual interpretive practices through which

knowledge about it is acquired and communicated. Questions need to be raised as to how to recognize; an examination is necessary of what qualifies or is disqualified as resistance...’ (Knights and Vurdubakis, 1994: 169).

However, these issues raise questions about the legitimacy of the study. Legitimacy concerns ‘what authority we claim for our texts’ (Bishop, 2005: 112). More specifically, throughout my study, I tried to ensure that workers’ opinions about their work, what they consider unfair, and processes of opposition should not be shadowed by my own knowledge, previous experience, and philosophical position.

Therefore, as I mentioned in the previous analysis, very often I would return to the same co-workers (the next day or during the week) again and again to discuss similar or even the same topics and incidents. The aim was not only to listen to the whole story if this had not been possible during previous discussions, but also to reconfirm previously collected information. This tactic was a way of eliciting the same data from the same person, and testing the validity of findings by the method known as internal triangulation. To me, this kind of qualitative research is legitimate because, additionally to what I hear, observe, and discuss, it also builds in to my subjective interpretation. At this point, the produced knowledge emerges through a kind of corrective process.

This tactic, however, is not disconnected from issues of ‘representation, where a researcher should not displace workers’ lived experiences with his/her own “authoritative” voice of the “expert”’ (Bishop, 2005: 112). To put it differently, mostly in the case of investigating worker resistance, a researcher should not misrepresent or simplify social reality. For instance, worker cynicism can be simply a

practice of misbehaviour, with no intention to oppose or resist. Another instance of worker cynicism, nevertheless, might be an intentional practice of resistance that may start as a critical comment and generate further opposition such as a collective ‘distancing’ from work processes or unofficial walkouts. Therefore, participants’ authentic voices are what matters, and if represented in a trustworthy and credible way, then they define the validity of the study.

Another way of ensuring the validity of my findings was the process of sense-making and meaning construction through comparing interview results with observations. As mentioned earlier, after each shift or during the day following our night out, I used to transfer my notes from my notebook to my observational diary. I updated my observational diary every day, and destroyed all my actual notes for reasons relating to personal escalating insecurity. Besides, no researcher ‘owns’ the field notes he/she makes about those (s)he studies (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005: xvi). Information in my diary took the form of short stories, including specific information such as the type of event, the location of the event, the individual(s) involved, the time, any supporting documents (see “‘Found” Data’ above), and other details. However, sometimes a conflict, a misunderstanding, or an incident of prolonged pressure and arguing would continue throughout the following days, and on some occasions until the next departmental meeting. Most of the time, I was trying to approach those involved during the day following the incident. I was trying to make sure that my accounts were in line with what really happened, and that all the different voices had been taken into consideration.

At the same time, I was seeking interpretations from every worker; indeed, every worker was a participant and a potential storyteller. According to Hassard (2007), ‘a

sufficiently accurate ethnographic narrative must account for a wide range of human interpretations’ (332). In examining the actual practices of workplace resistance within the hotel, for example, I had to pay attention not only to those practices and employees who were resisting the work process, but also to those employees not opposing. This approach allows for a more in-depth interpretation of participants’ behaviour, and a better understanding of the overall work process.

4.10.1 Respondent Validation

This part discusses the research practice of respondent validation. Respondent validation, sometimes called ‘member validation’ or ‘member checking’, is, according to Bryman and Bell (2007: 732), ‘a process whereby a researcher provides the people on whom he or she has conducted research with an account of his or her findings and requests feedback on that account’. Following this rationale, a year after my participant observation, I returned to Cyprus in order to corroborate the understanding and interpretation I had arrived at. My stay in Cyprus lasted for eight months. It was a slow but steady process during which I met with my previous co-workers outside the hotel’s workplace, trying to reconfirm my interpretation of what I had seen, listened to, and discussed the previous year. It was a slow process because, during the peak tourist season, all the workers were busy most of the time, having a day off once a fortnight. Therefore, our gatherings were not formal or scheduled in advance but rather casual and agreed to at the ‘last minute’. The process was steady and continuous, nevertheless, because most of the time the workers were enthusiastic

about meeting, drinking and eating together. Through this socialisation, in friendly and relaxing environments, I found my opportunity to interview my participants.

Respondent validation appeared to be a good way to ensure that there was a good correspondence between my interpretation of the findings and the perspectives, feelings, and experiences of my research participants (Bryman and Bell, 2007). This is because it enabled me to compare my previous analysis, which was based on participant observation findings, with additional workers' claims and confessions outside their work setting, and establish a kind of rapport and correspondence between the two, as well as reduce interpretation errors.

For the respondent validation technique, I invited a sample of my previous co-workers for a night out individually, at a small local tavern with nice food (Greek *meze*). Each invitation was made by telephone. In total, I talked to ten research participants. I informed my research participants that I was back in Cyprus, that I wished to invite them for dinner, and that I might use part of our conversation for my research. All of them enthusiastically agreed to meet, and I believe that this was due to the relationship I had established with them during my participant observation study.

During the session, I followed a specific sequence of questions that I had written on a small piece of paper (no bigger than the size of a packet of 20 cigarettes). I always prepared at home in order to remind them what they had told me during our previous conversations, as well as explaining to them my understanding and interpretation. I avoided carrying personal writings or taking notes on large A4 sheets in order to avoid breaking the participants' comfort zone. For instance, imagine someone entering a restaurant for dinner, carrying files and a pile of notes. Rather, I preferred

to make some notes on the back of my small piece of paper every now and then. At the same time, I did not want to invite participants to study or research areas such as libraries. I wanted our meetings to be a kind of casual reunion, during which I could suggest 'a couple of minutes' to discuss serious work matters.

Maintaining a comfortable, casual discussion was important in order to avoid any defensive reactions on the part of research participants (Bryman and Bell, 2007). Therefore, at the beginning of every meeting, I waited for at least 20 minutes before starting to ask for research-related information. Also, in order to maintain a comfortable discussion, I would stop our respondent validation conversation every now and then to talk about different, unrelated things. As with participant observation discussions and interviews, I did not use a recorder, for exactly the same reasons.

Finally, in terms of my interpretation and judging criteria, respondent validation reinforced the initial decisions that had been taken and the determinants set during my participant observation study. Member checking indicated that the information collected in the field towards answering the research questions set for the empirical investigation into worker resistance appeared appropriate. However, respondent validation also revealed additional information, in terms of workers' increased anxiety about a number of structural factors. During this process, I talked to workers who were not members of the hotel's staff any more, either because they had resigned or they had had their contracts terminated. This procedure produced further information about the particular hotel's labour process, labour control, and worker resistance. Also, other data were linked with the rapidly changing workforce percentages in the hotel between local and immigrant workers. This information enabled an understanding of the pace and effect of the changing labour market, as this has been

transformed after the last two enlargements of the European Union (EU) in 2004 and 2007.

4.11 Limitations

In the book *A Prison Diary*, Jeffrey Archer explains that, during his fourteen months' stay in prison as a prisoner, he used to write two thousand words a day, 'nearly a million in all, which has resulted in three published diaries' (Archer, 2004: 467). In Hollesley Bay open prison, with an aim to 'get more prisoners reading', he reluctantly settled for the position of library orderly. He mentions:

[...] as the library was only open to prisoners between 12.30 and 1.30, and 6 and 7 pm, I was left with countless hours to occupy myself. It doesn't take that long to replace on the shelves the twenty or thirty books returned each day. I could have occupied those lifeless hours writing ...

It is quite amazing how writing may fit into or be reinforced in particular research settings and/or work contexts. In sharp contradiction to Archer's capability to write in prison, my capability to write during my ethnographic study in the hotel was limited due to the hotel's long and exhausting shifts. Even on my days off, I felt tired and drained. I suppose that what kept me going was an internal psychological satisfaction, deriving from the collection of rich findings. However, my weariness was quite an obstacle to my research effort.

To continue, another obstacle is linked to the researcher's ability or inability to balance the value of each piece of information and judgement. This is 'the person-specific (not personal) nature of our judgments and the ability of informants to judge' (Geertz, 1988: 6). In order to minimise the effect of this limitation, I incorporate in the 'Analysis of Findings' chapter large parts of direct expressions and answers provided by those studied throughout my participant observation. As mentioned in the foregoing analysis, the people under study were eventually 'part subject, part object' of the wider research. I believe that, by incorporating co-workers' exact expressions and conversations, you give a voice to those under study, and you obtain honest stories, honestly presented and analysed. From an epistemological point of view, with this approach, I 'prevent subjective views from coloring objective facts' (Geertz, 1988: 9). In addition, the documentary analysis of "'Found" Documents' (see Table 4.1) may also help to minimise the effect of this limitation in the attempts to explore the organisational culture as well as the labour process.

In the same vein, established meanings, knowledge taken for granted, culturally dominant traditions, and/or paradigmatic points of departure all add to the researcher's constraints of understanding the organisation context conditions. 'Conditions include tradition and the socio-economic context which frames how we relate to and make sense of the world' (Alvesson and Deetz, 2000: 140). This limitation is one that makes necessary extra effort to distinguish your position during participant observation, but equally, or maybe mostly, during the analysis of respondents' perspectives and statements. The researcher's own perspective is that, between other strategies and components, honesty is vital towards achieving objectivity, and it cannot be achieved without it. It appears important, therefore, to mention truthfully at this point that having to detach and abandon personal views and

notions, and having to concentrate on participants' perspectives and interpretations of events, considering the nature of this research, appears to be the most difficult task. According to Patton (1990), this is purely a task concerned with the credibility of the evaluator, and the extent to which fairness and balance are addressed. Gray (2004) suggests that adopting and maintaining a distance from the subject and avoiding 'polemical arguments' (349) is a key issue. On the other hand, however, Patton (1990) asserts that 'distance does not guarantee objectivity; it merely guarantees distance'.

Another limitation is that, although you are inside the organisation and you belong to the workforce, you never know what is going on while you are at home, such as during days off. Many times, during days off, I felt that I was missing information by not being there. At the same time, it seems that this is like two sides of the coin. A further limitation has to do with what I call the 'routinisation of being there', and is highly related to the time factor. After the newcomer's view that I experienced during the first two weeks, I just stopped seeing things that I had noticed in the first place. To quote Malinowski (1922), 'certain subtle peculiarities, which make an impression as long as they are novel, cease to be noticed as soon as they become familiar' (21). As a result, it takes more time, effort, and concentration in order to notice the details I used to notice as a newcomer. It seems that you have to step out of the box and observe what is going on in the box from the outside environment's perspective.

4.12 Conclusion

In this chapter, I presented and discussed the full circle of my ethnographic experience. I considered and analysed all those critical issues that enabled an ethnographic investigation into worker resistance, misbehaviour, and the hotel's labour process. Simultaneously, the analysis highlights throughout the chapter the sensitive nature of 'worker resistance', and explains how the research was designed in order to reveal worker practices and 'narrate' their perceptions.

The analysis also covered epistemological, and methodological issues, where my primary aim was not only to present and discuss these issues but also to justify my choices. The purpose here was not to promote the *one best* way of carrying out research but rather the most appropriate for this specific study. Also, I tried to explain my decisions through examples deriving from the topic of workplace resistance.

Finally, the research process that has been analysed in the foregoing chapter made possible the development of what appears in the next chapter as the 'analysis of findings'. Chapter 5 is the full presentation, analysis, and discussion of my ethnographic findings.

Chapter Five

Analysis of Findings

5.1 Introduction

This chapter explores the labour processes, forms and everyday practices of workplace resistance through an ethnographic study conducted in a luxury hotel in Cyprus. Within the framework of labour process theory (LPT), the chapter initially analyses the characteristics and mechanisms of the hotel's labour process. In the chapter's second part, focus moves onto the uncovered matter of worker resistance, as recorded during a four-month participant observation. Analysis is then expanded to include a number of hidden practices of worker opposition.

Principally driven by the voices, experiences and expectations of those researched, the chapter presents and discusses how are power, control, and resistance undertaken in the specific hotel workplace, what issues generate resistance, what resources are available to those who resist, what are the effects of their resistance, and what mechanisms of labour control limit their autonomy. But before exploring managerial control and worker resistance, I sketch out in the next section the picture of the particular luxury hotel.

5.2 A Labour Process Diary

As mentioned in Chapter 1, LPT is a tool capable of supporting an investigation into power and resistance in the workplace. An analysis of managerial power and control at the workplace is important for understanding the way labour process exerts control over employees with the ultimate aim of maximising profit. Based on an ethnographic diary, this section portrays and discusses the picture of working in a luxury hotel. First-hand ethnographic data that span almost a year of ethnographic time (respondent validation included) constitute a kind of labour process blueprint, analysing the means, mechanisms, strategies, practices, techniques, methods and procedures used by managers in the environmental bubble of a luxury hotel.

But a labour process is not the organisation's work processes. Rather, labour process is a 'bundle' of managerial mechanisms, strategies, work processes, organisational philosophy, disciplinary mechanisms and any other means designed to impose power upon, and subject employees to, organisational control. However, in today's western workplaces, oppression and power may not necessarily be direct, sharp and/or harsh. For instance, one body of literature discusses a shift away from cruel control towards more consensual strategies and work-humanisation (Burawoy, 1979; Edward, 1979; Cressey and MacInnes, 1980). This issue can be located in each distinctive labour process and identified by examining each labour process on its own merits. Therefore, this section focuses on one labour process. It examines managerial power and control in a luxury hotel, through a discussion of specific managerial practices, techniques, work processes and 'ways of doing business' in the organisation.

Findings were collected from a luxury Cypriot hotel situated in the south eastern region of Cyprus, set in mature landscaped gardens of tropical trees and bordering a long sandy beach. The hotel is part of a chain of leading luxury hotels in Cyprus. The majority of guests are families of British holiday-makers, business travelers attending conferences, and sport teams exercising in nearby sport centres.

The hotel is an impressive building with white marble, and décor of ancient statues dominating the public areas, constantly being maintained and kept clean by maintenance staff and cleaners. Its modern facilities include a number of indoor and outdoor swimming pools, fitness and health centre, kids' club, three restaurants, two bars, TV and internet lounges, two pool bars and five well-equipped conference rooms. It boasts 180 rooms, charged at premium rates. Rooms are all sea-view, appointed all with a spacious balcony. A number of suites offer private wood decked gardens and jacuzzis. Rooms are cleaned daily to a high standard with fresh linens, beach and bath towels. More than twenty room attendants are responsible for their cleaning, and 4 housekeepers are in charge to inspect every room immediately after cleaning.

Lawn, grounds and swimming pool areas are extensive and adjacent to a landscaped garden area shaded by palm trees. Hotel's beach is private, with shallow water which is perfect for families with children. Its restaurants are sophisticatedly and elegantly decorated. The main restaurant offers a themed dinner every night with a huge selection of well cooked cuisine from all over the world. All bars offer food and expertly made cocktails, served in impressive glasses, decorated with fresh fruits. In the main bar lounge the hotel's band offers a sort of soft live music every night and folklore shows three times per week.

The hotel's management team is constituted by the general manager, and food and beverage manager, the front office manager, and the banquets manager. The management team meets twice a year with the board of directors. The board of directors is responsible for all three hotels of the chain, and is constituted by the chairman, the vice chairman, and another nine members that fill positions in various committees. The hotel's labour process is analysed in the following section, starting with two managerial processes: worker training and departmental meetings.

5.2.1 Training and meetings

Analysis of the labour process continues with a number of supporting mechanisms and strategies demarcating the power relations between managers, guests and workers. One element of these mechanisms was the routine training of managers and workers. Training courses were in line with the hotel's philosophy and core values, and aimed at changing employees into active subjects and managed in a way that encouraged their active participation in the running of the hotel (Dowling, 2006). These supported management efforts to train workers start with the 'three-day unpaid orientation course', which is analysed in the following sub-section.

5.2.2 The three-day unpaid orientation programme

Immediately after the appointment of a new worker, a three-day unpaid orientation course introduced them to each department's specific processes. For instance, during my first day working in the hotel bar, the manager assigned my orientation to a senior

worker and asked him to show me a number of tasks including how to prepare coffees (including speciality coffees with alcohol) and cocktails, wash glasses, clean up at the end of a shift and prepare a stock requisition.

On the second day, the manager himself explained how to use the networked cashier system, including the way to open bills, close transactions, void invoices and prepare complementary statements. On the third day, another senior worker explained the way the bar workers interact and cooperate with other departments. This interaction included sending orders and bringing food from various kitchens for customers dining in the bar, room service and exchanging information with the front office about the number and time of daily guest arrivals in order to prepare complimentary drinks.

Although this formal instruction lasted only a couple of hours every day, and workers went back to work for the remaining six or seven hours of the shift, all of the three days of the orientation programme was unpaid. Managers justified this by saying workers sometimes changed their minds during orientation and left the hotel or even the industry. In other words, the hotel was not willing to risk a loss-generating investment. In addition, managers promoted orientation as something that was part of everyone's future career, rather than paid work. At the same time, the three-day programme was also a test for the newcomer. Managers were checking a worker's capacity to learn and adapt quickly and their personal characteristics and behaviour, with the final appointment the sole decision of a department manager.

However, the orientation programme was not the only training programme for workers. The following analysis provides evidence of more comprehensive training

programmes which aimed to not only teach service-related tasks but also encourage a unified culture across the entire workforce.

5.2.3 Training programmes

After the three days of unpaid orientation, the majority of staff participated in various types of training programmes. Both hotel managers and external professional trainers run classes and practical demonstrations.

The high influx of inexperienced, cheap labour from eastern Europe meant the courses were highly specific to the tasks of each position, aiming at increasing new workers' ability to serve, as well as their efficiency and effectiveness with regard to customer satisfaction. Sessions included food and beverage serving, preparation and maintenance of tools and station posts, implementation of specialised techniques of increasing productivity, table laying, room service, effective communication between co-workers and advertising and promotion of hotel products.

Apart from simple operational tasks, considerable concern was also placed on introducing workers to the unique nature of service work. In other words, part of the training was like a ritual, initiating staff into the unique characteristics of the work's emotional, aesthetic and immaterial needs. In parallel, training was intended to introduce employees to the particular organisational culture, including the hotel's explicit rules and values. For instance, on one occasion when I attended a so-called 'can do' training session organised by a professional consultancy, I realised that the

golden rule throughout the two-day programme was the hotel's main value of 'total guest satisfaction'.

Training programmes attempted to 'wrap up' workers' practice with the desired way of thinking. In other words, they trained workers to manage themselves (Sosteric, 1996) using their emotions and personal characteristics to achieve guest satisfaction. The 'can-do' training was, however, clearly driven by organisational culture and values. It cultivated productive cooperation and emphasised the need for commitment (Thompson and Findlay, 1999; Lazzarato, 1996). 'Can-do' was a clear application of contemporary HRM theories, such as the Japanese *Kaizen*, and the early turn of western organisations to Japanese policies, ideas and ways of thinking (Brewis and Jack, 2009). During 'can-do' sessions, trainees were invited to visualise, use positive thinking, practise their emotion and choose between alternatives for given situational dilemmas.

After assembling and interrogating a number of documents about the training plan in the hotel, however, it became clear that repetitive training for managers, supervisors and workers attached an equal importance to realising the hotel's core aim. Despite the attention devoted to inculcating new employees into the hotel's ethos of 'total guest satisfaction' and encouraging them to adopt a positive, 'can-do' attitude to their work, documents relating to the hotel's training plan revealed that more 'traditional' management concerns and methods had not been forgotten. In fact, managers' training programmes were indicative of the nature of control and power in the hotel and were more important in controlling workers than the workers' training itself. For instance, managers' courses included titles such as 'precautionary inspections of labour costs', 'get the most out of employees', 'train the trainers', 'development of

inspection awareness' and 'exceeding customers' expectations'. In other words, cost and labour control aimed at increasing performance and affective productivity were the main objectives of training.

Training, however, was only one aspect of managers' control of the hotel labour process. The following section discusses another mechanism of control, namely departmental meetings. Meetings took place regular, and aimed to reinforce what was said in earlier meetings and remind employees to work according to set policies and guidelines.

5.2.4 Departmental meetings

Training programmes were also supported by monthly departmental meetings and memos intended to highlight errors and complaints and praise and steer staff into the desired ways of doing things. Together, training and meetings aimed to develop the capacity to activate and manage productive cooperation (Lazzarato, 1996) in an affective or emotional way. But they also wanted to "produce the kinds of subjects who would fulfil the required function" (Dowling, 2006:5) in a constantly cheerful way, regardless of whether this necessitated work in different departments or across different shifts.

Since hotel labour process is based on a number of different components such as effective communication, prompt information exchange, efficient utilisation of technology (e.g., reception computing) and adding value to guests' experience at all

times, it was also necessary to maintain disciplined subjects who would use their initiative to accomplish tasks not necessarily written into their job description. Workers could even make their own decisions when a manager or supervisor was absent (e.g., when a waiter delivered a cocktail to a guest in their room) by always putting customer satisfaction first. In meetings, managers promoted this as empowerment and participation in decision-making. But in most occasions, workers had to manage their time between a guest wishing to chat (or elicit some information from the worker about the island) and other guests waiting to get served. Maximising customer satisfaction was constantly *subject* to the constraints of staff numbers and cost reduction.

Meetings were held once a month. The agenda included reminders about rules and regulations, problems, complaints and examples of good practice. In the case of complaints or errors, management's tactic was to avoid pointing the finger at individuals. This approach is part of a body of literature suggesting that control in today's organisations is not necessarily direct, sharp or oppressive. Choosing to talk generally rather than directly blaming individual workers is a more consensual strategy (Burawoy, 1979; Edward, 1979; Cressey and MacInnes, 1980) that makes workers feel more comfortable. Simultaneously, however, it constitutes a warning that progress and drawbacks are being monitored. Meetings, therefore, were an important contribution to the ultimate aim of the labour process.

Meetings were also occasions where management would praise outstanding employees. This accolade was awarded by guests, who could complete the questionnaire displayed in every guestroom and answer the question 'name a member of the staff that you have a high regard for'. This questionnaire formed a significant

part of management's surveillance strategy and is analysed in-depth in the next sub-section.

5.2.5 Surveillance, measurement and discipline

Collecting and processing information about employee performance and disciplining subordinates are key components in the function of labour control (Hyman, 1987:41). The first two components constitute a managerial monitoring process, which is supported by a number of different strategies. One of the hotel's management strategies was to collect information about employee performance from guests. A detailed questionnaire was placed in guestrooms, restaurants, bars, lifts and other public areas of the hotel. The questionnaire explained management's aim of continuous improvement of performance and the importance of guests' opinions. It included questions on all departments and a breakdown of all products and services. It subjected the whole work process to measurement under the guise of performance improvement. The front page also advised guests that completion of the questionnaire guaranteed them a place in the end-of-year draw with a first prize of a fully paid, 14-night stay at the hotel on a bed-and-breakfast basis.

The questionnaires were electronically processed and a computer software program compared actual performance with established standards to produce a quantitative report for each department. 'Measurement and quantification of outputs' (Gellner and Hirsch, 2001:2) was more profound after information was processed and results were disseminated to the various departments in the form of a departmental report. The report was divided into four sections: a description of the target objectives; suggested

actions to correct deviations; required percentage to meet the desired target; and timeframe. Table 5.1 is a model report with identical descriptions. The guest questionnaire was so rigorously constructed that it could even single out individual employees. For instance, several questions invited guests to comment on each department's personnel, rate them and name one favourite and one unacceptable worker.

From an immaterial/affective labour perspective, there is a continuous debate whether labour value is measurable. However, quantification of performance in the hotel using mathematical software was a well established managerial activity, in line with writers who argue that value and affect are not only measurable (e.g. Caffentzis, 2005; Korczynski, 2001; De Angelis and Harvie, 2009; Virno, 2004), but also that "affectivity itself has now become a means of measuring value that is itself of value" (Clough et al., 2007:60). But the labour process body of literature also engages to managerial practices such as surveillance, appraisal and measurement. As it is discussed in chapter 2, a concept which has become established in labour process literature as a surveillance technique is Foucault's *Panopticon* (e.g. Knights and Collinson, 1987, Jermier et al., 1994; Sewel and Wilkinson, 1992a; 1992b).

In this direction, Grey (1994:479) highlights that 'Panoptic techniques can have the effect of creating self-disciplined behaviours amongst those subjected to surveillance'. In this sense, for Foucauldians panoptic surveillance has as its aim the production of self-discipline. However, from a traditional LPT perspective, Thompson and Findlay (1999:173) believe that the labour process' emphasis on surveillance and electronic panopticon is problematic. Specifically, they say that "even if we accept the notion of increasing personal and collective surveillance as part of contemporary organisational

restructuring, it is a much bigger leap to sustain claims that the panoptic gaze operates directly on the subjectivity of individual members”. However, as mentioned in Chapter 2, the concept of Foucault’s *Panopticon* is not singular. First, it has the capacity to produce self-disciplined individuals. More specifically, since it cannot be seen back, and since inmates cannot tell whether or not they are being watched, it exercises power and control over individuals’ subjectivities who think that they are being watched at all times. At the same time, however, Panopticon is a system of observing, collecting information, gathering knowledge and documenting reports on each individual.

Saying that, internal surveillance in the hotel did not have the capacity to monitor specific individuals’ subjectivities in the way Foucault suggests. Panopticism, however, was applicable in its second use of regulating the workplace by collecting information about individuals and producing records. Surveillance was not necessarily counting how many coffees a worker drinks during their shift or whether they pour whisky measures according to the codebook; such close monitoring was unfeasible. However, some practices did monitor individual performance in a detailed way. For instance, managerial meetings (see section 5.3.6) and the guest questionnaire were mechanisms enabling managers to gather and record a detailed picture of individual and collective worker performance. This was evident from the reports disseminated in each department, which compared desired targets with the results actually achieved (Table 5.1), as well as during managerial meetings. In this way, Panoptic surveillance in the hotel can serve as the basis for interventions in behaviour which is judged to be undesirable (Grey, 1994).

Another point contradicting the first use of Panopticon is that this kind of surveillance was happening almost invisibly. First, few workers knew about the questionnaire's existence and second, even the room cleaners who knew failed to realise its capacity for producing comprehensive performance-related information.

Table 5.1: Departmental target report based on questionnaire results

DEPARTMENTAL TARGETS				
DESCRIPTION	DESIRED TARGET	TIME-FRAME	ACTUAL TARGET	NOTES
Guest complaints decrease from 7 to 7%		By July 2008	More effort needed/Target renewed	
Guest Questionnaire Improvement of results from very good to excellent	Raise to 2.40 and remain steady	By June 2008		In order to assist departmental improvement of performance, a new software system of questionnaire processing will be introduced on ...
GENERAL MANAGER'S SIGNATURE			DEPARTMENT'S SUPERINTENDENT	

Furthermore, apart from other direct monitoring of employee performance by supervisors or direct examination of the results of employees' work, a common mechanism for processing information about employees' performance was the managerial meetings with the board of directors. These are not the departmental meetings analysed in the previous section.

At this point, it seems appropriate to discuss the third component, namely disciplining of workers, before concluding with a short analysis of meetings, which combines elements of both the processing of worker information and managerial disciplining of employees. As Rothschild and Miehle (1994:253) state:

"Managers in organisations have at their disposal many ways of gaining cooperation and compliance from workers. Primary among these mechanisms of control is the ability to regulate the rewards structure. Formal job evaluations, promotions, raises, firing, reassignment or demotions are some of the more direct ways of gaining organisational compliance."

The managers' way of disciplining employees and gaining compliance in the hotel was different, however, from the disciplinary mechanisms mentioned by Rothschild and Miehte. Social contact and interactions between workers and managers were familiar and friendly. Rather than confronting employees personally or punishing them to achieve control, management attempted to discipline employees and/or interfere with workers' psychology, and thus their performance, by issuing indirect and impersonal written guidelines. These memos were usually fixed to boards in corridors, and reinforced involvement and participation, promoted corrective directions and guidelines and reminded staff of core values.

Although the memos and letters were peremptory, and sometimes quite shocking, there was a general feeling within the workforce that most messages were conveyed as a general and abstract prompting. Similar to the behaviour of managers in meetings, this managerial practice of impersonal and indirect memos is another example of what Burawoy (1979), Edward (1979) and Cressey and MacInnes (1980) argue is a shift away from cruel and direct control towards more consensual strategies, work-humanisation schemes and the weakness of capital that relies only on control and coercion. For instance, one memo about stealing was entitled 'Reminder':

"According to our general internal rules and instructions, it is strictly prohibited for personnel to take home any goods or hotel assets. We regret to emphasise that if anyone disobeys they will be automatically fired.

Noticeably, the content of this memo is unkind, even brutal. Nevertheless, it was impersonal enough to seem distant because it was not pointing the finger at specific individuals.

Another supplementary memo informed workers that the hotel's outsourced security had been authorised to conduct body searches on departure from the hotel without prior warning. This reveals the coexistence of different mechanisms and levels of control that mediate particular capital-labour relations (Thompson, 1983, 1990). On the one hand, brusque letters and threats of body checks and, on the other, an impersonal and indirect supporting mechanism.

Even in cases of direct disciplinary action, the following example shows that it happened in a smooth and discreet way. Following complaints by managers of different departments about a cleaner who supposedly slowed down her productivity, a manager sat on a sofa in the bar and invited the employee to discuss her behaviour. The discussion appeared a friendly and relaxed exchange of arguments and lasted for thirty minutes. During the discussion, the manager offered the employee a drink. It was clear that the manager's behaviour was in line with the casual behaviour of the rest of the management team. This kind of approach was seen as typical of the way most managers in this hotel behaved. Managers' skills included joking, empathising with employees and even bullying in order to gain compliance. Despite being one of the few occasions where the disciplinary process was direct, the manager had chosen

a low key, chatty and relaxed disciplinary conversation with the employee rather than a written personal warning. It also appeared the manager had chosen the bar in order to maintain a sociable and sympathetic ambience. After the discussion, the employee returned to her job instantly. Owing to the nature of service work, this play on emotions was a common managerial tactic of influence, similar to what Hollway (1991) and Stearns and Stearns (1986) discuss as early 'sympathetic' human relations with the 'sentimental worker' (both sources cited in Sturdy and Fineman, 2001:139).

5.2.6 Managerial meetings

Managerial meetings help understand the nature of managers' main roles in the hotel. These are not the departmental meetings analysed earlier. Managerial meetings were summits in which managers gathered with either the board of directors or the general management team.

Moreover, despite the casual relationship between managers and employees in everyday operations, managers' tactics during general meetings with the board of directors were different. It is clear from minutes collected from managers' files (authorisation granted) that managers in meetings would cause a fuss for no reason. It was an opportunity for managers to reconfirm the legitimacy of their own position in front of the board of directors. They would often identify workers and leave them exposed. In addition, meetings were opportunities for exchanging and processing workers' information. Outcomes and decisions would be related to workers through supervisors rather than the managers themselves. In everyday situations, managers

were friendly and their social relations with workers particularly localised. However, during managerial meetings (which are a crucial part of the labour process) they supported rigorous managerial control. They knew how to maintain a different image in front of employees and expressed their power through supervisors and heads of departments. Their strategies, including the indirect disciplinary process and maintaining a different attitude between the 'front' line and managerial meetings, were all deliberate, consistent and considered choices. But as I discuss in the next subsection, these consistent and deliberate strategies were also part of management's attempts to minimise costs. One may assume that direct managerial oppression and bad attitudes were likely to increase labour turnover, and increase costs.

5.2.7 Reduction of costs

A final, and perhaps most important, point inseparable from the hotel's labour process is the issue of costs. In the same way that total guest satisfaction was the main driver of work processes in terms of performance, the main target of labour process was total cost efficiency that would in turn enable profit maximisation through meeting quantifiable targets.

The highest cost in hotels is the labour cost. It represents a significant proportion of total expenditure (Urry, 2002). Taken as a percentage of total cost, orthodox management textbooks estimate labour cost between 30 and 45 percent (Dittmer, 2003). The hotel's efforts to minimise costs were primarily directed at reducing staff expenditure. This was achieved through a strategic framework similar to what

mainstream business textbooks term Atkinson's model of the flexible firm (Atkinson, 1984). This model divides workers into core and peripheral groups and suggests flexible ways to meet a company's resourcing needs through functional, financial, numerical and temporal resourcing practices. These practices are effectively described by Lazzarato (1996:137) as "precariousness, hyper-exploitation [...where the] cycle of production comes into operation only when it is required by the capitalist". Similarly, Hardt and Negri (2004:112) argue that labour is "flexible because workers have to adapt to different tasks, mobile because workers have to move frequently between jobs and precarious because no contracts guarantee stable, long-term employment".

In the hotel, management used all types of flexible resourcing to maintain low labour costs. Some of their practices included split-timetable shifts, the increased use of part-time workers having one day off a fortnight, developing employees' capacity to undertake a variety of tasks in various departments and offering contracts with basic terms and conditions and/or low benefits (e.g., no pension plan). At the same time, it was difficult to bargain for better conditions because worker contracts did not guarantee long-term employment and a large part of the workforce was constituted by foreign workers. Workers from cheaper labour markets were a threat to temporary, local workers. This kind of structural threat has been evident in other parts of the world and minimises a worker's ability to resist. In this context, Hodson mentions that "workers are increasingly labouring under the implicit or explicit threat of losing their jobs to lower paid labour overseas" (1995:100). An organisation is no longer dependent on a single source of labour power. The hotel is able to replace senior, expensive personnel with foreign workers, even trainees and managerial effort to retain workers is less intense.

Additionally, the hotel (and as a result its workers) is not a member of any trade union and no longer cooperates with trade unions, another way of ensuring lower costs through minimising regulatory obligations. All contracts are prepared by management, meaning the hotel's workforce does not benefit from the provisions of collective bargaining and collective agreements. The hotel's only obligation in terms of governmental regulations is the national minimum wage (365,00CP per calendar month, 25\05/2007). Whenever the hotel hires a new employee, the modus operandi is always the same. Before start work, the newcomer is invited to sign a basic contract, a contract that workers often do not have the time to read thoroughly. As suggested in the following analysis, flexible strategies were major points of dispute between workers and management.

Finally, a shared frustration of guests and workers was generated by obvious managerial strategies to lower expenditure. Guests' discussions with workers were linked to three different issues. First, their dissatisfaction about the composition of workforce and sudden increase in immigrants. Most hotel guests were visiting Cyprus to learn about the Cypriot culture, but instead had to deal with workers from eastern European countries. Also, dissatisfaction was expressed by some returning British guests, together with their intention to travel to a different destination in the future. Second, the workforce was understaffed and in many instances workers had to rush to catch up with work processes. As a result, pressured workers had to minimise the time they dedicated to guests, which lowered the quality of service. Third, cheaper foodstuffs, such as the nuts and biscuits in the bar. Returning customers recognised the difference almost immediately. Notably, guests knew that these strategies had nothing to do with workers. They were all managerial attempts to minimise costs, and often they were central in the critical discussions between workers and customers.

5.3 Aesthetic and emotional expectations

This section contextualises and conceptualises the hotel expectations of the labour process by analysing theories of aesthetic and emotional labour. For some, this literature, or at least part of it, is consistent with the core of LPT (e.g. Bruke, 2009). For instance, Smith (2008:5) argues that "Hochschild (1983) developed labour process analysis indirectly by focusing on the negative consequences for workers' mental health and sense of self in servicing employers in ways which compromise their identity as individuals". Dowling similarly suggests that an "affective worker cannot be seen out of the context of the labour process that he or she is part of" (2006:10). Burrell (1990) follows a similar line of thought by maintaining that the labour process provides a theoretical basis upon which analysts of differing disciplinary backgrounds can ponder. Analysis continues with a discussion of the evidence relating to the theories of aesthetic and emotional labour.

5.3.1 'Smile, it's free': aesthetic standards

In service roles, worker appearance, dress, smile and courtesy are of major importance. Nickson and colleagues (2001:170) see such labour:

"as a supply of embodied capacities and attributes possessed by workers at the point of entry into employment. Employers then mobilise, develop and commodify these capacities and attributes through processes of recruitment, selection and training, transforming them into 'competencies' and 'skills' which are then aesthetically geared towards producing a

'style' of service encounter deliberately intended to appeal to the senses of customers, most obviously in a visual or aural way. Although analytically more complex, 'looking good' or 'sounding right' are the most overt manifestations of aesthetic labour."

Aesthetics in hotels prepares guests for what is to follow from the very first moment. In other words, although aesthetic skills complement social and technical skills rather than replace them (Nickson et al., 2001), the first aesthetic impression sells the 'product' earlier than any other component of labour process. In these terms, workers, and their uniform, cleanliness, smile and overall appearance, are part of a hotel's overall aesthetics, such as its bright and colourful interior and design. This enables the construction of a sustained aesthetic image for the hotel, which is equivalent to its quality and prestige.

There is another factor that makes hotel aesthetics imperative, and perhaps more so than other service sectors. In a luxury hotel, guests cannot check in on their own, as they do at an airport's automated check-in desk. In a hotel, guests cannot pay in money and print out an individual statement, as they would with a bank's automated services. They cannot pay a vending machine for a meal. The human element of hotel service cannot be reduced to mechanisms and automation. At all times, a worker with a big smile (ideally) and neat uniform should be looking forward to greeting and doing the job for the guest. This is why breaches of aesthetic order were considered workplace resistance and appear in section 5.6.2.

Aesthetic uniformity in the hotel had to be ensured by all means. Cleanliness, neat clothes, neat hair, clean-shaven gentlemen, shined shoes, smiling faces, short nails

and an overall effort to look neat and tidy were constant focuses of managerial attention. On one occasion, a waiter arrived at work unshaven. The restaurant manager said in a casual tone, 'You should always come to work shaved.' The employee instantly replied, 'I have shaved.' The manager then explained that although he had shaved, he had not shaved enough, adding humorously, 'by tonight you will have a beard.' Managerial attention and encouragement of appearance standards was continuous. For example, the most common phrase when new workers were around was the expression, 'smile, it's free', with the nearest manager always adding phrases such as:

'Smiling won't cost you anything, not even a single cent';

'Learn how to smile and make everybody happy';

'A small effort to smile would bring huge satisfaction, not only to you and guests, but also to employees';

'Unhappiness ruins your overall appearance'.

'To smile' is to "have or take on a facial expression showing pleasure, amusement, affection, friendliness, irony, decision ..." (Webster's Dictionary, cited in Hochschild, 2003:127). This kind of pleasure, amusement and affection had to be felt and expressed by hotel workers at all times. But aesthetics and dress codes mean more than merely looking nice (Gottfried, 1994). For instance, no matter the mood of each individual worker, cheerfulness and socialising with guests were also important. To put it in Van Maanen's (1991:70) words, "if for instance, Judy of the Jets is feeling tired, grouchy or bored, few customers want to know about it". In other words, appearance should be complemented by the appropriate mood.

Finally, in terms of aesthetic requirements in hiring staff, during my face-to-face job-interview I recognised no attempt by management to make a decision based on my appearance. One only had to look at the workforce to see that employment interviews did not filter candidates based on their body mass, voice, accent or how white their teeth were. During my interview, however, managers attempted to see whether my personality was compatible with the hotel's service quality. They asked me questions about whether I could put customer satisfaction first, handle complaints patiently and maintain a happy persona. They tried to check if my personal merits would suit their desired level of quality service (Macdonald and Siriani, 1996). This is the requirement that according to Hochschild (2003:7) "draws on a source of self that we honour as deep and integral to our individuality". It is associated with emotional and affective labour as well as with a dimension of aesthetic work not merely concerned with the management of appearance. A dimension that attempts to reinforce, manage and control workers' emotions and feelings. This is what led Hochschild (1983:7) to develop the concept of 'emotional labour', as analysed in the next subsection.

5.3.2 Emotional expectations

As mentioned in the previous section, emotional labour is not entirely separate from aesthetic labour. Indicative is Hochschild's (1983:7) argument that the management of feeling aims "to create a publicly observable facial and bodily display... sold for a wage". In other words, control of feelings and emotions is a hidden precondition for an organisation's aesthetics, which are by their very nature overt:

"All in all, we can think of emotion as a covert resource, like money, knowledge or physical labour, which companies need to get the job done. Real-time emotions are a large part of what managers manage and emotional labour is no small part of what trainers train and supervisors supervise."

(1993:xii)

From the first days in the hotel, I realised that because of the nature of the work process, no one worker can be permanently attached to any one post. Rather, they move from one department to another and operate in more than one department in every shift. Working in the lobby, parking area, around the swimming pools or any other front-of-house area is all part of a worker's remit, but the non-negotiable mission of maintaining guest satisfaction means that, regardless of which department a worker belongs to their performance anywhere on hotel premises should remain the same. This kind of labour is emotional because it is unconfined to a worker's post, task or specialisation, but instead is related to having a personality and being able to sell it through active emotional labour (Hochschild, 1983, 2003). This labour requires service employees, according to Hochschild (1983:7), to "induce or suppress feelings in order to sustain the outward countenance that produces the proper state of mind in others". Not every aspect of hotel work is emotional labour. 'Frontstage' interaction however, requires reinforcement, management and control of workers' feelings and emotions to fulfil organisational goals (Hochschild, 1983).

Furthermore, when orthodox management textbooks state that each worker in a hotel should be a salesperson no matter which department they belong to, they mean a hotel's generation of revenue is firmly attached to the standardisation of the smile, good mood and enthusiasm of each individual worker at all times. There is an

emotional command above any other material production of goods or settings. But a worker's management of feelings, psychological sacrifices and emotional promptness is also evident in a hotel's specific processes. Workers have clear instructions on how to handle guest complaints. No matter how anxious or offensive a guest is, the formal procedure requires the worker to stay calm and avoid taking personal offence, start writing down (noticeably) whatever the guest is saying without replying and let the guest express their anger. Finally, workers should reply with a smile and promise immediate action.

Emotional labour can be also considered a precondition of affective labour²¹. By controlling emotion and feelings, hotel work becomes affective. The goal is to affect emotions and feelings of guest, which requires that hotel workers control, manage, and if necessary, suppress their own emotions and feelings (Harvie, 2009). Or maybe the attempt to generate and manage a facial, emotional and bodily display (emotional labour) is part of affective labour. For some, affective production moves a step further and commodifies the worker so that certain characteristics such as charm, poise, courtesy and character become associated with their performance (Gottfried, 1994). However, in the subsequent analysis, I argue that the hotel's labour process expectations and managerial strategies transformed the workplace into a site of struggle. Finally, in terms of resistance, my evidence suggests that no specific examples of rebelling against customers have been recorded. As indicated in the following section, however, emotional labourers were not passive. To balance the

²¹ Affective labour is an important component of immaterial labour. Affective labour "involves the production and manipulation of affect and requires human conduct excitement or passion" (Hardt and Negri, 2000:292).

demanding emotional labour process, workers were resistant through a number of uncovered and hidden practices.

5.4 Mistaken expectations and misjudgement of workers' capacity to resist

"The beauty and mystery of the ethnographer's quest is to find the unexpected stories."

Ruth Behar (2003:16)

Before my participant observation study, I expected the only practice of uncovered resistance, if any, would be a trade union struggle through representation and/or collective bargaining. There is a strong tradition of unionism in Cyprus, where collective bargaining between trade unions and employers generates collective agreements covering pay increases, national holidays, annual leave and all other terms of employment (SEK, 2007). During the research design stage, however, I realised that most luxury hotels in the region, including the one I studied, were not unionised. The workforce was reliant on basic employment contracts.

At the same time, I was already preoccupied with a body of literature suggesting that most common practices of workplace opposition are usually hidden (Tucker, 1993; Collinson, 1994; Davidson, 1994) and that uncovered and collective resistance is usually undertaken through union representation (Davidson, 1994; Collinson, 1994). But my discussions with workers showed me that this was not the case. You have to spend time watching events, discussing and becoming an 'insider' before the full spectrum of worker resistance is revealed. Resistance is a topic not easily spoken

about. It involves ambiguity, secrecy, risk and ambivalence. In the long-term, I found both hidden and uncovered forms of resistance. I misjudged and underestimated both employees' potential to resist openly and their capacity to oppose collectively. Even though their opposition was sometimes fragmented by elements of consent, at other times, it was challenging and continuous. The following analysis is divided into two parts. The first focuses on the uncovered form of opposition and its practices, the majority of them unexpected. The second part examines hidden practices of workplace resistance, which have a non-confrontational nature as a common characteristic.

5.5 Uncovered resistance

5.5.1 Opposing through exposing: struggle in meetings

Unionism was unrelated to open and formal practices of worker resistance. However, the absence of organised unions meant workers resorted to other practices in order to redress the balance of power. The evidence persuaded me that informal uncovered resistance from below provided workers with a balance between their inability to enjoy trade union benefits and the demanding work processes in the hotel. These practices, beginning with workers' practices in departmental meetings, are discussed below.

Meetings appeared to be a worker's chance to complain, raise concerns, expose unfair practices and point the finger at management and the work process. The workers' general sense of dissatisfaction was mostly an intangible presence in the atmosphere.

Sometimes, disputes in meetings ended with mutual agreements between managers and employees. Other times, the intense work processes and associated pressure resulted in open grievances with management, and even instant unofficial walkouts.

Indicative of an individualistic act of opposition is one interesting complaint made by an overweight worker. This person ironically mentioned that the sandwiches sent from the kitchen to the pool bar for consumption by the guests were so dry that he almost choked on them. He said,

Despite the fact that [the tuna sandwich] is not tasty at all, it contains mayonnaise and it helps me to swallow my bite. The cheese and ham, though, is simply a dry and crap kind of sandwich.

(Bartender, Cypriot, 33)

The worker was signifying to management that he consumes products which are intended for guests and not employees. He was dismissive of the fact that management was present. The same worker also complained about the quality of the buffet food during cuisine events such as ‘Mexican night’ and ‘Cyprus night’, again signifying that while management are absent, workers have access to, and consume, food prepared for guests. Finally, the worker mentioned that the food in the staff restaurant was so oily and filthy that we had to eat anything else except that. Although management was aware of the fact that the workforce was sometimes consuming food meant only for guests, such direct statements were highly unexpected, not only by managers but even co-workers.

Moreover, this worker’s behaviour in the meeting was open opposition to the disciplinary process, cost efficiency and control of the labour process over employees.

At the same time, his uncovered practice signified what was happening in the hotel in terms of hidden opposition. One can even say that this uncovered practice of opposition was based on previous hidden opposition undertaken by the same person. His sarcastic but natural way of talking, in combination with his funny facial gestures, made everybody in the meeting room laugh. It was a comic moment that unfolded naturally and management appeared to accept it, but how funny it really was for them is debatable.

On another occasion, the majority of bar workers requested a meeting with management to discuss their low salary and poor working conditions. Before the meeting, workers agreed to use the possibility of strike action as a mechanism for applying pressure on management. Indeed, during the meeting workers appeared to be prepared and collectively informed managers about the possibility of strike action if management did not take their requests seriously. Management's instant reply was that they could not tolerate threats and that no one was irreplaceable. The general manager's exact words were, "by calling in workers from neighbouring cooperative hotels we could replace everybody within two hours", thus, making their strike useless and sending them home. After this response, employees immediately changed their minds. They abandoned their strike plans and accepted their payment conditions.

Their consent, however, incorporated aspects of resistance. Despite their short-lived plan for strike action, they signalled a clear message to management. Workers' discussions afterwards revealed a degree of satisfaction. They were pleased because they challenged the decision-making process and sent a message of collectiveness and predetermination, rather than an individual tendency to oppose the labour process. They cultured a spirit of collectiveness that could be subsequently used to facilitate

different forms and practices of resistance. Their open grievance with managers was evidence that hidden resistance, in the form of hidden discussions, covert pre-arrangements between workers and even conspiracies, existed in the organisation. It was based on their hidden discourse and was an extension of it.

Another example of uncovered resistance was linked to complaints about work processes. During front-office meetings, employees complained that management issued the weekly shift schedule in bits and pieces – sometimes for four days, sometimes for two weeks and sometimes even for a single day – instead of adopting a regular pattern. The background of this strategy was that after a number of personal requests to the front-office manager had met with no response, a number of disgruntled employees became engaged in a kind of a plot. They agreed in advance to expose this manager collectively in front of the management team and the workers during the next meeting. Reception workers raised this issue at the departmental meeting, in front of the management team. They stressed how unreasonable it was to refuse them the right to organise their schedules and lives in advance, simply because the front-office manager was not responsible enough to issue a fixed weekly programme. They emphasised that this tactic destroyed their work-life balance and was unfair and inhumane. During the meeting, the front-office manager found himself in a difficult position and when employees insisted on over-emphasising the issue, he turned towards them and signalled them to calm down. The manager started issuing a final weekly shift schedule every Saturday from then on.

One more example of ‘opposing through exposing’ concerned employees working at the dishwashing facilities. This is one of the toughest posts in the hotel’s work process. Employees work non-stop in humid conditions and high temperatures. Their

major tasks are to provide clean chinaware, cutlery and glasses, dispose of leftovers, pre-wash, fill the dishwashing machines and place items back onto shelves. It appears a manual job with less psychological intervention and control by management, but this is untrue. The job is demanding enough to make people cry sometimes, and most of the time their cries go unnoticed. Their workplace is full of signs indicating that they should be extra careful because breaking glasses and plates, even accidentally or in the washing machines, increases the hotel's expenditure and, therefore, this is prohibited. They also have to put up with moaning and complaints from superiors if any of the hundreds of glasses and plates they clean in a single shift have spots or stains.

Workers at the dishwashing facilities were always first to complain during meetings and informal discussions with other employees, while working and in face-to-face talks with managers at the back-of-house sections of the hotel in an attempt to expose their unfair treatment in any way possible. Their constant complaints facilitated a more collective form of resistance. Complaints were concerned with their bad working conditions and low wages, the lowest of any position in the hotel. On one occasion in the middle of the shift a worker said,

"We do the worst job, like slaves, and we are getting paid one pound²² and ninety cents per hour. We asked them to increase our wages during the meeting, and they agreed to add 15 cents. This is a little bit more than a pound for the whole day; it is ridiculous. Not to mention that we always work overtime, and we still get the same money: one pound ninety per hour."

(Female Dishwasher, Cypriot)

²² Cyprus Pounds

Workers' open accusations and critical comments about management in casual discussions in the staffroom were continuous, exposing in this way their disadvantageous conditions and exacerbating people's feelings about low wages and mistreatment. In addition, the held face-to-face talks with back-of-house management at every opportunity, demanding better working conditions and higher wages. But the dishwashers were not the only ones to hold face-to-face talks with the management. For instance, once I saw a female housekeeper putting her hand in the pocket of a manager's trouser. Afterwards I asked her what was going on and she said:

they don't understand do they? I told him so many times that my wage is very low compared to what they ask me to do daily at work. I just put my hand in his pocket and told him that soon I will have to take his own money to survive.

(Romanian female waiter, 26)

The 'opposing through exposing' strategy of confrontational resistance was unexpected. Sometimes it was effective and sometimes not. It was indicative, nevertheless, of workers' determination to bargain better working conditions in a non-unionised environment through intentional struggle. It is worth mentioning that hotel management appeared quite tolerant of their responses. However, as the next section suggests, opposing through exposing was not the only confrontational practice.

5.5.2 Uncovered contestation of work processes

This section examines the open practices of opposing the hotel's labour process through contestation of individual processes. Findings evidenced that some employees took advantage of the control they exercised over the work process to resist the

overall labour process. Control was gained through either their position or skills. Either factor was enough to force management to depend on them to a high degree. First, because a large part of the workforce was made up of untrained temporary workers from Eastern Europe and management was heavily dependent on skilled workers and secondly, because some positions in a hotel, such as night waiter or night receptionist, are far less attractive to hospitality employees. As a result, management was far more tolerant of workers occupying these positions.

One practice of workers' open opposition was their non-cooperation. Non-cooperation is a common characteristic in findings related to hidden opposition or union-directed strikes. A framework of hidden opposition includes mental abstention from work, distancing of the person from work processes, lack of adequate involvement and participation, refusal to do as directed, detachment from teamwork, rejection of management favours and even physical abstention from work with the usual excuses. Nevertheless, workers can incorporate non-cooperation with more open practices of resistance. In the following section, I explore findings that combine characteristics of both confrontational and uncovered resistance practices.

On one occasion, a valuable worker who was both skilled and willing to work unpopular after-hour shifts was the only person in the hotel with an earring. In Cyprus, it is strictly prohibited for male workers to wear earrings in luxury hotels. The concept of aesthetic labour, where workers are part of the hotel's interior design and overall product, views an earring as detracting from the hotel's quality and prestige. This worker, a waiter in the restaurant, was an interesting case from the outset because of the earring. After a couple of weeks, I realised that it was not an isolated act but that he wore it everyday. In the meantime, we had the chance to discuss a

couple of things during the work process and we became friends. Having established a degree of trust, I asked him how it was possible for him wear an earring at work. He replied that when he first started work he had four earrings and management made it clear that he would have to take them off.

"The management informed me that I have to take my earrings off. I used to have on four. I stopped wearing three, however, I will keep on this one. They intervene in my lifestyle and my appearance, and since I don't want to abandon my lifestyle totally I will keep this ring on my ear no matter what they say. I am even willing to resign if they don't accept it."

(Restaurant Waiter, Cypriot)

It was an act of non-cooperation and disregard from the worker's side. For management it was a barrier to maintaining a high aesthetic quality standard. Heads of different departments often commented about his earring and asked him to take it off. Nevertheless, management's dependence on this worker at this period of the year was high and they could not afford to lose him. At the same time, there was no guarantee he was not first on management's list for firing after the peak season. Nevertheless, when I returned to the hotel a year later for my respondent validation study, I found out that this worker was still a member of the workforce, and he was still wearing an earring.

Nevertheless, it is clear that open practices of resistance with non-cooperation characteristics can be used in settings where superiors depend on subordinates (Tucker, 1993). For instance, a night waiter on his day off appeared in the swimming pool area of the hotel at lunchtime and made use of the facilities. Using the front-of-

house facilities was strictly prohibited. Everybody saw him, including the restaurant manager, but he did not react negatively. At this time of the year, the need for night waiters was very high as not everybody is willing to work after-hour shifts.

Another skilled and competent female employee worked full-time on reception and in the bar during her days off because she wanted to increase her income. After an unfortunate incident, when she destroyed a crate of beer after mistakenly leaving it out in the sun, the bar supervisor, who seemed to be in a bad mood, entered the bar and began shouting at her. The worker became embarrassed and left. I managed to talk to her in the staffroom the day after. She said she became embarrassed not only because of the head barman's dreadful behaviour but because he did what he did in front of the other staff. She said,

He could take me out of sight and talk to me, instead of embarrassing me in front of everybody else.

(Female Receptionist, Romanian)

The worker decided that she would not work in the bar again. She was even on the schedule that night but informed the head barman that she was not coming. She kept her reception position and from that point on talked to other employees about the head barman's antisocial behaviour.

Additional non-cooperation practices included two different occasions when employees were not wearing their name badge on their shirt. Another example of continuous non-cooperation related to customer parking. Although management issued repeated memos stressing that guest parking was strictly prohibited for employee cars, many simply ignored the ban and refused to cooperate. When asked,

one replied that guest parking was closer to the hotel, cleaner and safer than the dedicated area for employee cars.

Finally, foreign workers on reception, in the restaurant and in the staffroom often spoke in their mother tongue. It was a strange phenomenon, with co-workers and managers unable to understand them. But it was a way of opposing the labour process without consequence. Managers kindly reminded employees to talk in English in order to let everybody understand. This was, however, not enough to prevent foreign workers talking in their native language and managers did not resist this defiance of their request. Another interesting example of uncovered worker opposition which managers could not fully control was the issue of consuming products, which is analysed in the next section.

5.5.3 Consumption of products

The practice of consuming products designated for guests was a daily occurrence. Many employees tried to obtain or consume drinks, food or other unauthorised goods. Some workers chose a time when managers or supervisors were not around, but others acted openly and naturally, even in front of managers. Some workers could even wrap and take products home. For instance, I saw the ‘beach boys’ from the leisure centre of the hotel taking home olive oil and eggs. A bar colleague took raw coffee for consumption at home. When she saw me staring she justified her action by saying, ‘Anyway the salary is very low.’ Acquiring raw materials is a tactic which has been repeatedly and strictly prohibited in management memos. In this sense, it was stealing but for workers it was indirect compensation achieved through scorning management

threats. Hodson argues that "theft and pilferage are commonly used tactics in balancing the accounts between effort and rewards" (1995:92).

Workers produced a host of different excuses for eating buffet food rather than staffroom food. For instance, staffroom food was served at 6:30pm, but some waiters delayed their dinner until 9:30pm on the grounds that their shifts ended after midnight and they needed energy for the rest of the night. The only food available at 9:30pm was the buffet food. Although their point was valid, their real intention was to avoid the staffroom food. Many had previously spoken negatively about the food served to staff. They consumed food cooked for customers at 9:30pm believing that staffroom food was of inferior quality, poorly cooked and dangerous. One waiter told me repeatedly that "the food in the staffroom is too oily" (male waiter, 26). During my four-month stay in the hotel he reminded me more than ten times that, "George became poisoned by eating the food in the staffroom". Another worker used to say 'I prefer to eat buffet food or nothing' (male waiter, 38). Front-desk employees were avoiding staff room food too. In one occasion, a female receptionist told me, *'I prefer to slice a bread-roll and eat it with a simple slice of cheese rather than eating staffroom's filthy food'*. Another two female receptionists who were present agreed that a simple cheese roll would be much better than staffroom's food.

Others consumed products more openly. When I worked in the bar, the porter, the 'mini-bar girl' and a maintenance worker consumed ice creams and soft drinks every day before the arrival of the head barman. Many employees consumed food and desserts designated for guests in the main kitchen. I asked one waiter about drinking and eating products openly. He said,

"We work long shifts until very late, mostly when we have booked functions. We work until three or four o'clock in the morning but the salary remains low. And when we finish, we cannot even drink a pint or something to relax. The place is full of warnings reminding us that we are not allowed to drink the hotel's soft drinks or alcohol. I don't want to walk out of sight and drink anything. I am not a thief but this is ridiculous after these long and exhaustive shifts. So I decided that I will eat and drink anything I want and I don't really care."

(Restaurant Waiter, 42, Cypriot)

In many similar occasions workers used to say, *'I deserve it; maître d'hôtel knows I deserve it; after tonight's exhaustive shift I deserve to eat and drink whatever I want'*. This practice is always worker resistance. It might easily be called misbehaviour or dissent. However, for some employees, consuming products was an attempt to balance the labour process's unfair working conditions. For others it helped them cope with the demanding work process in the long-term.

In line with the consumption of products, however, it is important to mention that workers were always willing to offer unauthorized products to co-workers and guests. For instance, in many occasions a specific female receptionist was offering complimentary drinks to guests without prior managerial permission. Also, for bar personnel, offering complimentary drinks to guests was a practice taking place every now and then. In addition, bar and restaurant personnel were known to offer drinks or food to co-workers who had no direct access to it, such as back-of-the-house maintenance personnel, receptionists and housekeepers. Obviously, this was a direct breach of cost control and therefore management was trying to minimize this

phenomenon through oral warnings and written memos. Nevertheless, the repetitive internal memos raised on announcement boards every month were indicative that the consumption of goods was an everyday practice of resistance. It is worth mentioning however, that most practices were discussed by workers in the hotel's corridors and staffroom, which is central to the following analysis.

5.5.4 The staffroom

There are places at work where different feeling rules prevail (Gabriel, 1988; Goffman, 1956, 1959), places which provide amnesty from work requirements and normal emotional labours. "Restrooms, galleys, corridors and other 'off-stage' areas provide an opportunity for employees to drop their corporate masks, free from the scrutiny of supervisors and customers" (Sturdy and Fineman, 2001:146). The staffroom is one of these places.

I have listened to workers relating unthinkable stories in the staffroom. I have listened to monologues and deliriums from workers who had sat on the same chair for their daily break for the past three decades, accusing managerial personnel for different reasons: *'They are useless; this is why we change managers every couple of years'* (Beach-boy, 49). *'I don't care about their university degrees, what I know is that when I got employed here most of them were primary school students'* (Male cooker, 56). *'I am not going to do what they are asking; this is not what we agreed at the beginning'*. *'Look at this food; it was part of the buffet two nights ago and now it's served in the staffroom for dinner'*. In other words, the staffroom was a place for

complaints, critical discussions, tears, misunderstandings— and often nothing but the sound of knives and forks.

It was quite good for a staffroom: clean, tidy and recently refurbished with white plastic chairs and tables, free coffee and a couple of vending machines. Complimentary hot food was served three times a day, including a salad and dessert bar. Bread, butter and jam were provided on a 24-hour basis. Nevertheless, most workers had something bad to say about the quality and variety of the food served. Interestingly, talks targeting the staffroom were frequently those of the workforce in work zones outside the staffroom. It was a reason for resistance:

“The food in the staffroom is oily and filthy”;

“Instead of throwing away customer food they serve it in the staffroom”.

“I got poisoned from the staffroom’s food”; and

“The staffroom is a filthy place, everybody is smoking in there”.

Even managers occasionally ate in the staffroom with workers, just to prove it was a good place for everybody and that the food was fine. But even in the presence of managers, workers behaved no differently. It was a place of planning and talking about resistance (e.g., critical talks and boycott), and also a place of resistance for employees who wanted to kill time doing nothing when they were supposed to be working. It seemed to be a practice of resistance itself.

I often thought about the staffroom phenomenon during my free time at home. One day, feeling curious, I typed in the search box of ‘YouTube’ the word ‘staffroom’. More than 1500 results (clips) made me realise that the staffroom is a significant chapter in worker resistance, fun and self-identification.

Finally, for me, the hotel's staff-room was indicative of the 'potential spaces of freedom possible in even oppressive corporate environments' (Fleming and Spices, 2007:5). It is a place where, among other activities, workers could gather to plan rule-breaking, 'play', and discuss everyday issues at work in a satirical and ironic way. It appeared to be a centre in which the corporation was challenged from within.

5.6 Hidden forms of resistance

Based on their similar characteristics, such as their indirectly confrontational nature, a number of different practices can be categorised under the heading above. The spectrum of hidden resistance in the hotel included a vast range of non-confrontational practices. This form of opposition was sometimes inconsistent, individualistic and fragmented by elements of consent. On other occasions, it was facilitated by a collective spirit and long-lasting practices. Workers' methods of covertly resisting the labour process were mostly concerned with interfering in the hotel's work processes by secretly attacking their vulnerable spots.

It is important to highlight that the nature of hotel work processes and their characteristics play an important role in understanding and analysing the non-confrontational nature of hidden opposition. To produce an affective product, hoteliers heavily rely on people's emotions, feelings and appearance. Although existing in hotels, machines and material labour are mostly secondary to affective labour. Also, "the relation between customers and employees is a very personal one

and interrelations between them are mainly unsupervised" (Lockwood and Jones, 1984:5). Nickson et al. (2001) mention that organisations may find it particularly difficult to manage and control interaction between front-line employees and customers. These characteristics indicate that hotel processes rely heavily on the human factor. Any hidden intervention within its vulnerable spots enables workers to exercise serious control over the product's quality and output. As a result, the labour process is often susceptible to hidden opposition.

But a hotel's processes are inseparable as well as heterogeneous. They are inseparable because guests' needs in a hotel are anticipated and then satisfied almost immediately, while in other industries it is normal for customers to wait for delivery (Lockwood and Jones, 1984). In other words, production and consumption takes place simultaneously. Another characteristic is heterogeneity, which refers to the many possible variations in service quality. For instance, workers have variations in their behaviour from day to day. People have their ups and downs. Another factor is that service quality varies from producer to producer, worker to worker and, since guests are part of the experience, customer to customer (Zeithaml et al., 1985, cited in Nickson et al., 2001:173). Hotel work is a social act constituted of human relationships (Bolton and Houlihan, 2005). As a result, it is difficult to maintain uniformity of service, and some instances in the employee-customer interaction remains relatively uncontrolled.

In the manufacturing sector, employees often monopolise technical production-related knowledge that facilitates their oppositional practices (Collinson, 1994:28). In the hotel sector, however, worker resistance can be twofold. There is a hidden option of resistance, but it is not the only one. Through production of affect, workers can also

monopolise their own unique personality or self, which is required to deliver a personalised service to guests. A hotel's product – even in the form of a romantic sunset on its deck – cannot be fully delivered without workers' affective self-competence and personal touch in the first instance. If a candidate's personality is deemed melancholic or apathetic, and their typical behaviour pessimistic, suspicious, depressed, egocentric, aggressive or any combination of the above, they will not be hired.

As noted in Chapter 3, current literature addresses various sub-forms of hidden opposition, such as 'resistance through distance' (Collinson, 1994:28), careful carelessness (Prasad and Prasad, 2001:107) and routine resistance (Scott, 1985:273). The practices of these sub-forms include output restriction (Emmet and Morgan, 1982), restricting information flow from and to management, critical comments about the management (Tucker, 1993), avoiding tasks and non-cooperating (Tucker, 1993; Collinson, 1994), walking out unofficially (Tucker, 1993; Davidson, 1994) and sabotage (Tucker, 1993; Davidson, 1994).

For many workers, hidden resistance practices are attempts to compensate for low wages, demanding work processes and the prevailing power asymmetries concerning what they personally contribute to the hotel contra its operations. In other words, they believed that, after their opposition, their employment in the company was more balanced and fair. On the other hand, if we take into consideration the lack of unionism in the specific hotel, one may establish links between worker resistance and what some researchers term "a transformation of resistance from formal collective opposition to mundane or 'routine' forms of resistance" (Prasad and Prasad, 2001:106, also in Scott, 1985; Hodson, 1991; Prasad and Prasad, 1998). Nevertheless, my

findings do not justify this approach and I will avoid falling into a dangerous generalisation.

5.6.1 Asserting self-tailored preferences

This spectrum of practices of hidden resistance is similar to Collinson's (1994) 'resistance through distance'. Distancing is a form of opposition by which "subordinates try to escape or avoid the demands of authority and to distance themselves, either physically and/or symbolically, from the organisation and its prevailing power structure" (Collinson, 1994:25). In this case study, distancing does not comprise challenging employer dominance directly. As mentioned in Chapter 3, distancing often serves to "[tailor] the person's preference or defensive interests, so camouflaging and partly ameliorating fears and anxieties" (Sturdy and Fineman, 2001:144). In other words, workers tend to tailor their tasks to what they believe to be fair. In these cases, Sturdy and Fineman (2001:144) suggest that "the dictates of the corporate script are actively rejected or subverted in favour of one which is more self-designed".

This oppositional form concerns a number of resistance practices applied by workers to help them to escape, avoid or distance themselves from work process requirements. Apart from non-cooperating, employees may intervene harmfully in routine processes, exercise their own control over the quality of their service and restrict output through a number of practices. The ensuing analysis explores how hidden

resistance may shift over time, according to circumstances and the different sections of the hotel.

During a casual conversation, after-hours shift workers mentioned that management assigned them extra tasks to those agreed after accepting the post. One worker asserted,

We agreed on specific tasks, but everyday they keep adding more. But I cannot produce what I am not getting paid for.

(Night Waiter, Cypriot, 43)

Therefore, workers were often not fully cooperating and tended to apply their own control over production by keeping distance, slowing down and minimising productivity. Since management was absent during their after-hour shifts and surveillance methods were not utilised, workers used to create free time and sleep for two to three hours, having worked flat out on what they thought to be the equivalent of one shift and avoided the tasks considered 'extra'. Not only did they believe they were assigned too many tasks for a single night, they also thought their salary in relation to their after-hour timetable was unreasonable. As a result, they kept their productivity to a low level. For example, on being instructed to lay 40 tables in the main restaurant in readiness for the next day, they chose to prepare fewer.

Additionally, instead of wearing their full uniform, they preferred to wear the basics, avoiding their bow tie and name badge despite the hotels' aesthetic nature. When I asked the employees about their uniform, one co-worker replied:

"They pay me £18 every shift, plus £3 for the unorthodox time of my shift. I prepare 15 additional tables every night, and at the same time, I have to escort guests up to their rooms, carry luggage, prepare early breakfasts

for those checking out early and whatever else occurs. At this time of the night and under these circumstances, I do not have time for formalities.”

(Night Waiter, Cypriot, 23)

Here is a clear example of workers' efforts to distance themselves from the work process. A co-worker was making fun of me because I was working on Saturday during a wedding event organised by the banquet office. He reckoned that it was going to be a nightmare. I asked him why. Note that this hotel is famous for organising romantic weddings by the sea, while Cyprus weddings traditionally attract 1000–2000 guests. My co-worker said,

I was supposed to work as well, but I informed the restaurant manager in advance that it was impossible because of family matters. I am not working tomorrow, no way. You will break into pieces. You will have to work until 3 o'clock in the morning, carrying food, drinks and cleaning at the beginning and then carrying tables and chairs.

(Waiter, Cypriot, 26)

He invented an excuse to avoid a difficult shift – and he was not the only one. As I found out during my ethnographic study, this is a common tactic among workers.

Another example of a worker opposing the work process by distance occurred when the head barman had mistakenly called in one extra person to work. After looking at the schedule, we discovered that one person among us was not supposed to be working on that day. We phoned the head barman. He confirmed that one person's shift had been wrongly moved and that they should leave now and return tomorrow. The worker immediately replied that he had not been informed of the change of shift, and that there was no chance for him to return tomorrow because of a family matter; therefore, he would return on Monday. Of course, it was not his mistake and since he

provided a valid excuse management could not oppose his decision or blame him. Three days after, we discussed the matter. He was still disappointed because nobody had informed him about the change. He said,

Preparing yourself psychologically for work, showering, shaving, travelling all the way from home, starting servicing guests and then having to return back home because somebody is not responsible enough to inform you is the final touch in this poorly paid job.

(Bartender, Cypriot, 29)

When I asked him about his family business on Saturday, he replied, “Don’t be silly, I did not have any family matters to attend. That was just my revenge to their unresponsiveness. I had an excellent weekend. Three days free, the ultimate relaxation.”

Managers’ behaviour was diplomatic, but they were expressing their strategies through their supervisors who were very strict. This may be because of the daily power struggle between supervisors and workers ‘fighting’ together at the first line, the need for supervisors to control the process or the attrition produced in the work process. Below is an occasion where a discussion between a worker and supervisor ended in resistance through distance. A waitress became anxious because of the offensive behaviour of a restaurant supervisor, and she eventually requested a holiday. Her supervisor sent her to one of the hotel’s restaurants, which was shut at the time, to find a service trolley and bring it back to him. But the waiter did not manage to find it. She said that the restaurant was dark and messy, and she couldn’t see. The supervisor went to the restaurant himself and found one. When he came back, he was furious. He was shouting at the worker, accusing her of playing games with him. At the end of the shift, the worker said to me,

This guy has communication problems. His behaviour is awful. I tried to do my best and put in all possible effort, but under the pressure of work he does not seem to respect anything.

(Waitress, Polish, 38)

The waiter was highly dissatisfied. It was clear this conflict had badly affected his state of mind, and he decided to book holiday in the middle of peak season. He requested 10 days' leave in August, and said that he would be unable to stay if his request was refused. He went to Amsterdam during his time off.

5.6.2 Computer-based resistance

This section analyses hidden workplace resistance practices of employees who occupy computer-based positions. In most cases, their positions require the handling of important information and access to networked PCs. It seems that computer technology has not only stimulated a hotel's sales: it has also become a resistance tool in the hands of workers. The provision of information to a hotel's decision-makers, online booking, global advertising and evaluating the competition are some of the benefits provided by information technology. However, the use of computers at the front desk has assisted workers' efforts to escape the work process and use information to criticise the company.

Specifically, a receptionist with access to the hotel's room rates online could compare the rate with the current occupancy rate of the hotel, criticise the extreme fluctuations of the price and examine how a room's price could become a tourist trap. This

discussion was frequently central to reception employees' under-the-radar discussions, which consisted of criticising or poking fun at management and guests behind their backs.

Employees were also able to decide room rates according to the situation. For instance, if the computer system indicated that the hotel's occupancy was high, they could increase the room rate of an unexpected walk-up guest without prior permission from managers. Conversely, if the computer indicated low occupancy for any night, a receptionist could provide a lower quotation. The power to decide whether to increase or decrease the rate was in the receptionist's hands. Subsequently, he or she could oppose the labour process at their will. For instance, one receptionist with eight years' experience checked in an unexpected guest at the lowest possible rate. When I asked why she had chosen this rate rather than the rate immediately higher, which was £10 more expensive but still lower than average, she replied ironically, "The company is rich enough. How much more are they going to have?" This tactic is similar to what Collinson (1994) terms strategic manipulation of information in oppositional discursive practices. In other words, the receptionist utilised the information and technology providing power to decide on certain room rates in order to oppose the labour process.

Another technology-related practice of resistance is using the Internet on the PCs at the front desk. Some examples of this practice included receptionists surfing the web and using Windows MSN Messenger during shifts. This was a way to keep at a distance from the labour process and their duties. During the third month of the ethnographic study, the situation grew out of control to such an extent that management decided to uninstall all software connected with MSN Messenger.

Management announced that the use of MSN Messenger was illegal, and that using the Internet for non-work purposes was forbidden.

5.6.3 Secret talks and critical comments

Critical comments about a company are reasons for redundancy or denial of promotion (Collinson, 1994:45). In the hotel, this kind of practice was a routine resistance (Scott, 1985), as was dissent, which manifested itself in various forms such as hidden irony, humour, ambiguity, satire or even unplanned and spontaneous reactions. For instance, receptionists gossiping about hotel rates and managers was an attempt by workers to redefine their identity and status and fit a more positive model than the one ascribed by management. They secretly talked about the management and their eating and working habits. “They eat everything, they are overweight and their children have very bad manners,” claimed one employee. “Their husbands have affairs,” someone else added.

Even considering the higher interaction between management and front office personnel, accusations and criticism aimed at managers was undoubtedly higher on reception. Management offices were situated right behind the front office, which increased the interaction between management and the front office. The call centre was part of reception, and at least half the incoming calls were requests to be connected to a member of the management team. The majority of managers’ calls could only be answered by reception workers, and this further made the interaction between the two sides challenging.

Nevertheless, secret discussions and accusations concentrated on more important aspects of the work, such as the reduction of costs and their consequences on the labour process. For instance, while preparing for a wedding event, a co-worker complained that management had hired as waiters eastern European workers who had no experience in this role. With a wink, he showed me a manager struggling to help lay a tablecloth and said ironically:

“Now managers have to stand over their heads all the time to inspect if they are working correctly. It’s like having two people for one job. One day I will walk out unexpectedly and they will wonder why.”

On another occasion, a cleaner secretly complained to me that she would soon leave her job because she could not survive on the hotel’s wages. She said:

“They pay me £1.85 per hour. My monthly net salary is not even £325. Our work is exhausting and cruel. We have to work under the sun, then work in the air conditioning and then back to the sun. Yesterday, the housekeeper said that my co-workers had accused me of laziness. However, I work according to my salary. I will not do anything more than that. Low salary equals low productivity, and at the first chance I will leave for another job, I will just walk away. Between me and you, I will not even say goodbye.”

(Female Cleaner, Cypriot)

In a similar vein, a male waiter said:

As soon as I arrived at the hotel, the food and beverage manager was waiting for me to ask me to go through the hotel’s floors and collect all the empty trays which had been placed by the guests outside their guestrooms. But this is not part of my tasks. I am not going to do it. This is room-service’s job, not mine.

In another example, a disgruntled cook was preparing to leave for a different industry. He was attending private lessons in order to sit exams to become a fireman. Of his current employment, he complained, “Everything has been concentrated and reduced in this sector. No trade unions, low wages, no benefit and most hotels working understaffed.” This worker was part of a large number of well trained, knowledgeable and graduate-standard hospitality employees choosing to move to another industry and work in unseasoned occupations. As we discussed his situation, the cook stood in a cloud of BBQ smoke. Another cook nearby, who was listening to our conversation, was shrouded in a similar smoke, and added, “*We have no Sundays or Saturdays in this inferno.*” It was humorous watching two people complain about their occupation engulfed in a cloud of smoke. However, their thoughts, and the tone in which they expressed them, were not humorous at all.

Similarly, a night waiter mentioned during an after-hours discussion that managers added too many tasks to his shift, yet there was still no time left to accomplish all of them. He insisted that they expected him to produce the work of two people. At the same time, his salary was low. He said:

“They pay me £18 every shift, plus £3 for working late. On top of what we agreed at the beginning, they want me to prepare 15 additional tables every night, and at the same time, I have to escort guests up to their rooms, prepare early breakfasts for those checking out early and anything else that may occur. We are understaffed, and our wages are very low. One day you leave for good, and they ask you the reason of your walkout. However, when you repeat your complaints to them throughout the year they pay no attention at all. This job is very demanding because of the nature of this position and its timetable. In addition, you have to work in the heat all the time because they

refuse to turn on the air conditioning at night-time for energy conservation, which is basically managers saving electricity costs.”

Another worker was anxious because they wanted him to move from one department to another. “I don’t like these games,” he said. “They send me from the restaurant to the bar, from the bar to the pool bar and from the pool bar back to the restaurant according to their needs. That was not the deal. I want them to choose one position and let me work there. I don’t like this kind of fluctuation every two days.”

5.6.4 Silence

Throughout my study in the hotel, some workers distanced themselves from collective discussions and refused to criticise or disapprove of management. Their silence was treated with suspicion by many co-workers. One bar worker rarely talked with the rest of the workforce and never expressed negative views about management. Co-workers used to characterise him as a ‘manager buddy’. Others said he was the assistant manager’s friend. I was also told that although his previous profession had nothing to do with hotels or service, the assistant manager personally hired him to work in the hotel bar.

I purposely approached this worker and started a discussion about different issues such as politics and football. He liked politics, and we used to discuss international politics and matters almost everyday. We soon began to discuss different topics, including job-related issues which caused frustration in the hotel, such as wages. He eventually revealed he had nothing to do with what our co-workers were thinking

about him and his stance. His frustration about workplace issues was similar to our co-workers, and his stance did not necessarily represent contentment. But still his frustration was expressed ‘silently’:

“I prefer to remain silent. My silence is an act of avoiding saying anything that may travel within the workforce, become twisted and return to me as something totally different; as something I never said, or as something that may generate punishment without even a serious reason.”

(Bartender, Cypriot, 45)

I tried to understand whether his silence could be resistance. Indeed, silence may constitute a strong argument, if accompanied with the right act. In the service industry, a ‘false’ gesture, a rude comment in front of a guest, a ‘careless disregard or a sleepy and bored presence can all undermine the enterprise and ruin a sale (Van Maanen, 1991:59). This worker frequently appeared bored. His answers to guests’ questions were often monosyllabic and he was never enthusiastic enough to put in extra effort or work overtime. In the minds of his co-workers, his attitude at work was linked to the fact that his previous job had nothing to do with hotels or service. His silence and low profile, though, was never linked to good work performance. He eventually spoke to me one day:

"Our co-workers think that criticism and sarcasm acquires them a part of the managers’ authority. They think that talking behind managers’ backs makes them more powerful. But my lack of authority is what enables me to act freely. Lack of authority makes you free."

I never managed to make him explain what he meant by ‘free’. Did he mean free to resist, or maybe an alternative way to negotiate? Nevertheless, it was clear he opposed the idea of talking and criticising too much.

5.7 Conclusion

My chapter described and discussed the hotel labour process and workers’ resistance using the context of LPT and theoretical elements of aesthetic, emotional and affective labour. My fieldwork findings indicated that control was not direct and coercive. In everyday work situations managers were friendly and their social relations with workers particularly localised. In other words, they knew how to balance and maintain a different image in front of employees. However, they used to express their power through supervisors and heads of departments. Also, management could monitor the labour process in a very detailed way and produce numerical findings about performance in the context of future goals.

But at the same time, fieldwork findings showed that workers resist with a number of hidden and confrontational practices. Although research literature on workplace resistance usually suggests that practices of workplace opposition are usually hidden and that uncovered and collective resistance is usually undertaken through union representation, findings showed that workers resist with a number of uncovered and confrontational practices in order to balance their low wages and unfair working conditions. In the absence of organised unions, workers resorted to other practices in order to redress the balance of power, vis-à-vis hotel management

The next chapter continues with a discussion of the findings in relation to a number of LPT debates.

Chapter Six

Discussion

6.1 Introduction

My earlier analysis described and discussed the hotel labour process and workers' resistance using the context of LPT and theoretical elements of aesthetic, emotional and affective labour. Fieldwork findings showed that workers resist by a number of uncovered and confrontational practices in order to balance their low wages and unfair working conditions. At the same time, their opposition is a way of preserving a sense of self from the requirements of emotional and affective work. Their resistance is a response to the threats and pressure of valued identities (Ezzamel et al., 2001).

Emotional work becomes a state of mind when a worker should manage and suppress their feelings and try to love the job in order "to create a publicly observable, facial and bodily display" (Hochschild, 2003:7). On some occasions, both workers and guests in the hotel are engaged in affective reproduction, in which personality and subjectivity are involved in the production of value (Lazzarato, 1996). Resistance, however, breaches the required emotional sequence. In this context, resistance is an emotional act which opposes work's attempts to coordinate workers' acts and feelings towards emotional labour requirements. In such cases, worker opposition breaks the fake image and they are no longer "dissonant to their feelings, covering anger or distress" (Guerrier and Adib, 2003:1413). We can also argue that their unofficial self re-scripting of their tasks created a degree of positive feelings (Sturdy and Fineman, 2001) that relates to fun, joy and even personal realisation. Worker opposition,

however, is influenced by and generates a number of debates and responses. These are discussed in the analysis below.

6.2 The issue of defining resistance from below

The issue of defining worker resistance is consistent with other dichotomised issues between structuralists and post-structuralists in LPT. It remains debatable until the present day (i.e., Stream 1 during the 27th International Labour Process Conference in Edinburgh, 2009). The differing viewpoints of labour process commentators on the issue remain central for researchers, who struggle to contextualise their fieldwork, and at the point of analysing findings. For instance, from my previous examples of ‘opposing through exposing’, ‘asserting self-tailored preferences’, distancing, silence, consuming products and the occasion of unsuccessful bar workers’ strike, none of these practices are resistance in a traditional LPT perspective. This body of literature define these practices as dissent or misbehaviour. Thompson (2009), for example, divides conflict into resistance, misbehaviour and dissent. But from a Foucauldian perspective these issues are all practices of resistance. They may be ineffective or unsuitable for bringing about change, but are defined as resistance in most post-structural accounts.

I believe we should treat delicately the issue of defining resistance. The practices I discuss in presenting my findings, although similar to a Foucauldian vocabulary, also draw on characteristics of traditional accounts. These characteristics relate to purposive, behavioural and intentional responses. For instance, although ineffective,

the bar workers' strike was collectively planned in advance and demanded better working conditions. In this instance, resistance is not only a response to threats, but also a struggle for a better workplace.

What does it mean to misbehave if there is a clear purpose to resist? Is it a workers' game? Or is it action borne out of boredom? For Thompson (2009), an act is resistance if it is effective. But if there is intent why is it called misbehaviour instead of opposition? I agree with Piderit (2000:784), who asserts that "rarely do individuals form resistant attitudes, or express such attitudes in acts of dissent or protest, without considering the potential negative consequences for themselves". I also agree that "frivolous expression of resistance seems unlikely, [or at least not so common,] since individuals who engage in it could face severe penalties and are aware that they should treat lightly" (Piderit, 2000:785). Besides, my evidence suggests that many conflicts in the hotel ended in resignations and/or layoffs. Therefore, I believe that Thompson's view is limited. A practice of resistance may not be effective, but this does not necessarily reduce it to an act of misbehaviour. At the same time however, I agree with Thompson's (2009) argument about blurred lines between the different practices of resistance and misbehaviour. In other words, the two categories are not fixed. As a result, this makes the need for empirical examination (Jack, 2008) an appropriate determinant for defining resistance. In my study, workers' purposeful, intentional and purposive practices are oppositional acts to balance unfair work and this is how they are defined. Finally, this analysis is similar to the issue of effectiveness. The efficiency of specific practices of opposition is one more debate in the LPT's control and resistance model. This is analysed in the next section.

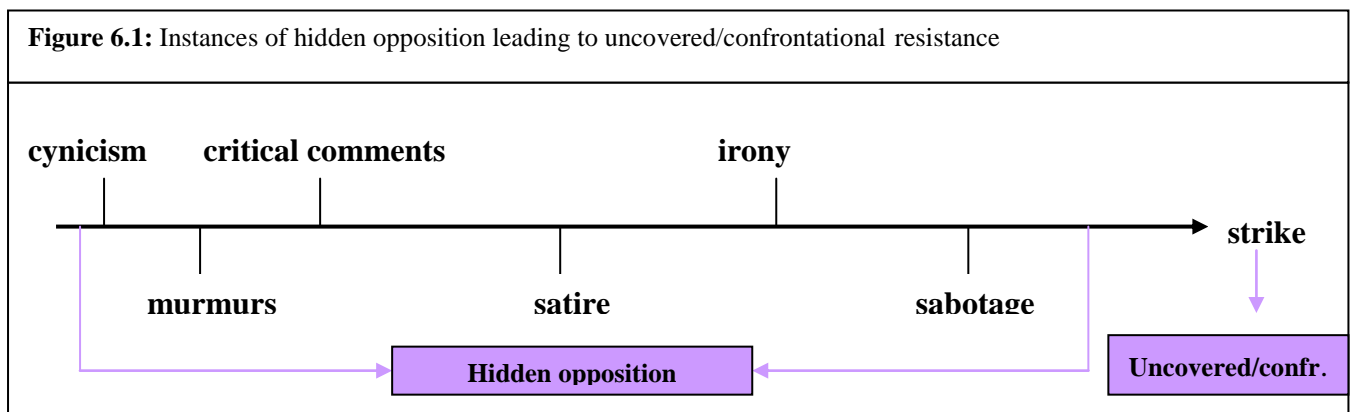
6.2.1 Effectiveness of hidden resistance practices

Discussion by LPT researchers focuses on debating the effectiveness of resistance practices. Specifically, there is a significant part of the literature opposing the use of hidden, partial, temporary, distancing and transitory practices of resistance. This writing supports the view that practices such as cynicism, humour, distancing and sabotage are not only ineffective but also preserve the structure of domination rather than challenging it (du Gay and Salaman, 1992; Willmott, 1993; Burawoy, 1979, 1981). They work as a safety valve, reinforcing power relations, conversing domination and diminishing the efficiency of more effective and permanent forms of opposition. In this direction, Fleming and Sewell (2002) ask whether some forms of resistance may simply end up strengthening domination rather than challenging it, obscuring the distinction between resistance and consent. The dimension of workplace resistance sought by these writers (e.g. Kunda, 1992; Leidner, 1993; Willmott, 1993) is a wider, permanent and more effective struggle against capital to transform society. They suggest open, collective forms of resistance, which do not exist but would be ideal for overthrowing capitalism and stopping employer exploitation. They suggest connecting accounts of everyday opposition to those of broader domination, such as global capitalism and class (Fleming, 2005). Most of these accounts highlight that although post-Braverman LPT was strongly associated with the investigation of worker resistance as a motivating force to workplace change, it left the connections to wider forms of social and class struggle loose.

However, there is another way of interpreting worker resistance and its effectiveness. Figure 6.1 presents six hidden practices, which are supposedly anything but effective.

But my evidence from studying the hotel suggests that even a hidden or passive practice of opposition can produce an escalating dynamic that leads to confrontational resistance, such as strike. More clearly, if we view these practices as different points on the power scale, then a worker's cynicism may create a feeling of autonomous self, and lead to murmurs and critical comments among co-workers. So critical discussions may then lead onto a more critical attitude among a department's workforce, including satire, jokes, humour and irony. This environment may cultivate an attitude where certain types of sabotage can emerge, such as hidden destruction of equipment or even a confrontational strike, which is also considered sabotage (Dubois, 1979). Therefore, resistance in an organization can be mapped as a continuum, where each practice of resistance should not be examined singularly or unconnectedly, but in relation to the previous strategies that generated this practices, as well as those that followed. Although ineffective themselves, some practices may cultivate an environment where more effective and confrontational resistance can flourish. It provides a platform for challenging managerial order and, more simply, limits totalising control (Sturdy and Fineman, 2001). Besides, more confrontational and overt forms of opposition are sometimes indicative of what is secretly going on in organisations (Scott, 1990). Therefore, these practices should not be underestimated.

Figure 6.1: Instances of hidden opposition leading to uncovered/confrontational resistance



Moreover, the claims underestimating the effectiveness of resistance are not always appropriate for universal application. Besides, as mentioned in previous chapters, workplace resistance is difficult to define and often takes multiple, complex, and subtle forms. "The logic of control under different systems of organisation of work provides openings for different forms of worker resistance" (Hodson, 1995:82), not always appropriate for universal consideration. Therefore, although these resistance practices are ineffective in some accounts, for others they may cause considerable opposition. As Harvie (2006:4) suggests, "frequently, struggles are ambiguous", driving managerial strategies in different directions or even imposing work on others.

Furthermore, although post-structural accounts suggest this kind of resistance quietens "real resistance", this opposition is what made the hotel workers able to continue functioning in the workplace environment. Hidden humour, critical discussions, distance, contestation of work processes and other practices are important. They exist and they keep shaping everyday organisational life. I agree with Hodson (1995:80) that "all of these forms of resistance are attempts to regain dignity in the face of organisations of work that violate workers' interests, limit their prerogatives and undermine their autonomy". Therefore, this "resistance, struggle and effort bargaining [remain]... important components of everyday life at the workplace" (Hodson, 1995:79). Or maybe these "micro-patterns of structural conflict" (Smith, 2008:3) compose the workplace itself.

But from a different point of view we may also suggest that resistance has two edges. On the one edge is the 'institutionalized labour conflict' (Gottfried, 1994:107), which involves the struggle between employers and organized bodies, such as trade unions.

The practices on this edge are organized, collective, and formal, such as strikes and labour court tributes. On the other edge nevertheless, struggle takes place by workers within the workplace. This:

'is resistance that takes place on a local, immediate and often informal level. This might be called everyday forms of resistance, including covert and subtle forms like restriction of output and rules violation, or more illicit, subterranean forms like sabotage and theft' (Gottfried, 1994:107).

So the point here is that arguing against the effectiveness or appropriateness of some opposition practices, simply because they do not bring a change in the wider system, is not necessarily correct. To use Littler's argument (1982), workers do not come to the workplace as the carriers of general opposition to the system. In other words, if they resist, they resist in order to bringing change to their own working life; to achieve better working conditions; better treatment; and to protect their own dignity. Not to bring a capitalistic breakdown as some would expect.

However, some writers have not only previously underestimated specific forms of resistance, but they have also "suggested the right form of resistance that the staff should be taking" (Wray-Bliss, 2002:94). More specifically, critiquing accounts that use workers' subjectivity to explain relations in the labour process, Wray-Bliss writes:

"Rather than, for instance, LPT authors questioning their understanding of the oppressive nature of the workplace, changing their narrow masculine understanding of what constitutes real resistance (Rothschild and Miethe, 1994; Wray-Bliss, 2001) or entering into more open dialogue and/or engagement with the researched about the natures of oppression and resistance, authors instead problematise workers themselves for not realising that their subjectivity prevents them from

resisting right (Collinson, 1994; Knights and Collinson, 1987; Knights and McCabe, 1998; Willmott, 1993, 1994). By textually appropriating, and then problematising the subjectivities of the researched, the potentially disruptive lack of observable empirical resistance may be reinterpreted to affirm LPT."

Thus, they ignore the fact control and resistance cannot be fixed. As Harvie (2006) asserts, "capital develops in response to struggle and in turn, new forms of struggle develop in response to capital". For instance, Newsome et al. (2009:156) describe a situation where a fruit and vegetable processing factory had instigated "a draconian attendance policy linked to the bonus scheme" as a response to growing absenteeism. Similarly, internal memos in the hotel threatened unexpected body checks and layoffs in cases of theft. The underlying fact here is that worker resistance can be revealed by managerial actions, and "labour control is nothing static or homogeneous, but the outcome and object of constant struggles" (Carls, 2007:48). So resistance constantly evolves according to the conditions that exist in different workplaces.

Finally, collective examination of all these fragmented attempts may reveal a picture of a continuous and pervasive struggle. Besides, "just as any given concrete instance of labour control may include elements typical of several different systems of control, so too can different agendas of resistance overlap and occur simultaneously with other agendas of resistance" (Hodson, 1995:81). Sturdy and Fineman (2001:146) also argue that some practices comprise "the conduit for questioning and resistance which may produce alternative, sceptical rationales and rhetoric". After all, can all these practices be so unproblematic for management (Rodrigues and Collinson, 1995), and so easily controllable and manageable? Or can we dismiss the view that sometimes resistance

practices are so hidden that "we can only detect their existence through observing capital's response" (Harvie, 2006:4). Therefore, discussing specific practices as universally applied theories may not be even necessary. What is necessary is to examine the micro-patterns of worker resistance in the context they take place. Some of these patterns are linked to what I call *variability*, *intentionality* and *rationality*, and are analysed in the next sections.

6.2.2 Variability

Following my own empirical research, this section reconfirms previous empirical accounts which suggest that resistance should be seen as variable rather than fixed into specific conditions or workplaces. The distinct characteristics of each labour process at the industry level, as well as the culture of each organisation, prohibit or tolerate specific forms of worker resistance. For instance, policies and terms of employment vary from company to company, even in organisations operating in the same industry, and their product's characteristics are different, requiring different levels of employee involvement, knowledge and contribution to produce and deliver the product. As a result, management's tolerance of grievances and resistance varies according to their dependence on workers.

Tucker (1993) explains how the attempts of temporary workers to discuss, negotiate or even simply share their problem with a representative of their organisation, such as a supervisor or manager, usually carry the risk of dismissal. Even if they do try to negotiate with their immediate supervisor and are not fired, they are generally

dissatisfied with the outcome. My findings in the hotel, however, show that uncovered resistance through exposing and demanding better wages or working conditions would not result in immediate dismissal. This tactic could lead to unofficial walkouts on the employees' side, but not dismissal on the management's side. Kunda (1992) is careful enough to highlight that his findings (on Tech's normative exchange) do not extend outside the core engineering employees of secretarial, clerical and temporary staff (cited in Thompson and Findlay, 1999). Even if writers are accused of underestimating or romanticising workplace resistance (e.g., see polemic arguments against Scott, 1990 by Mumby, 2005) they are not necessarily accurate. This is because work that seems to romanticise opposition in a specific workplace may just reflect what is actually happening in a different workplace in the context of a different labour process. Works about workplace resistance should avoid generalisation, or as May (1999:770) puts it "power and resistance at work require sensitivity to heterogeneity in workplace organisations".

Writers discuss how conventional practices of resistance, such as mental and physical abstention from work processes, strikes and output or quality restriction, are extinct in workplaces because of high levels of non-coercive, hegemonic control (Burris, 1986; Heydebrand, 1981 cited in Prasad and Prasad, 2001; Barker, 1993), establishing and maintaining workers' willingness to participate and consent. However, it is inappropriate to employ industrial-based findings and use them as a basis for a generalised theoretical analysis of workplace resistance. Similarly, it is inappropriate to take my findings, which are based on an emotional and immaterial workplace, and use them in a totally different setting.

Although one reason for workplace opposition in the literature relates to providing temporary and short-term rather than full-time employment, the main proponents of resistance practices in the hotel were full-time employees. Temporary employees are, according to Tucker (1993:26), "individuals employed in organisations for specific, limited periods of time". According to the same writer, the social environment associated with temporary employment and in which workers are loosely tied to the organisation makes workers in transient positions more likely to resist.

My findings revealed exactly the opposite. Temporary and transient workers from eastern Europe were less likely to resist. On the contrary, they were willing to accept any kind of contract and wage. This might be linked to an ambition to work for the same organisation in the future; some had even worked temporarily for the hotel the previous year. They travelled from their home countries to Cyprus for the peak season, then back home for the winter before returning to Cyprus again. They relied on their salary to survive and some even borrowed money from the hotel's accounting office simply to live during their first days in Cyprus. Workers desperate for money may tolerate working conditions deemed unacceptable by other workers (Weaver, 2005). Similarly, however, management's tolerance of grievances, resistance and even rule breaking was different towards specific workers.

6.2.3 Intentional or unwilling resistance

Another debate in LPT literature questions whether workers' routine opposition is the product of purposive, calculative and conscious actions or a product of false

conscious, unintentional and unwilling opposition (Prasad and Prasad, 2001). In their work, Prasad and Prasad (2001:110) reject resistance as the product of calculated planning and intentionality. They reject the idea of intentional resistance and support a notion concentrated on culture, its habits, styles, skills and reflections, which are "used almost automatically to solve everyday problems" in the workplace, and which are closer to workers' emotional responses and patterned behaviour.

My hotel study revealed that although not always calculated carefully or planned in advance, workers' behaviour and practices of resistance were mostly characterised by expressed intention. Supporting my analysis is a case about workers' behaviour and actions between the back- and front-of-house operations. Goffman (1967) identifies that behaviour at 'frontstage' or 'backstage' is different and that special attention should be paid to this phenomenon. This difference is also an important consideration in orthodox management textbooks, where every worker should perform according to the emotional and aesthetic expectations of the labour process. In other words, in front of guests, the setting and tasks are different and this requires different behaviour from back-of-house, where most employees do not have to pretend.

As my previous analysis suggests, hotel workers would intentionally oppose the labour process in order to balance what they considered unfair working conditions, unreasonable demands by managers and other structural issues. Responses such as acquiring company products or distancing themselves from work processes were purposive choices of "pretending deeply" (Hochschild, 1983). They distinguished between the frontstage and backstage, as well as between managers' presence and absence. "Pretending deeply" is a practice of acting, where, according to Hochschild (1983, cited in Bolton and Houlihan, 2005:688), workers change their emotional state

and offer a convincing performance of customer service. In this way, workers avoid possible customer complaints or rebukes by management, but behind the scenes their behaviour would change. I am not suggesting that all practices of opposition and misbehaviour are intentional. Indeed, the practices discussed in this study were mostly purposive and this is why they are analysed as part of a workplace resistance analysis.

6.3 The weak spots in Labour Process Theory

As has been mentioned in my literature review, I used Labour Process Theory (LPT) in order to theoretically contextualize the overall study, including my fieldwork, because I consider it to be one of the most appropriate tools to examine workplace power, control and resistance. However, LPT commentators have been divided over the last two-and-a-half decades into three different *camp*s: the traditional LP theorists; the Foucauldians; and those who disagree with this sharp contradiction. From the very beginning, my intention was to take into consideration all those differing viewpoints and theoretical contradictions that exist in LPT and test them in the field. For me, differing viewpoints are important in every theoretical body, however, I find myself in the same *camp* with those who believe that the disagreement among LP theorists is so sharp that it appeared to be a disadvantage to LPT, rather than an advantage. This is evident every year in the annual LPT conferences, which are rarely visited by Foucauldians and post-structuralists, and any references to Foucault or subjectivity are not welcomed. But also on the theoretical level, this separation between two different camps has left LPT with theoretical gaps and weak spots that cause problems to researchers in the field.

This problem, for instance, was evident in the case of hotel workers' subjectification and subjectivity as resistance, which are issues of major disagreement in LPT. Moreover, during my ethnographic study I collected findings that can produce a more unified body of analysis, based on both Foucauldians' and traditional theorists' standpoints. On the one hand, the workers' subjectification was evident in a number of instances. On the other hand, theories of structural antagonism appeared to be more applicable for a control/ resistance analysis.

More specifically, the subjectification of Cypriot hotel workers was mostly evident in young newly hired workers and trainees. Similarly to my analysis on subjectification in Chapters 1 and 2, the workers' previous experience in universities, their families, companies and the society in general, produced the kind of individuals that corporations are after. To use Fleming and Spicer:

...in order to get the job you want you are going to have to work hard while you are at university. Of course, this involves applying yourself to coursework and projects. However, the really important thing seems to be crafting yourself into the kind of dynamic young professional that big businesses are after. To do this you think you might join a few clubs, take a few summer positions at reputable companies and hone your image. The motivation books you have been reading remind you that really believing in yourself will help you to achieve your goals ... You know that when the time comes you will have to show the recruiters that you are the dynamic person professional that they are looking for. [This is] an actor who exuberantly grasps hold of his/her own destiny ... and it involves the process of subjectification (2007:22–23).

In the same way, newly hired workers at the hotel were entering the luxury workplace preoccupied with what they have been told, taught and experienced in terms of the immaterial and emotional nature of service work, as well as ‘the principle of their own subjection’ (Foucault, 1977:203). They had a professional attitude and a specific way of thinking and acting. According to Foucault, this is the form of power and knowledge that exists in the society and produces the people we naturally are. It is the power that ‘reaches into the very grain of individuals, touches their bodies and inserts itself into their actions and attitudes ... and everyday lives’ (1977:194). Possibly, this Foucauldian perspective can explain why most of the young newly hired workers were entering the hotel with a very professional attitude. Their appearance and overall behaviour did not reveal any evidence that they were entering the workplace preoccupied with resisting the labour process.

However, it seems that new workers’ subjectivities, as they have been formed at the macro-level in previous years, had no consistency. My ethnographic findings revealed that even new workers were reacting to structural conditions. Their identities which were built in a certain way through subjectification were changing. Besides, according to Kondo (1990), identities are not fixed, static or singular. On the contrary, there are open to change (Beck, 2009). Similar to the older staff in the hotel, it seems that a number of structurally unfair conditions, such as the low wage compared to the long shifts of the demanding labour process, were leading them also to practices of resistance. Some of these practices can be considered as part of workers’ transformed identities in the current workplace. Nevertheless, it is worth mentioning that every newly hired worker and trainee used to be ‘welcomed’ by older workers and was instructed about what was going on in the hotel in terms of what they were considering as managerial unfairness and worker dissatisfaction. This kind of

‘welcoming’ was also experienced by me at the very beginning when I was employed in the hotel as a worker. Most of the older workers were already dissatisfied, believing that there was no promise in the hotel. They used to say that ‘even the hotel’s training was reduced to the basics, mostly for the inexperienced staff’. Some others used to repeat that ‘there is no pride or loyalty in this sector anymore’ and that ‘the hotel workplace is different from what it used to be’. Thus, based on the directions and commentary of their older co-workers, new workers used to subscribe to a more opposing role in the labour process dynamic.

To continue, although it was repeatedly highlighted by managers in meetings that the hotel’s main aim was ‘total guest satisfaction’, on some occasions even managers used to make fun of it, due to the fact that the hotel was seriously understaffed. So managers’ contradictions and structural asymmetries played an important role in changing workers’ previous subjectivities. In other words, workers were re-inventing their identities. Also, within the everyday dynamic of workplace struggle, workers’ subjectivities appeared to be a source of resistance. As has been mentioned in Chapter 2, subjectivity as resistance is conceptualized within an agonistic power/knowledge regime, where opposition arises from managerial attempts to regulate identities (Symon, 2005) and occurs in expressions and/or defence of these managerial attempts (Knights, 2002). Similarly, in many instances, organizational culture and aesthetic/emotional expectations were encountered with humour and gossip. It was evident that workers were not subscribing to corporate values (see critical comments/humorous parody in Chapter 5) and some team-building exercises during training courses were discussed with cynicism and satire.

Finally, workers were still subjected to the mechanisms of control, including surveillance and disciplining, but the evidence indicates that workers' subjectivities as these have been produced in the macro-level were different from those in the hotel's micro-level. Finally, the foregoing analysis is indicative of a more unified LP analysis, without the sharp characteristics that exist between in the current dichotomized LPT. So the point here is that rejecting the Foucauldian or traditional LPT perspective does not necessarily enable critical scrutiny. On the contrary, such sharp rejections reinforce a theoretical gap in LPT. To use an argument of Knights and Vurdubakis (1994:192), '[s]ince there are no easy solutions to these dilemmas, critical theorizing must therefore resist excessive claims'. Besides, as Foucault put it, 'the "best" theories do not constitute a very effective protection against disastrous political choices' (1984b:374, cited in Knights and Vurdubakis, 1994:192).

6.4 Conclusion

It seems that the lines between organisational resistance, misbehaviour and practices of dissent are rarely clear. They become distinguishable, nevertheless, through their characteristics. For instance, some workers' actions were intended, planned and described as opposition to unfairness or ways to balance structural conditions. In this thesis, these practices are considered resistance, but at the same time it should be highlighted that the lines between these practices are blurred and a practice of cynicism or sabotage is not always real resistance. Indicative is the argument of Thompson who suggests that "[j]okes are often designed by their users to

communicate serious messages; often met with serious responses by management”. At the same time however, jokes “should be seen as also involving negotiations” between a worker and a manager (1999:111).

But the lines between effective and ineffective practices of resistance are also blurred. My analysis suggests that hidden or passive practices of opposition should not be underestimated because they often produce an escalating dynamic that leads to more confrontational resistance. This dynamic often reinforces a continuum of oppositional practices, where more effective resistance can flourish.

Finally, practices of resistance not only continue to characterise organisation practices (Collinson, 1994), but despite my initial misjudgement, workers’ resistance in the context of the hotel labour process can also be collective and confrontational. It might not be a factor which forces management to significantly change demanding working conditions or their existing strategies. However, it was a constant reminder to management that workers’ resistance exists and workers' demands must be taken into consideration. The absence of unionism memberships, the increasing number of cheap eastern European workers and management’s increasing pressures to minimise costs and maintain profitability were sufficient to alarm workers and generate substantial hostility.

Chapter Seven

Conclusion

At the end of chapter 6 of Capital's first volume (Marx, 1991), the 'money-owner' and the 'owner of labour power' leave the realm of the market, in which 'Freedom, Equality, Property and Bentham' rule, for the 'hidden abode of production'. The money-owner 'strides in front as capitalist ... with an air of importance, smirking, intent on business', the possessor of labour power 'follows as his labourer, ... timid and holding back' (280). Marx, of course, follows them both and in subsequent chapters of Capital he explores what happens within that 'hidden abode', or what is going on inside the production process and remains hidden. The goings on in the hidden abode have been the subject of this thesis too, where I have examined management control and workers' resistance in a luxury hotel in Cyprus.

With the 'hidden abode' in mind, the theoretical tool of Labour Process Theory (LPT) has been applied to examining a hotel workplace that, my evidence suggests, is part of a rapidly changing industry. This thesis took into consideration a wide spectrum of literature and produced a labour process analysis that cuts through the various debates and aims to examine whether there is any struggle or resistance from below. However, as mentioned repeatedly in this thesis, worker resistance is a complex concept. It is debatable, difficult to define and uncover and risky to interpret. Therefore, in order to proceed to a more in-depth examination of resistance, my analysis reviewed various debates and conflicting theoretical assumptions (Chapter 2). On most occasions, I attempted to present equally differing viewpoints (e.g. structuralist versus post-structuralist accounts) and take these theories into the field

for testing. The aim was not to pick and mix the best points from the differing sides. On the contrary, I aimed to use empirical data as a basis for my claims.

In addition, based on a review of empirical accounts and critical interpretations from different work contexts (Chapter 3), I re-examined these assumptions towards investigating the reasons for resistance in the labour process, what it is and how it is restricted, how workers resist and with what practices, how resistance can be classified and what its consequences are. From collective strikes to irony, distance to bitching and whistleblowing to acquiring company products, this thesis reviewed and examined a large number of resistance practices towards the construction of an A to Z catalogue of worker opposition. This catalogue is a useful tool for every researcher engaged in workplace research. Based on empirical cases, it is a reliable database of forms, strategies and practices of workplace resistance. Encompassing a wide spectrum of the employment relationship, it also informed the preparations for my own research in the luxury hotel.

Chapter 4 is an ethnographic chapter explaining the different stages of the research process from my philosophical position to research methods and ethics. Considering the complexity of the concept of worker resistance, this thesis proceeded to a participant observation study and a respondent validation in order to verify my interpretations and understanding. The ethnographic preparation in Chapter 4 enabled my participant observation in a hotel that produced fruitful results about its labour process and control, the aesthetic, emotional and affective expectations of work and, most importantly, the forms and practices of workers' struggles to retain dignity and fair working conditions.

As my ethnographic evidence suggests (Chapter 5), following the widening of the European territory, as well as the constant transformation of the global economy, the Cypriot hotel workplace is changing rapidly. Both issues contributed to the growing labour market and the influx of lower cost workers from Eastern Europe. This is, of course, a natural consequence. Work matters, and it matters for everybody regardless of nationality. It is a matter of survival and people migrate for a better life. Immigrants, however, are willing to accept any kind of wages or working conditions. As a result, employers have at their discretion the power to produce even more demanding labour processes and, at the same time, keep minimising their costs and exploiting people. A decent wage for a Cypriot is too high compared with a flexible, “below the breadline” (Abrams, 2002) salary offered to an immigrant.

Also, as my analysis in chapter 5 has demonstrated, the Hotel’s labour process was supported by a number of mechanisms and strategies demarcating the power relations between managers, guests and workers. Collecting and processing information about employees’ performance and regulating their behaviour appeared to be key components of the function of labour control in the hotel.

At the same time however, my results suggest that workers employ a number of practices to balance what they consider unfair, unequal and excessive demands. Their practices are sometimes fragmented by outside threats and internal managerial control, but other times are collective and effective. The fact that the hotel is not unionised excludes formal practices of collective and organised resistance, such as trade union strikes. However, hotel workers apply their own hidden or confrontational ways to intentionally resist the labour process, and sometimes even achieve an alteration to their working conditions.

Finally, my analysis in chapter 6 suggested that we should treat the issue of defining resistance delicately. I argued that workers often plan their opposition in advance and purposefully. In these instances, workers' actions, although sometimes ineffective, are clear intentions to oppose the labour process and this is how they should be defined. At the same time, this argument raised the issue of 'variability', where I argued that opposition should be seen as variable in different work contexts rather than fixed into specific conditions and workplaces. However, the most important contribution of this thesis to knowledge, is the one that views resistance as a 'continuum' and most especially as 'escalation'. In other words, every-day practices of resistance, such as jokes, murmurs, irony and theft, should not be examined singularly or unconnectedly. These different practices, which are various points on the power scale, should be mapped as a continuum in relation to the previous strategies that generated these practices, as well as those that followed. From this point of view, although irony and jokes appear to be ineffective, they may produce an escalating dynamic in the workplace that leads to more confrontational resistance such as a strike. This continuum provides a platform for challenging the managerial order and for limiting totalising control.

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