Doctoral thesis

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Continuity and change: Individualization processes in young Muslim women's knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam in Trondheim

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Acknowledgements

I could not have written this thesis had it not been for all the valuable help and support I have gotten from a large group of people: participants/informants, supervisors, colleagues, friends and family.

First of all, I would like to thank all those who participated in this study. They welcomed me and my project with open arms. Their openness and generosity made my time in the field very interesting and pleasant. I thank them for their time, contributions, stories, reflections, trust, patience and forbearance. Without you, this study would be impossible.

Secondly, I would like to thank and show my gratitude to my supervisors Professor Ulrika Mårtensson (NTNU) and Professor Anne Sofie Roald (Malmö University). I really appreciate the help, support and patience you have showed me during all the years it has taken to write this text. I cannot thank Ulrika Mårtensson and Anne Sofie Roald enough for their patient guiding, inspiring and extensive commentary and availability throughout the project. Ulrika has offered me "first aid" help during all the years, and Anne Sofie has patiently read and commented the chapter drafts as they took form. Because of them, I was able to find my way and hand the text in.

I will also express my appreciation for the support, help and friendship I have enjoyed from my previous colleagues at Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies (NTNU) and my colleagues at the Department of Teacher Education (NTNU). My colleagues at Religious Studies provided me with a good working environment and have always been supportive to me and my project even well passed by deadline. My colleagues at the Teacher Education, and in particularly those at the Social Studies section, have helped me find time to finish my project and have provided much support and motivation until the end. You all deserve a number of thanks!

My family and friends have been there for me through all my ups and downs during these years. I am so grateful for having you in my life. I would like to send a special thank you to Ragnhild Laird Iversen, who have commented on some of the chapter drafts and who have been a great conversation partner and friend throughout the project. Last but not least, I will express my deepest gratitude to my partner Øyvind Jensen for his endless patience and support and to my son Aksel for just being who he is. You are the sunshine of my life.

I take full responsibility for errors and shortcomings in the final product. Credits of what may be good in this thesis is owed to my participants, supervisors, colleagues and friends.

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Chapter 1. Introduction

> The drafts look pretty good, even though I cannot believe that I talked about being unemployed after five years, because actually I am 😁 I have not managed to find a job since I finished 2,5 years ago. But, oh well (Mai 2018)[1].

Time flies when you write a PhD thesis. This PhD project, which is about Muslim women in the Norwegian city of Trondheim, began as an MA thesis and has been up and running since 2009/2010. During this time, much has happened in the lives of the women who participated in the project as well as in my own. When we do empirical research, and qualitative interviews, we "freeze" a tiny bit of time. As a researcher, I both must have and do have the possibility to "dive into" the interviews repeatedly and re-experience them. For the interviewees, on the other hand, the interviews and their contents drift further and further away from their memories and everyday lives as the years pass by. Because of this, when I sent out my texts to the participants and awaited their responses, it was with a bit of excitement – Will they recognize my presentation of them, their experiences and the "activities" they participated in? Have I understood them right? Will they take into consideration the "time gap" between what they said and told me then and what they mean and know today? Last, but not least, does my description of "the context of Trondheim" still feel relevant and recognizable to them today? Due to this, I read Mai's feedback to my chapter drafts with mixed feelings. I was pleased that she recognized my presentation of her utterances and reflections. At the same time, I felt a kind of unease since her response revealed that she has had trouble getting a job, something she as a student expressed concern about years ago during our interviews (see section 7.2.2). This shows that even though time passes, some of the women's experiences and concerns may be as relevant today as they were then.

I started this project as a PhD candidate in religious studies with an aim to learn more about individualization processes among Muslim women in Trondheim. At present, I work in Teacher Education, where I teach a subject with the objective of transmitting knowledge about religions, world-views, ethics and didactics to teacher students. In relation to this, I have become aware of some pedagogical elements concerning the relationship between different categories and understandings of religion(s) as well as weaknesses in our transmission of knowledge. For instance, the religious education subject in Norwegian schools is by some of

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[1] The quotation is from an email I received from one of the informants, Mai, on November 27, 2018. It was part of her response after reading the two final chapters of this thesis, which I had sent to her and the other informants for a "read-through."

the informants experienced as "irrelevant" and "not enough." The women have trouble relating to its contents and their teachers' presentations of "Islam" and "Muslim" even though they recognize the form of the presentation. One of the reasons for this is that the school's presentation of Islam and the women's understandings of Islam and Muslims emphasize different elements. In their definitions of "Islam" and "Muslims," as well as in their lived Islam, the women emphasize faith, rituals and ethics and the close connections between these elements. However, at school and in interaction with non-Muslims, the women find that these elements are approached and dealt with separately and that some elements gain more attention than others. For instance, the ethical aspects of Islam are of much importance for the women in their lived Islam and their Muslim self-definitions. Still, these are not always a part of or included in non-Muslims' or "outsiders'" understandings and presentations of Islam.

Another example is the number of questions, the types of questions and the sometimes-negative attitudes toward Islam and Muslims the women encounter from non-Muslim colleagues, fellow students and peers, which display shortcomings in the latter's knowledge about Islam. As Muslims within non-Muslim surroundings, the women gain attention for their religious identities and practices. They are encouraged to explain, elaborate and legitimize these and to answer questions about, and answer for, Islam and Muslims. In this way, they function as representatives for Islam and Muslims at their places of work and/or study. The regular encouragement to represent and answer questions about Islam and Muslims makes the women highly self-aware of their embodied Islamic knowledge, behavior and appearance within these non-Muslim majority settings since they aim to give a good impression of Islam and Muslims. In relation to this, they find that some parts of their Muslim identities and practices gain more attention and are more likely to be identified as determined or inspired by Islam than other parts. Where religious practices in the form of rituals and the observance of Islamic diet and clothing regulations attract much attention to the women's Muslim identities and Islam, their faith, morals and rules of conduct are often overlooked or not recognized as "Islamic." Due to different approaches and understandings of Islam, it can be hard for the women to provide their colleagues with meaningful and understandable answers to their often basic questions about the Islamic faith and practices. This again makes it difficult for the women to gain recognition for and acceptance of their Muslim identities and practices.

The scholar of religion Ninian Smart developed a model of seven dimensions of religion to describe how religions exist in the world. He emphasized that each dimension should be seen as a central part of a religion and that the various dimensions closely interrelate (Smart 1998: 11-22; see section 3.2). My material, on the other hand, shows that according to the

women's experiences, the knowledge about Islam transmitted within school and the active knowledge about Islam among non-Muslims favor the practical and ritual dimension above the ethical and doctrinal dimensions (Smart 1998: 11-22). It is no wonder that Islamic rituals, practices and regulations concerning diet and clothes gain more attention than other aspects of Islam, such as faith and morals, because they are more "visible" to the public. Within the Muslim-minority situation in Trondheim, the observance of Islamic rituals, practices and regulations functions as a visible identity marker that distinguishes Muslims from their non-Muslim surroundings. Still, as a teacher educator, I think we should learn from the women's experiences of the religious education subject in Norwegian schools and the number and types of questions they encounter from their non-Muslim surroundings. If we want more knowledge about Islam, and what Islam may mean to Muslims, we should increase our knowledge about all dimensions of Islam. Subsequently, if we want to transmit more "accurate" knowledge about Islam and Muslims in our classrooms, and thus present Islam in a way that more Muslims can identify with, we should pay more attention to the various dimensions of Islam, and particularly that of ethics. This may contribute to a greater everyday understanding of Islam and the women's Muslim identities and practices.

1.1 Context and purpose

Several studies of Islam in Europe emphasize how the "new" geographical and cultural context(s), and thus the minority situation, trigger transformations and processes of individualization in European Muslims' relationship to Islam and that these processes influence young Muslims in particular (Cesari 2004; Fadil 2005; Jacobsen 2006; Peter 2006; Roy 2004). This study explores individualization processes in young Muslim women's knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam in Trondheim. By doing so, it contributes to a more complex understanding of *the problem area: "knowledge acquisition and formation and their implications for research on individualization processes among European Muslims."* The method is to use a complex methodology consisting of several perspectives and analytical categories, and to analyze theories of religious individualization with references to theories of institutional conditioning of individual's religious knowledge and practice, and through a historical and family perspective.

Researchers within this research area have different disciplinary backgrounds from both the humanities and the social sciences. They ascribe to the "individualization" concept different meanings and have different views of what is involved in the "processes of individualization" and their consequences. In addition, they both approach and contextualize Islam in different

ways. This has led to a variety of studies and theories about "Islam and individualization" (Peter 2006). Several of these studies carried out by social scientists deal explicitly or implicitly with Islamic knowledge acquisition and formation and the practice of Islam, though in various ways (Roy 2004; Fadil 2005; Jacobsen 2006; Peter 2006). Some, among them Olivier Roy, look at how Muslims in Europe and the West[2] gain knowledge about Islam and how their sources and methods to Islam influence their relationship to, and practice of, Islam (Roy 2004). Others, such as Jacobsen and Fadil, look at how Muslims gain knowledge in addition to how they use, and what they do with, this knowledge (Jacobsen 2006; Fadil 2005). Common to these studies is that they mainly use contemporary approaches to the research area and analyze the transformations and processes of individualization in Muslims' relationship to Islam based upon contextual changes and the Muslim-minority situation in the West (Roy 2004; Fadil 2005; Jacobsen 2006).

This study builds upon previous studies of religious processes of individualization in general and the research on individualization processes among Muslims in Europe and the West in particular. *The objective of the study is twofold. Firstly, this study will explore individualization processes in Muslim women's knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam in Trondheim by looking at the women's sources and methods to Islam and the local context's influence on these.* In this way, I continue the contemporary contextual approach and orientation around Islamic knowledge acquisition and formation and the practice of Islam from the prevalent studies. *Secondly, this study will introduce a complex methodology that brings more perspectives and analytical categories into the study of individualization processes among European Muslims. This will be used to raise a debate about the prevalent theories of individualization and their applicability in studies concerning Islam and Muslims in Europe.* By bringing more factors into the study of individualization processes among European Muslims, and by using both contemporary and historical materials, this study contributes with some new nuances and a more complex understanding of the problem area.

1.1.1 Islamic knowledge acquisition and processes of individualization

Some researchers, among them Olivier Roy, see the *individualized* acquisition of religious knowledge, and the individual's turn to the Islamic sources of the Qur'an and *hadith*, as something "new" in an Islamic context. Roy regards these as a consequence of what he refers

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[2] The concepts "West" and "Western" are problematic but are used in the literature that deals with the study of Islam in Europe. Because of this, I use the concepts when I refer to or discuss this literature. When I refer to my own research, I will specify Trondheim.

to as the growing "deterritorialization" of Islam, which according to him leads to a pluralization and fragmentation of Islamic authority, particularly in the West (Roy 2004: 1-30, 148-151, 156-164). Not everyone shares Roy's view of the pluralized and fragmented religious authority as a novelty within Islam. Peter Mandaville, for instance, refutes Roy's view of the pluralized and fragmented Islamic authority because of the deterritorialization of Islam by arguing that there has always existed various forms of authority within the Islamic schools of law and theology (Mandaville 2007: 101-115).

Contradictory viewpoints on other parts of Roy's theory of individualization exist as well. For instance, Ulrika Mårtensson has shown how the famous Muslim historian, jurist and exegete of the Qur'an al-Ṭabarī (d. 310/932) regarded it as a duty of *every* Muslim to study and seek knowledge about Islam.

> Al-Ṭabarī, and all the Ash`aris, with the exception of al-Samnānī, hold that the exercise of reason is a necessary prerequisite to be a Muslim, without which one is not a Muslim. Al-Ṭabarī declares: 'the man or woman who has reached puberty but ha[s] not yet by way of reasoning (*istidlāl*) learned to know God, together with all His names and attributes, is an infidel (*kāfir*) ⟨...⟩.' He also says: 'when the male or female servant [of God] has reached the age of seven, they must be taught and trained in all that.' According to the Ash`aris, knowing God through reasoning is not required until after puberty (Mårtensson 2009:17-18, quote from Claude Gilliot, Exégèse Coranique, 36, who cites from the Andalusian theologian Ibn Hazm, al-Fisal fi l-milal wa-l-ahwa wa-l-nihal, i. 35, iv. 67).

This can be seen as an early encouragement for *all* Muslim men and women to seek knowledge about Islam. Al-Ṭabarī's concept of knowledge is not unique within the Islamic tradition of knowledge but corresponds with that of the later and prominent Muslim theologian al-Ghazzālī's (d. 505/1111) (Mårtensson 2010: 41-44). Both al-Ṭabarī and al-Ghazzālī can be seen as representatives of empiricist epistemology. The objective of Qur'an interpretation was, according to them, to gain knowledge about "God's intended meaning" (Mårtensson 2010: 32, 36, 41). Al-Ṭabarī believed that knowledge about God's messages could only be deduced from God's empirical self-manifestation, which, according to him, was the revealed Qur'anic text (Mårtensson 2010: 31-32). This can be seen as a clear call for the individual scholar to turn to the Qur'an for knowledge about God's guidance. Al-Ghazzālī, on the other hand, emphasized scholars' *personal* experience and argued that "even though the truth about God's intention is

only one, it can only be arrived at through an individual intellectual and experiential journey" (Mårtensson 2010: 41; Jackson 2002: 35-69). Because of this, al-Ghazzālī argued for a critical approach to received knowledge and did not recognize as valid knowledge "only transmitted" from others. Instead, he emphasized the individually experienced knowledge since this, according to him, is the only form of knowledge that can lead to the realization of true faith and action (Mårtensson 2010: 41; Jackson 2002: 59-65). Thus, al-Ṭabarī's and al-Ghazzālī's views of Islamic knowledge, and how scholars could gain it, challenge Roy's view of the individualized quest for knowledge as something "new" within Islam.

Since there are various and sometimes opposing views on Islamic knowledge acquisition and processes of individualization, I want to approach the problem area with a complex method. To be able to analyze possible transformations and "historical changes" in the women's sources and methods to Islam, I will bring contemporary and historical perspectives on Islamic knowledge acquisition and formation into this study of individualization processes in Muslim women's knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam in Trondheim. This will provide me with a framework in relation to which I will discuss the women's sources and methods to Islam and the theories of individualization.

1.1.2 A gender perspective on Islamic knowledge

According to the Islamic faith, *every* human is responsible for their own actions and deeds and will be judged upon these by God on the Day of Judgment (Roald 2004: 111; Vogt 2005: 65-70). To be able to practice Islam and thus "live proper Muslim lives," one needs knowledge about what to practice and how. Thus, it is important for every practicing Muslim, men and women, to embody Islamic knowledge. Furthermore, Muslims in Europe also need knowledge about how to adapt their religious practices and rituals to their non-Muslim surroundings. Due to this, Muslims' embodied Islamic knowledge influences their lived everyday religion, that is, how they choose to live as Muslims and practice Islam.

The Islamic tradition of knowledge has long historical roots and consists, amongst others, of different well-established, institutionalized and authoritative Islam schools of theology and law. The tradition and its various schools have traditionally been, and are still today, the main producers, maintainers and transmitters of Islamic knowledge (Vishanoff 2011; Hallaq 2009a; Hallaq 2009b). Several women were among the first transmitters of *hadith*, which contain stories about the Prophet Muhammad's life and teachings. This means that women played an important function as transmitters of knowledge about Islam in Islam's early formative period (Roald 2004: 70). Still, men have historically been the religious specialists

and the producers, maintainers and transmitters of Islamic knowledge (Roald 2004: 68-69; Vogt 1992: 282-283, 306; Vogt 2005: 98-106). Throughout the history of Islam, traditional Islamic institutions of knowledge and academic Islamic positions have been reserved for men. Due to this, Muslim women have had less access to *institutional* Islamic knowledge and positions than men (Vogt 2005: 99-105). However, this does not mean that women have not been preoccupied with gaining Islamic knowledge, nor that there have never been any women Islamic scholars, nor that women did not have access to religious knowledge. Because women have been involved in the quest for Islamic knowledge, there have been women scholars, and women did have access to Islamic knowledge, however mostly *outside* the traditional Islamic institutions of knowledge (Al-Qadi 1995; Khalafallah 2014; Vogt 1992: 282-283, 306; Vogt 2005: 98-106).

Knowledge about Islam is regarded as important for *all* Muslims due to the Islamic faith and eschatological beliefs. Despite this, Muslim women have traditionally had restricted access to institutionalized Islamic knowledge and positions. In light of this, I find it relevant and important to focus on Muslim women's knowledge acquisition and formation and practice of Islam in Trondheim. In relation to this, I will explore the women's individual sources and methods to Islam in Trondheim. Furthermore, I will consider what local Islamic institutions the women in this study are engaged in, the institutions' sources and methods to Islam and the women's accesses to Islamic knowledge within the different institutions. In this way, I will approach individualization processes in Muslim women's knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam from individual and institutional perspectives. More insight into Muslim women's Islamic knowledge and their sources and methods regarding such can contribute to a greater understanding of Muslim women's relationships to Islam and their everyday lived religion since the first influences the latter.

1.1.3 Knowledge acquisition and processes of individualization among Muslim women in Trondheim

To explore how the "new" context may influence individualization processes in Muslim women's knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam, I have localized this study to the Norwegian city of Trondheim. Trondheim is Norway's third largest city, with a population of approximately 195 000 (Statistisk Sentralbyrå 2018). Trondheim's Muslim population is composed of mainly first- and second-generation immigrants. In 2018, they were represented by five Islamic institutions, that is, mosques and/or Muslim organizations, with a total of 6339

registered[3] members (Regjeringen.no 2018b). Within a period of approximately 30 years, Islam has been established, has evolved and has been institutionalized as a minority religion through various Islamic institutions and Muslim organizations in Trondheim (Eriksen 2006; Mårtensson and Eriksen 2014). Trondheim's modest size and its limited number of Islamic institutions make the city sufficient for this study.

By emphasizing how the new context(s) and the Muslim-minority situation(s) in Europe trigger transformations and individualization processes in European Muslims' relationship to Islam, the prevalent theories of individualization imply that there have been "historical changes" in how Muslims relate to Islam. To study individualization processes in Muslim women's knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam, and possible "transformations" in how Muslim women in Trondheim gain knowledge about Islam, I will include additional perspectives on Islamic knowledge acquisition in this study, namely local and global Islamic methodologies. I will explore which local Islamic institutions the women in this study engage in and the institutions' sources and methods to Islam. Furthermore, I will look at how the local Islamic methodologies relate to the Islamic tradition of knowledge and thus global and historical Islamic methodologies. In addition, *and* in relation to this, I will include a generational perspective on Islamic knowledge acquisition since several of the studies on Islam in Europe emphasize how the individualization processes are affecting the young Muslims' relationship to Islam in particular. This will provide me with a framework consisting of local, global, historical and family-based Islamic methodologies to discuss the women's sources and methods to Islam and the related theories of individualization.

Knowledge about local and global Islamic methodologies can provide us with insight into how the Islamic traditions of knowledge and thus Islamic authorities are being (re)established in Trondheim. This type of knowledge is relevant beyond this study since it can provide information about how Islam evolves and is being institutionalized in Trondheim through the establishment of local mosques and organizations. "Local" knowledge about the development of Islam in Trondheim can furthermore contribute with a more overall understanding of Islam in Norway and thus complement prevalent studies of Islam and Muslim organizations in Norway (Vogt 2008; Naguib 2001).

Knowledge about various local insiders' views of "Islamic knowledge" – what it is, why it is important and how to get it – may also contribute with more knowledge about "Islamic

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[3] In Norway, all religious organizations can receive public funding on the basis of membership records (Regjeringen.no 2019; Lovdata 2017).

knowledge" and "knowledge acquisition and formation" in general. More knowledge about what the women define as Islamic knowledge, its importance and purposes, may inform our understanding of what types of Islamic knowledge some Muslims regard as relevant to live proper Muslim lives in Trondheim, Norway, or elsewhere. Furthermore, more knowledge about how "Islamic knowledge" is (re)produced, maintained, communicated/discussed and transferred locally in Trondheim may contribute to a greater understanding of Islamic knowledge production nationally (and globally) and furthermore whether and how to adjust for it.

1.2 Clarification of terms: Emic and etic

I will use the concepts "emic" and "etic" to address the classical insider/outsider problem in the study of religion. According to McCutcheon, this problem is briefly "whether, and to what extent, someone can study, understand, or explain the beliefs, words, or action of another" (McCutcheon 1999: 2). The "emic" perspective is culturally specific and an outcome of studying human behavior from inside a particular system. It includes a specific terminology, which gives meaning within a particular system, however not necessarily outside it. The "etic," or the "outsider," perspective is a cross-cultural comparative approach that studies human behavior from outside the system and has its own terminology. To translate emic perspectives and concepts in a way that they can be meaningful outside their particular system, we need etic concepts and theories that are cross-cultural and thus comparable (McCutcheon 1999: 15-18; Pike 1999: 28-31).

The emic and the etic approaches should not be seen as dichotomous but rather as a method to present the same material from various viewpoints (Pike 1999: 32-33). I will approach individualization processes in Muslim women's knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam in Trondheim from both etic and emic perspectives and by using emic and etic analytical categories. An etic approach to the data allows me to use the current and prevalent individualization concept, debates and theories to explore and identify individualization processes among Muslim women in Trondheim. In contrast, an emic approach to the data allows me to compare and discuss how etic approaches to the problem area correspond with internal views of Islamic knowledge and processes of Islam knowledge acquisition. In relation to this, I will discuss the extent to which processes of individualization are specific to the new Western context, and the extent to which they continue Islamic traditions of knowledge.

Historical traditions of knowledge make up parts of the "emic" analytical categories in this thesis and include the Islamic institutional schools, movements and methodologies. The

historical and global institutions and their Islamic methodologies will be used as an "emic" framework in relation to which I will see the local Islamic institutions' and the women's sources and methods to Islam, to assess continuity and change of Islamic methodologies. For the same purpose, I include a generational perspective on Islamic knowledge acquisition and compare the women's sources and methods to Islam with the Islamic sources and methods of their parents. This comparison builds upon interviews with some of the women's mothers or the women's account of their parents' sources and methods.

1.3 Project design and outline of the thesis

In this chapter, I have introduced "individualization processes in Muslim women's knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam in Trondheim" as the topic of this thesis. Furthermore, I have introduced "knowledge acquisition and formation and their implications for research on individualization processes among European Muslims" as its problem area by placing these in relation to previous and prevalent research on individualization processes among European Muslims.

In Chapter 2, I will enter and start treating the problem area. Here I will present and analyze previous studies on individualization processes in European Muslims' knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam and critically examine the individualization concept and its use and meaning in the study of religion and in the study of Islam. In relation to this, I will also present and analyze various approaches to conceptualizing Islam with examples from the social sciences and religious studies.

In Chapter 3, I position the thesis in relation to the individualization and conceptualization debates and conclude with an argument for combining "emic" and "etic" analytical categories. Then, I move on to develop the thesis's methodology by introducing its perspectives and "etic" categories. I explain how and why I will approach the problem area from three different perspectives. I will use a lived religion perspective to explore how Muslim women acquire knowledge about and practice Islam in Trondheim and what sources and methods they use in their quests for knowledge. I will use a contemporary comparative institutional perspective to explore how the context of Trondheim, in the form of local Islamic and non-Islamic fields, may influence these processes. Finally, to address the individualization debate, and to discuss whether the women's sources and methods to Islam should be seen as unique or common, and in continuation with the Islamic tradition of knowledge or not – that is, to assess continuity and change of Islamic methodologies and between family generations – I will apply a historical perspective.

The "etic" analytical categories that are introduced in this chapter include Ninian Smart's "dimensions of religion" (1998), Meredith McGuire's "everyday lived religion" (2008), Pierre Bourdieu's "field" and "capital" (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992; Bourdieu 2006), Michel de Certeau's "strategy" and "tactic" (1984) and a model for assessing continuity and change that builds upon Anne Sofie Roald's (2001) development of Jan Hjärpe's "the Islamic basket" (1997, 1998). The religious studies' categories "dimension of religion" and "the Islamic basket" are introduced as models to conceptualize Islam as a religion with a history and tradition of knowledge and thus to assess continuity and change. I will use Smart's dimensions of religion to approach Islam as a complex religion and to explore the young women's understanding of Islam and what it means to be a Muslim in addition to distinguish between different types of Islamic knowledge and sources. This means that I will use the dimension model as a categorical tool to translate emic types of knowledge and concepts into etic categories. The "Islamic basket" will be used to describe and explain individual and institutional differences when it comes to how Muslims acquire knowledge about and practice Islam in Trondheim and to explain how the context of Trondheim may influence these processes. The "everyday lived religion" concept and perspective will be used to explore and describe how Muslim women acquire knowledge about and practice Islam in Trondheim. The social sciences' concepts of "field," "capital," "strategy" and "tactic" will be used to explore what Islamic and non-Islamic fields the young Muslim women engage in; which forms of capital, including Islamic knowledge capital, they access, possess and experience as active within these fields; and how they operate within these fields in their quest for knowledge. In the last part of Chapter 3, I give a presentation of the study's applied methods and main informants.

The "emic" analytical categories of this thesis include the Islamic tradition of knowledge – and more specifically the Islamic institutional schools, movements, methodologies and related concepts – in addition to the women's own definitions. Chapter 4 contains a presentation of local and global Islamic methodologies. In this chapter, I introduce the local Islamic fields the women engage in and these fields' different methodologies and methods of gaining knowledge about Islam. I offer a historical survey of how methodologies can relate to traditional Islamic institutions and schools of law and modern Islamic movements and a presentation of how knowledge about Islam has traditionally been transmitted within these institutions. Furthermore, I describe and explain how the traditional Islamic methodologies of the Shafii, the Hanafi and the Twelver Shia schools of law, and the modern Islamic methodologies of the Salafi and the Muslim Brotherhood movements, relate to the local

Islamic fields in Trondheim and these fields' methodologies. In relation to this, I argue that these traditional and modern Islamic methodologies contribute significantly to the latter. This means that in Chapter 4, I develop and introduce the "emic" framework of local and global Islamic methodologies through which I will analyze the women's sources and methods to Islam and critically discuss the theories of individualization.

In Chapter 5, I approach the women's knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam from a lived religion perspective. I explore how and why the women define themselves as Muslims and compare the women's emic descriptions of "Islam" and "Muslims" with etic descriptions. I explore the women's individual quests for knowledge and use Smart's dimensions of religion to describe what types of knowledge the women are seeking and why as well as their individual sources and methods to Islam. In this chapter, I start to analyze individualization processes in the women's knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam by seeing the women's individual quests for knowledge in relation to the prevalent theories of individualization. For this purpose, I include a generational perspective on Islamic knowledge acquisition and compare the women's sources and methods to Islam with the Islamic sources and methods of their parents.

In Chapters 6 and 7, I explore how the context of Trondheim influences the women's knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam from a contemporary comparative institutional perspective. In Chapter 6, I explore how the local Islamic fields function as sources and methods to Islam for the women and what forms of capital, and in particular Islamic knowledge capital, the women have access to and can generate from each field. Furthermore, I look at how the women operate within these fields in their quests for knowledge. In Chapter 7, I introduce family, study/school, work and friends as the women's non-Islamic fields. This chapter follows the same structure as Chapter 6. The thesis's "emic" and "etic" categories are in both chapters used as categorical tools to analyze how the *different* local Islamic and non-Islamic fields influence the women's knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam and what implication this has for understanding individualization processes.

Chapter 8 is the final and concluding chapter, where I summarize the main results of this thesis. I show how my complex method of several perspectives and analytical categories can bring some new nuances to the prevalent theories of individualization. In relation to this, I elaborate on the importance of studying Islam as a complex religion with several dimensions and of approaching individualization processes in European Muslims' knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam from several perspectives and with "etic" and "emic" analytical categories – and thus bring more factors into our studies.

Chapter 2. State of the Art: Islam and individualization in the modern West/Europe

The aim of this chapter is to give a presentation of the research on individualization processes in European Muslims' knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam. In the first part of the chapter, I will look at the research on religious individualization among Muslims in the West, while the second part is dedicated to different ways to conceptualize Islam.

Several studies have shown how European Muslims' relationship to Islam has been individualized. Researchers on "Islam in Europe" seem to agree that processes of individualizations are currently reshaping European Muslims' identity and practices and that these processes are affecting young Muslims in particular. However, different scholars use the concept of "individualization" in various ways. They do not share a common understanding of what the processes of individualization involve nor their consequences. Yet, what most of them have in common is that they look at how religious identity and practices are transformed into something that demand more involvement from the individual, who can choose from among several religious alternatives (Jacobsen 2006: 50-51; Peter 2006: 105-118).

One of the findings from my Master's thesis, *Everyday Religiosity Among Muslim Women in Trondheim* (2006), was that the women's religious practices to a large degree had been privatized after they settled down in Trondheim due to their surroundings and the absence of a strong institutional Islamic authority. In Trondheim, it was solely the women's responsibility to facilitate and follow prescribed Islamic practices because their surroundings were more or less secularized and not facilitated for the Muslim minority. The privatization of religious practices can be seen as one of several processes of individualization that are currently reshaping European Muslims' identity and practices. Nevertheless, religious individualization involves *more* than this. I will therefore start this chapter with a presentation of how the individualization concept has been used, and is being used, in the study of religion, and in the study of Islam, and what the different processes of individualization are said to involve.

Several scholars have criticized the concept and theories of individualization (Repstad 2003). I will end the first part of this chapter by taking a closer look at some of the criticism before I evaluate its relevance in relation to the theories presented here.

The study of individualization processes in Western or European Muslims' relationship to Islam is not merely for scholars of religion. This research area, or at least parts

of it, has been a subject of study for researchers from the humanities and social sciences. These researchers have different objectives and reasons for studying Islam. Consequently, they have different approaches to and perspectives on their subject matter ("study object"). When Islam becomes a *rendezvous* for scholars from different disciplines, some questions and debates naturally arise. For instance, should we treat Islam as a religion or as something else? Moreover, how can we conceptualize Islam in a way that preserves its unity, diversity, continuity and change? The way we conceptualize Islam determines what we look for and find in the study of Islam. This means that our approaches to Islam and the Islamic faith and practices influence how we study processes of individualizations among Muslims in Europe and also our findings. In the second part of this research survey, I will therefore present some strategies used to conceptualize Islam from social science and religious studies.

Due to disciplinary differences, the scholars of religion and social sciences often have different approaches to Islam. Whereas the religious scholars do not hesitate to conceptualize Islam as a religion, representatives from the social sciences often "transform" Islam into something else, such as a "discursive tradition" or a "chain of memory" (Asad 1986; Hervieu-Léger 2000). The different views about how to conceptualize Islam are closely connected to different opinions about what determines Muslims' beliefs and practices in relation to the knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam. In this way, the debate concerning how to best conceptualize Islam has implications for causality as well. Thus, I find it necessary to point out which alternative causality factors the different attempts to conceptualize Islam use to explain why Muslims believe and act as they do. Moreover, since the young Muslim women who participated in this study live in a migrant-minority context, I find it relevant to look at whether the migrant-minority context is a factor in the surveyed studies as well and to what degree it is considered to be relevant for Muslims' beliefs and practices.

2.1 Processes of individualization

To show how the individualization concept has been used, and is being used, in the study of religion, I will start by introducing how the sociology of religion has traditionally dealt with this concept. Subsequently, I will give a presentation of Danièle Hervieu-Léger's view on individualization – what she thinks characterizes this phenomenon and how she has reached this view. The reason I am introducing Herivu-Léger's view on religious individualization is that her opinions have received massive support and are often used and referred to in similar studies of European Muslims (Fadil 2005; Cesari 2004; Roy 2004).

I will then look into how the individualization concept has been and is being used in the study of European Islam by presenting Olivier Roy's, Jocelyne Cesari's, Nadia Fadil's and Christine Jacobsen's use of it and the methods and sources their theories of individualization are based on. Roy and Cesari are prominent researchers on European Islam and therefore highly relevant for this study. Fadil's and Jacobsen's studies of young Muslims in Belgium and Oslo have some resemblances to this project in terms of research focus and the use of qualitative methods, and it is therefore relevant and necessary to introduce them here.

In 2003 Pål Repstad criticized what he called a "Too superficial and general way of speaking about religious individualization" (Repstad 2003: 75, my translation). I will let Repstad's criticism and critical remarks against the theories of individualization in general end the first part of this chapter.

2.1.1 Religion à la carte

In the sociology of religion, the individualization of religion involves religious restructuring at the individual level. According to this view, we have to compare the role of religion in the past with the role of religion in modern societies to understand the processes of individualization. In the past, religious life centered around the large religious institutions. A person's membership in a religious community could be predictive of his or her beliefs and actions partly because people were socialized into an institutional package of beliefs and practices. Because of this, there was presumably compliance between "official" (prescribed) religion and "lived"[4] religion (individuals' religious expressions). But, times have changed. Modern societies are characterized by religious pluralism and a higher level of religious diversity, not only between religious organizations but also within them. Today, individuals want to decide for themselves what to believe and what to do – they want to be in charge of their own religious beliefs and practices. As a result, we find an increased discrepancy between "official" and "lived" religion. In this way, individualization does not refer to religious decline, but to the fact that individuals in modern society tend to be freer than ever before to construct their own religious lives. Here, individuals practice what is called a "religion à la carte" – a bricolage. This means that they "pick and mix" elements from one or several traditions to construct their own religious beliefs and practices. According to the sociology of religion, the individualization of religion can therefore be summarized as "the degree to which individuals pick and choose among various religious options, crafting a

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[4] The term "lived religion" is taken from Meredith McGuire's (2008) *Lived Religion*.

custom-made religious life, rather than choosing a package formulated by religious institutions" (McGuire 2002: 292-294).

2.1.2 The individual's right to bricolage

The French sociologist Danièle Hervieu-Léger uses the concept of "individualization" to describe the individual's increased number of choices concerning religion in modern societies. In this way, she is a representative for the sociology of religion approach. Hervieu-Lèger's "method" is to work systematically with theories concerning religion and modernity to explain the role of religion in modern societies. She uses an overall approach to the role of religion in modern societies and sees religion in relation to other social, political and economic factors in society. When it comes to the study of the individualization of religion, Hervieu-Léger has not done any empirical research on her own. But her analyses concerning this must be seen as the result of her systematic work with theories based on contemporary empirically observable phenomena, mainly from France (Hervieu-Léger 1998: 213-228, 2000: 1-5).

In modern societies, individuals are free to choose religion (or to not have religion) and free to choose how they want to practice their religion, according to Hervieu-Léger. Here, they are no longer dependent upon religious institutions to practice their religion or beliefs. In the past, established religion provided a framework for social organization. In modern societies, religion has become fragmented across an array of specialized spheres and institutions. This has led to a decline in the power and influence that religious institutions and religious authorities used to have in so-called traditional societies. In modern society, as stated by Hervieu-Léger: "the pretension of any religion to rule over the whole society and to govern the life of every individual in that society has become an illegitimate pretension" (Hervieu-Léger 1998: 217, 2000: 33-34, 163-164).

According to Hervieu-Léger, religion's role in society cannot be seen as an isolated subject; rather, it must be seen in relation to other major social, political and economic changes, such as the economic modernization, the founding of the United Nations in 1945 and the proclamation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) in 1948. In one of her examples from France, she describes how religious institutions, specifically Christian institutions, started to lose much of their influence and power due to the changes mentioned above. The economic modernization created the "consumer society," the UDHR drew attention to individuals' autonomy and the declaration gave people rights in virtue of being citizens and not because of religious affiliations. It also gave people the freedom of religion

(article 18). Consequently, religious authorities' control over individuals' religious lives was marginalized. This again cleared the way for religious diversity and new religious movements, which led to an increased religious pluralism (Hervieu-Léger 2000: 131-140).

In Hervieu-Léger's descriptions of modern societies, individuals are free to construct a universe of meaning, on their own or in groups. What is specifically modern and characterizes individualization, as stated by Hervieu-Léger, "(…) is not that individuals make their own choice and combinations (i.e. practice *bricolage*), of beliefs: it is that they assert their 'right to *bricolage*' at the same time as the right to 'choose their own beliefs'" (Hervieu-Léger 1998: 217). This means that she sees the developments toward the individuals' claim to assert their right to bricolage and their right to choose their own beliefs in relation to the development of the consumer society and of human rights.

2.1.3 Processes of religious individualization among Muslims in Europe/the West

While we in the sociology of religion can find general descriptions of religious individualization, Olivier Roy focuses on processes of individualization among Muslims in the West. Roy has a theory stating that processes of individualization are reshaping Western Muslims' relationship to Islam. Through Web searches, Web observations and text studies, Roy has gained access to a large contemporary corpus of texts that all say something about how Muslims relate themselves to the theological content of Islam. The corpus, which is the primary source in his research, consists of books, articles, biographies, interviews, booklets, audiotapes, videotapes, speeches and ideas gathered from different sites on the Internet, including homepages, chat rooms and other websites where people "meet" and express themselves. It is not Roy's aim to explore the theological content of the Islamic religion, nor is he interested in referring his sources to the Islamic authoritative tradition. Rather, Roy thinks it is enough to relate to current debates about and among Muslims concerning Islamic theology to be able to explore globalized Islam in an intellectual way. Previous studies of Islam conducted by Roy and other researchers are also sources on which he founds his research (Roy 2004: ix-9).

Roy sees the processes of individualization in relation to a globalization and a Westernization of Islam. Islam is decreasingly ascribed to a specific territory or a civilization, and Roy refers to this as the "deterritorialization" of Islam. The growing "deterritorialization" of Islam has several consequences that trigger individualization processes among Muslims in the West, according to him. One of the consequences is a pluralization and a fragmentation of Islamic authority, especially in the West. The religious authorities' loss of power is evident if

we look at the changes in the religious debate. The religious debate has moved from religious institutions to private madrasas (religious schools) and to the individuals in the public sphere. Modern media technology has made information easily accessible to everyone. The religious debate is now everywhere and in everybody's hand, and the "line" between the religious intellectuals and ordinary people has become blurred. Roy refers to this as Islam's crisis of authority (Roy 2004: 1-30, 148-149, 158-164).

For Muslims in the West, the external pressure from society to be a "good Muslim" and associated culture and law have almost disappeared according to Roy, who considers it a consequence of Islam's authority crisis, which triggers processes of individualization. In the absence of strong religious authorities and powerful religious institutions in the West, it becomes the individual's task to interpret Islam. Each individual is free to define "Islam" and what it means to be a "Muslim." In this way, individuals decide what "Islam" means to them and to what degree they want Islam to influence their everyday life. In these definition processes, more Muslims turn to Islamic sources, such as the Qur'an and *hadith*, which they start to read and interpret on their own. The individual's turn to the sources is a new phenomenon as stated by Roy, who also sees this as a process of individualization due to Islam's crisis of authority (Roy 2004: 17-29, 148-151, 156-164).

A third process of individualization triggered by Islam's authority crisis is, according to Roy, that people with no religious training present themselves and act like "religious experts" on the Internet. Ordinary Muslims surf the Internet and "pick and mix" among the enormous variation of religious ideas and information they find there until they find something that suits them. Consequently, it becomes the individual's choice what to follow and not (Roy 2004: 158-164, 174-175).

The globalization and the individualization of Islam have renewed the relationship between Muslims and Islam as stated by Roy. It is the Muslims' religiosity and relation to Islam that are renewed and not Islam itself. Globalized Islam is not a new Islam. Many of its agents want rather the opposite – to preserve and return to the "roots of Islam." Roy thinks that the processes of religious individualization among Muslims in the West can have two outcomes. First, it can "lead to a critical approach to dogma, a quest for *itjihad* (personal interpretation), a renewal of theological thinking – in other words, an Islamic Reformation" (Roy 2004: 181). That, again, can lead to a liberalization of the religion. Second, the individualization of Islam can also lead to fundamentalism. Fundamentalism requires the opportunity to reconstruct a Muslim community based solely on the explicit tenets of religion,

which has become possible through globalization and individualization (Roy 2004: 1-30, 181-183).

Roy's characterization of the processes of religious individualization that are reshaping European/Western Muslims' relationship to Islam has parallels in other studies. For instance, in the book *Producing Islamic Knowledge. Transmission and dissemination in Western Europe* (Bruinessen and Allievi 2011), religious individualization is referred to as a process that demands more involvement from Muslim individuals when it comes to acquiring and producing Islamic knowledge in the West. Due to a fragmented Islamic authority and competing Islamic authorities, Muslims in Western Europe are choosing between various sources and Islamic authorities when they acquire or produce Islamic knowledge. By highlighting the fragmented Islamic authority, and the individual Muslim's individual choice of who or what Islamic knowledge to follow, their use of the concept of individualization seems to correspond with Roy's meaning of the term (Bruinessen 2011: 2; Caeiro 2011a: 136-137).

2.1.4 The individualization of the religious choice

Jocelyn Cesari is another researcher who thinks that the study of Muslim minorities in the West must be seen in relation to global Islam. Her research orients around integration and aims to understand the situation of Muslims in democratic and secular societies in the West. She explores how Muslims adjust to the new context(s) and how shared transformations within Muslim minorities and Western societies mutually influence each other and these processes (Cesari 2004: 5-7, 175-181). Cesari has used both quantitative and qualitative methods in her study, including surveys, interviews, observations and text studies. Her sources consist of survey materials from Europe and the USA and interviews with religious leaders, leaders of religious and secular organizations and Muslim men and women with various cultural and ethnic backgrounds as well as observations of Muslim communities in European and North American cities. Other sources her study draws on are previous and existing research on Muslims in Europa and the USA, public reports and studies conducted by Muslim organizations themselves. Thus, Cesari's research build upon diverse sources and includes material from several "generations" of Muslim immigrants in Europe and the USA (Cesari 2004: 7, 9-19).

To be a Muslim in Europe or the USA means, according to Cesari, "to lose one's relationship to Islam as a cultural and social *faith accompli*, and instead to open it up to questioning and individual choice" (Cesari 2004: 45). This form of individualization is not

only characteristic of Western Islam as people in Muslim countries also question their relationship to religion and make their own choices. However, the contexts for such individualism in the West vary from those in Muslim countries. In secular societies, individuals have several and disparate choices that are both more available and accepted. Here it is not presupposed that you are a Muslim, as it is in Muslim countries; rather, religious identity is more connected to individual choice. Therefore, it is the religious choice that becomes individualized for Muslims in the West, as stated by Cesari. Here Muslims must both choose *to be* a Muslim, and they must make choices concerning *how* to be a Muslim (Cesari 2004: 45-46).

The individualization of the religious choice has led to several possible Muslim identities among Muslims in Europe and the USA, according Cesari, because there are different ways to identify with Islam. Cesari builds upon Hervieu-Léger's descriptive model of four ways to identity with religion when she distinguishes between various "Muslim identities" (Hervieu-Léger 1998: 219-222; Cesari 2004: 45-46). Some Muslims identify with Islam at a communal level, according to Cesari. These emphasize "orthodoxy and observance of religious rituals, in which observance of the five pillars, circumcisions, food prohibitions, and rules regarding dress are the crucial elements of religious praxis" (Cesari 2004: 45). Others identify with Islam on an ethical level. This means that they emphasize "communal and personal values that may have nothing to do with ritual and religious prohibitions," as stated by Cesari (Cesari 2004: 45). Some Muslims identify with the cultural aspects of Islam, such as language and heritage, while others again identify with Islam on a more emotional level based on their reactions to different situations. Muslims' minority situation in the West and the continuous reflection over what it means to be a Muslim often trigger the emotional identification with Islam, according to Cesari. She further claims that in the West it is the more personal forms of Islam that dominate, namely the emotional, the cultural and the ethical. Because of this we can now witness a development of a more individualized and secular Islam (Cesari 2004: 45-46). According to Cesari, it is possible to divide the representatives for the individualized and secular Islamic trend into the following three categories of Muslims: "those who practice a private version of their faith, non-practicing Muslims who nonetheless identify on an ethical or emotional basis, and fundamentalists who embrace a totalizing version of communal Islam" (Cesari 2004: 46).

Muslims that practice a "private version" of their faith adapt their religious observance to their private life. This means that they distinguish between which Islamic observances to follow and not based upon the observances' "social visibility" (Cesari 2004: 46).

Representatives of this category may practice some Islamic rituals and regulations in private but avoid being pointed out as Muslims in social relations. Thus, they choose not to follow "social visible observances" such as clothing regulations or regulations concerning the relationship between the sexes (Cesari 2004: 46-47). Representatives from the second category define themselves as "non-practicing believers," as stated by Cesari (Cesari 2004: 47). According to Cesari, these Muslims live more or less secular lives but are tied to Islam through the observance of Islamic rites of passage and holidays. Muslims within this category may approach Islam as a cultural heritage or norm, or they may identify with the moral and humanistic values of Islam, without observing religious rituals and practices (Cesari 2004: 47-50). Muslims that Cesari terms "fundamentalist" are those that aim to follow all Islamic rituals and regulations, including codes of dress and segregation of gender, and to practice Islam as a "way of life" (Cesari 2004: 53). Within this category, Cesari distinguishes between Muslims who adapt their totalized religious world to their non-Muslim surroundings – such as those who choose to follow Islamic rituals and regulations and participate in public life through work, studies or social engagement – and those who show more of a rejection of engaging in the non-Muslim world (Cesari 2004: 53-56).

Cesari's categories of "Muslim identities," which include more sub-categories and nuances than mentioned above, must be seen in relation to her objective of understanding the situation of Muslims in Western secular and democratic societies. She uses these categories as analytical tools to expose diversity among Muslims and the numerous ways Muslims may identify with Islam. Cesari supports Roy's view that it is not "Islam" itself that changes when Muslims settle down in the West but that what changes is Muslims' religiosity and their relationship to Islam. Because of this, she emphasizes the importance of studying Islam in relation to the historical, geographical and cultural context in which it is practiced (Cesari 2004: 5-7, 45-57, 175-181).

2.1.5 Individualization through Islam

The social scientist Nadia Fadil has done in-depth interviews with young Muslim women in Belgium. Her results correspond with Roy and Cesari on the point that it is the Muslims' relationship to Islam, and not "Islam" itself, that changes for Muslims in the West. Based on her interviews, she shows that it is her informants' *entry into* and *engagement with* Islam that have become individualized. To practice Islam or not has become a matter of individual choice and not something you should do to prove your loyalty to a specific community or to an inherited culture. At this point, Fadil's findings correspond with Cesari's findings. Fadil

argues that in their emic descriptions of "good Muslims," the women in her study rejected religious bricolage as an acceptable form of Islamic religiosity. Instead, they shared the view that "a good Muslim" is someone who lives according to certain prescriptions. Not following these prescriptions was seen as "lacking" and a "sin." In this way, the authority of Islam as a system of meaning and norms remained undisputed among her informants (Fadil 2005: 143-153).

According to Fadil, we have to investigate how Muslims individualize themselves *through* Islam rather than how they individualize themselves *from* Islam. Her research shows that the young Muslim women use Islam as a reference when they oppose themselves to inherited Moroccan cultural practices. They make a clear distinction between Islamic and cultural practices, where the former is seen as "authentic and true" practices, while the latter is often negatively associated with oppressive practices. In this way, the women individualize themselves within a religious framework. From this point of view, individualization can be seen as a way of inscribing oneself into a tradition and to find new opportunities and interpretations within it (Fadil 2005: 143-153).

2.1.6 "Restricted bricolage"

The Norwegian anthropologist Christine M. Jacobsen discusses individualization in relation to processes of knowledge acquisition, religious authority structures and the young Muslims' processes of "becoming Muslims" in her study on how Muslim identities and practices are being (re)produced in a context of international migration and globalization. The sources Jacobsen draws her research and results from consist of material from her fieldwork in and interviews with participants in "pan-Islamic" Muslim student and youth organizations in Oslo. Furthermore, she draws on texts produced and distributed by the participants in her study as well as Internet sites such as chat rooms, email discussion lists, the homepages of the organizations she studied and diverse frequently visited Islamic pages. She has interviewed various members from the Muslim student and youth organizations as well as some non-members. In addition to this, she has used the national media, novels, statistics and other academic literature as sources in her study. Thus, her research is grounded in comprehensive and contemporary source materials that can provide information about processes of individualization among young Muslims in Oslo (Jacobsen 2006: 24-34).

Jacobsen found that her informants acquired knowledge about Islam from a number of different sources, such as the extended family, religious classes in the mosque, books, the Internet, videotapes, audiotapes, seminars and conferences. Because of this, they are

surrounded by several overlapping and competing discourses that all claim to transmit the Islamic tradition. In the processes of gaining Islamic knowledge, the young Muslims practice what Jacobsen refers to as a "restricted bricolage." This means that they claim their right to put together elements from different Islamic discourses to increase their religious knowledge. The bricolage is described as restricted because the young Muslims do not put together beliefs and practices they find outside the Islamic tradition but remain faithful to Islam and choose only from within the tradition. The restricted bricolage is not only a result of individual reflection, according to Jacobsen; it is also *a product of different Islamic traditions being mixed together* when young Muslims with various backgrounds mingle in educational settings to learn from each other about Islam. As a result, the young Muslims internalize elements from different Islamic traditions in their lived Islam (Jacobsen 2006: 24-30, 65-86, 212-229).

Like the women in Fadil's study, the young Muslims in Jacobsen's study engage in debates and differentiate between what they characterize as "true" and "inauthentic" forms of Islam in their quest for Islamic knowledge. Knowledge and practices that can be traced back to the founding texts of Islam, the Qur'an and *hadith*, are recognized as "true Islam." The religious practice of the uneducated and their parental generation are believed to build on cultural tradition, not religious knowledge, and are therefore recognized as inauthentic forms of Islam. Jacobsen argues that we should see the young Muslims' involvement in debates and attempts of defining the "correct" forms of Islamic knowledge and practices as *processes of "normativization"* (Jacobsen 2006: 230-232, 234). That their practices are "normativized" does not mean that the young Muslims embrace a specific set of Islamic doctrines to be identified as "normative" or "orthodox" Islam, according to Jacobsen. Instead, it means that the young Muslims "seek to (re)order the knowledges that govern the "correct" form of Islamic practices, as against other claims to know what the correct Islamic knowledge and practice is" (Jacobsen 2006: 231).

What is new in the transmission of Islamic knowledge are the modern conditions through which Islamic knowledge is transmitted to young Muslims, as stated by Jacobsen. This includes the new European context(s), where Muslims make up a religious minority and where Muslims with various backgrounds and traditions come together to learn about and discuss Islam and thus are confronted with various differences in relation to the non-Muslim majority and other Muslims. In addition, the modern condition of mass education and mass media has made the young Muslims more familiar with Islamic texts and made it possible for more people to engage in theological debates. However, what continues, or stays the same, is the young Muslims' relationship to authorized forms of Islamic discourses and religious

authorities, which remain as the maintainers, producers and transmitters of Islamic knowledge. Jacobsen argues against seeing the young Muslims' relationship to Islamic knowledge as individualized in the meaning of being disconnected from Islamic discourses and authorities because it is by references to authoritative Islamic sources that they legitimize and authorize their own, sometimes opposing, viewpoints. The young Muslims remain in Islam, which continues to function as a system of meaning and a normative system for them. However, their quest for Islamic knowledge puts them in contact with several Islamic discourses in which the boundaries of "Islam" are constantly contested and debated. Thus, to increase their knowledge about Islam, the young Muslims must critically consider which voices to follow and respect as authoritative (Jacobsen 2006: 267-270). As a result of this we find: "-a paradoxical development in which Islam is both increasingly "individualized" and "normativized", as it enters debates and social confrontation about the nature of "true Islam"" (Jacobsen 2006: 269).

Jacobsen's and Fadil's studies have several correlated results. The participants in both studies individualize themselves *through* and *within* a religious framework that functions as an authoritative system of meaning and norms for them. Fadil, like Cesari, emphasizes that it is the choice about *whether to practice* Islam or not and *how* to practice Islam that have been individualized. Fadil's and Jacobsen's results show that the young Muslims distinguish between practices they identify as "Islamic" and "cultural" and that they oppose the latter through references to the Islamic scriptures. In this way, they are using Islam as a religious framework to individualize through. Some differences in Jacobsen's and Fadil's research, such as in how they use the term "bricolage," can explain why Fadil claims that her informants are rejecting "religious bricolage," while Jacobsen claims that the participants in her study are practicing a restricted version of it. It seems as though Fadil thinks that the young Muslim women must "pick and choose" between beliefs and practices from different religions before she can call it a "bricolage," while Jacobsen calls it a "restricted bricolage" when her informants assert their right to put together elements from various Islamic discourses to increase their religious competence. Still, their results show that their informants use Islam as an overall normative system and that they do not include elements from other religions in their beliefs and practices.

2.1.7 Inaccurate picture of the past and an ethnocentric perspective
The traditional theory about "religion à la carte" or "bricolage" found in the sociology of religion has been charged with some weakness. Sociologist of religion Meredith McGuire

identifies the theory presented, for instance, by Hervieu-Léger with two main problems. First, McGuire thinks it gives us an inaccurate picture of the past. We cannot presume that the people in so-called traditional societies just accepted their religious authorities' beliefs and practices as their own. Even though religious institutions used to have more power and influence on people's life in the past, we must assume that there were disagreements between prescribed (normative) religion and lived religion even then. The second problem McGuire identifies with this theory is that it is ethnocentric. The theory can be used to describe the religious development in Europa and North and South America, but according to McGuire it is not suitable for describing religious development in other parts of the world (McGuire 2002: 294-295).

It is possible to criticize Heriveu-Léger's research for being "inaccurate" about the past and too "ethnocentric" because she uses a "then and now" perspective and builds most of her research on empirical data from France. Nevertheless, it is not the "bricolage" itself that is Hervieu-Léger's main point in relation to the individualization of religion. What characterizes individualization, according to her, is the fact that individuals simultaneously assert their right to bricolage as well as their right to choose their own beliefs. This way of thinking about "rights" can be seen as a result of the economic modernization and the human rights "reasoning." It can also be related to an actual historical event, such as the UDHR, and its call upon to be universal. Without a doubt, there have been changes in the way we think about the individual's rights and take them into consideration before and after the UDHR. It was of course possible for the individual to assert his/her rights before this event as well. However, after the UDHR, the individual could support his/her claim of rights with a reference to the fact that the UDHR was intended to secure all human beings a minimum of political, social, economic and cultural rights. Regarding this, there has been an essential change that allows us to speak about a "then and now." Still, even though the UDHR is meant to be universal, the human rights thought cannot be described as universal. Even though most countries formally consent to the idea that all individuals have some immanent rights, there can be a huge gap between the formal and the practical affirmation of human rights (Svensson 2000: 20). Thus, it is difficult, impossible and even unthinkable for numbers of humans to assert their rights toward their State like citizens in modern Western countries can. In addition, Hervieu-Léger's theory of individualization of religion in modern societies is founded on historical and contemporary empirical data from France and thus developed within a Western context. This means that her theory of individualization of religion uses Christianity and its institutional organization as a religious model and that it describes changes in the individual's relationship

to Christianity due to shifting times and economic and socio-political changes within a modern Western Christian context, and mainly the context of France. This makes it ethnocentric, in McGuire's use of the word, and best suited for use in Christian societies that have experienced religious and societal developments similar to those of France.

2.1.8 Problematic epoch perspectives

Pål Repstad's critique of the individualization concept is not aimed at the different theories of individualization but at how religious studies deals with the phenomenon. He criticizes what he calls a biased use of "epoch perspectives" in the study of religion. These perspectives have been prominent within the humanities and the social sciences until the beginning of the 21st century, he argues. The epoch perspectives are based on the notion that all humans within a certain era to a certain degree share the same thoughts and behaviors. This means that the main objective for our analysis is to capture what can be said to characterize humans in a certain era and that the categories on which we structure our analysis is "then" versus "now." The prominent "image of man" in our era is the "individualistic individual," according to Repstad. This can be seen in the study of religion, where the prominent trend until recently has been to "create images of an autonomous individual who out of self-interest or in the search for meaning relates himself/herself to, and chooses among, new and old narratives, and who constructs her/his own universe of meaning, which is loosely connected and therefore changeable, and rather independent of established organized religion" (Repstad 2003: 75, my translation, and Repstad 2003: 76).

Repstad identifies several weaknesses with epoch thinking and the image of man as prominent in our era. First, he warns against what he calls an undifferentiated way of thinking about epochs. We cannot base our analyses on contemporary religion on notions that all humans think alike and that everyone has the same access to economic, social and cultural benefits. This gives us the wrong picture of reality because we live in a class society where we find economic, social and cultural sorts of differences. Secondly, Repstad thinks the image of the "individualistic individual" is exaggerated. The religious individual is not so autonomous and isolated as the researchers describe him/her to be. Every religion is socially transmitted, including "unorganized" religion. And all relations are social, he points out, including those which exist solely online. There should be a place for the individual in search of meaning in the analysis of religion and religiosity today, but Repstad warns against exaggerating how disconnected from everything else this individual is. Thirdly, Repstad indicates that the research field of "religious individualization" to a certain degree is created

by the scholars of religion themselves. He also questions whether or not the religious scholars have been misguided by their own life situations and social contexts and, as a consequence, exaggerate Western secularity and the significance of the "seeking individualistic religiosity." Individualism is not likely to be found in every class of society, and in all contexts, but is most likely to be found among youth, intellectuals and artists, according to Repstad. He is afraid that the researcher forgets about this and therefore overstates the occurrence of religious individualization in society and, in this way, creates an area of research that is more embedded in his/her head and social situation than in social reality (Repstad 2003: 78-81).

Repstad's epoch critique affects both the traditional view of religious individualization we find within the sociology of religion and Hervieu-Léger's theory about the individualization of religion in modern societies. Both views are grounded in the thought about "then and now" and in an anthropology, which builds on the notion that all people within a certain epoch think and behave in similar ways. Thus, there is little room for individual differences. The image of the "human in search of meaning" is to be found in the studies of Fadil and Jacobsen, where they describe how their informants relate to Islam as a normative system of meaning, or framework, through which they legitimize or reject religious beliefs and practices with references thereto. However, both Fadil and Jacobsen contextualize their informants geographically, historically and socially and thereby avoid Repstad's epoch critique. Their studies also show how young Muslims have social ties to organized religion, family and cultural traditions, so Fadil and Jacobsen cannot be said to exaggerate how "individualistic" the individual is, as Repstad warns against doing. Instead, they argue that it is not necessary to look at processes of individualization as disconnected or "disembedded"[5] from institutionalized religion but that processes of individualization can take place within and through religion, too.

2.1.9 How to capture the wind? Other critical remarks on the theories of individualization
When Repstad criticizes how the individualization concept is used in the study of religion, he criticizes the scholars of religions' tools of analysis and methods. He accuses the qualitative "desktop researchers" as being too far from their empirical data, while he speaks in gentle terms about empirically grounded quantitative research. According to him, the latter is more likely to find more continuity in its results than qualitative research. This is because qualitative research occasionally seems to enlarge and pay too much attention to trivialities

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[5] The concept of "disembedding" is taken from Anthony Giddens's (1990: 21).

and consequently finds and describes larger changes than those that have really taken place. The problem with the research on religious individualization is, according to Repstad, that it exaggerates the phenomenon. We should therefore use more varied types of methods in the contemporary study of religion and not only qualitative or only quantitative methods. Repstad uses the metaphor "who can capture the wind?" to describe how it is to study lived religion today. It seems impossible to capture the wind; nevertheless, the wind is not entirely unpredictable but has its clues and directions Repstad argues. If we use various measuring instruments, we can capture parts of it. The same applies to lived religion today. If we combine more methods in the study of lived religion, we will improve our chances of giving an overall picture of it. Because of this, Repstad argues that we should use both quantitative and qualitative methods in the study of religion, or at least aim for a closer dialog between the empirical research and the theorization about society (Repstad 2003: 75-84).

It is hard to disagree with Repstad's view that we should use more varied methods in the study of lived religion today. However, research projects concerning this vary to a large degree in their extent, size and timeframe, and it is very time-consuming for one researcher to use a number of methods. The different theories of religious individualization presented here are the result of the researchers' use of qualitative and quantitative methods and contemporary sources. Where Hervieu-Léger tends to rely more on quantitative methods and materials, Jacobsen's and Fadil's studies are more qualitative, and Cesari's and Roy's studies can be seen as a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods and source materials. Even though they use different methods in their studies, they all identify processes of individualization in the European Muslims' relationship to Islam based on their contemporary source materials. By contextualizing their studies culturally and geographically, Fadil and Jacobsen show that qualitative research projects can be closely connected to the empirical material and provide us with extensive and good descriptions of reality without either exaggerating or understating the research phenomenon, despite Repstad's critique.

Not only has the researchers' use of methods in the study of religious individualization faced criticism but so have their perspectives and source materials. Peter Mandaville has questioned Roy's lack of a historical perspective in his studies and criticizes some of the claims Roy asserts in his theory of individualization. For instance, Mandaville disagrees with Roy's view that Islamic authority has become pluralized and fragmented due to the globalization and deterritorialization of Islam. Instead, Mandaville asserts that there has never existed one singular and situated source of authority within Islam. Rather, the authority in Islam has always been decentralized. Mandaville legitimizes his view with references to the

history of authoritative knowledge production within Islam, which has always been characterized by different power struggles between social, epistemological and political systems. Thus, globalization has not in itself led to a pluralization of Islamic authority, according to Mandaville, but it has strengthened the old tendency toward the decentralization and pluralization of Islamic authority by bringing new extents and new intensity into debates concerning the meaning and the nature of the authorities in Islam. Anyone familiar with the history of Islam will be able to recognize several of the current pluralized forms of Islamic authority from that history, according to Mandaville (Mandaville 2007: 101-115). And it is not only Mandaville claiming that there is nothing new with a decentralized and fragmented Islamic authority. Other researchers seem to share Mandaville's view that globalization has strengthened, and not created, such forms of authority by referring to Islamic knowledge and authority in Europe as "increasingly fragmented and diffuse" (Dessing et al. 2013: 3).

Roy is not the only one who lacks a historical perspective. It is the same with Cesari's, Fadil's and Jacobsen's studies. Both Fadil and Jacobsen use interviews and fieldwork as their main methods. Even though they refer to Islam as a tradition and a system of norms, and Jacobsen to three different but overlapping horizons of action that her informants engage in – "the global Muslim community," "Euro-Norwegian Muslims" and "family and the ethnic diaspora" – neither of them approach individualization processes among Muslims from a historical perspective (Jacobsen 2006: 109-150). They only use contemporary sources such as field notes, interviews, observations and other contemporary studies of Islam and Muslims in the West in their studies. This means that Mandaville's critique against Roy's lack of knowledge about the history of Islam can also be directed toward their studies. Fadil and Jacobsen contextualize their studies in prominent ways – geographically, culturally and socially – but not historically. The same can be said about Cesari, who also emphasizes the importance of contextualizing. Cesari explores the social and historical contexts within which Muslims create their own discourse about what is important and unimportant in Islam. In this way, she brings a historical perspective into her research. However, this is a restricted historical perspective because it is limited by applying only to Islam and Muslims in a migration context in the West and the challenges related thereto (Cesari 2004).

2.1.10 Summary: The theories of individualization and their identified weakness
The presentation above shows that within the study of religion, the individualization concept has been used, and is used, to describe the *increased* number of choices the individual has in relation to religion in modern societies. What these theories have in common is that they

compare the individual's relationship with religion in modern societies with the presumed relationship between individuals and religion in traditional societies and thus approach religion's role in society and the individual's relationship to religion from a "then and now" perspective (McGuire 2002: 292-294; Hervieu-Léger 1998: 217). It is mainly due to their use of a "then and now" perspective that these theories have faced criticism where they have been accused of comparing today's religious practices with an idealistic picture of religious practices in the past and of being grounded in a biased form of epoch thinking. These theories have also been criticized for being ethnocentric and because of that are only appropriate for describing religious development in countries in Europe and North and South America.

Within the study of Islam, the individualization concept is used to describe transformations in Western Muslims' relationship to Islam, mainly due to the new geographical and cultural context(s). Both Cesari and Roy argue that the Western context triggers processes of individualization among Muslims in the West. Cesari compares Muslims' relationship to Islam in Muslim-majority countries with Muslims' relationship to Islam in Western countries. According to her, what distinguishes Muslim practices within Western countries from Muslim practices within Muslim-majority countries is that the Western context(s) to a larger degree enforces the individualized religious choice. Muslims in Western countries have access to more available and accepted religious alternatives and choices than Muslims in Muslim-majority countries, according to Cesari. Since Islam is a minority religion within the Western countries, it is not as "obvious" or "natural" to be Muslims within these countries as it is in Muslim-majority countries. Because of this, the minority situation requires a higher level of reflection around religious identity; here, Muslims must both choose to be Muslims and choose how to live as Muslims since there are many different prevalent understandings of Islam present in the West (Cesari 2004: 44-53).

Like Cesari, Roy emphasizes the Western context in his theory of individualization. However, in contrast to Cesari, he also identifies the deterritorialization of Islam and thus the fragmentation and pluralization of Islamic authority – that is, Islam's authority crisis, in particular in the West – as the main causes behind what he identifies as the processes of individualization. The practices that make up these processes of individualization are, according to Roy, 1) the individual Muslim's task to interpret Islam and define "Islam and "Muslims"; 2) the individual Muslim's turn to the Islamic source materials, which he/she reads and interprets on their own and 3) the individual Muslim's "picking and choosing" among what Islamic ideas, information and religious "authorities" to follow. Roy believes that these individualized Muslim practices characterize Muslims in the West's relationship to

Islam. This means that he regards them as different from Muslim practices in Muslim-majority countries and thus as new practices (Roy 2004: 1-30, 148-175).

Neither Fadil nor Jacobsen aim at constructing new theories of individualization but refer to the individualization concept, and some of the theories, to describe their informants' relationship to Islam and how they use Islam as a system of meaning and norms. Fadil's results show that her informants use Islam as a religious framework they individualize themselves through, and not from. By invoking the authority of Islam, the women in her study legitimize their own religious choices and interpretations and oppose themselves to what they define as "cultural" and often oppressive practices. Jacobsen also emphasizes the "new" context in her descriptions and explanations of how young Muslims relate to Islam. The participants in her study are all engaged in multicultural and "pan-Islamic" student and youth organizations where they encounter different understandings of "Islam" and "Muslims" – which they are influenced by and influence (Jacobsen 2006: 64-82). In their quests for knowledge, they put together elements from various Islamic discourses and claim their right to do so. However, they do not include elements from other religious but only choose from Islam. Because of this, Jacobsen refers to their practices as "restricted bricolage."

As we can see, within the study of Islam and Muslims in the West/Europe, the individualization concept and the theories of individualization are closely related to the Western context, which is seen as the main trigger of individualization processes in young Muslims' knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam. The studies emphasize that the minority situation of Muslims in the West changes Muslims' relationship to Islam and makes the individual more responsible and in charge of her or his religious beliefs and practices. It is not these studies' contemporary approach that is seen as problematic; what is identified as their weakness and thus criticized is their lack of variation when it comes to perspectives, methods and sources. As Mandaville has pointed out, the lack of a historical perspective can make us see an old or common phenomenon as something new and thus make us build our theories of individualization on a wrong basis. This, again, can make us overlook continuities in how religious knowledge has been produced, maintained and transmitted within the history of Islam and how this is done today. Repstad, on the other hand, is more concerned that the researcher's lack of varied methods can make her overstress how independent and isolated the individual is from institutionalized religion and thus exaggerate the individualization phenomenon. Mandaville's and Repstad's critiques can therefore be seen as a call for the use of more varied perspectives, methods and sources in the study of individualization processes in Muslims' knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam in Europe.

2.2 Conceptualizing Islam in the West

The debate considering how to conceptualize Islam has traditionally been between those who see Islam as a monolithic entity versus those who see Islam as a diverse religion – namely, the Orientalists versus the anti-Orientalists. The second part of this chapter starts with a brief presentation of these two approaches before I move on to more recent attempts to conceptualize Islam. As representatives of the social sciences' ways of conceptualizing Islam, I have chosen Clifford Geertz, Talal Asad and Salman Sayyid. Jan Hjärpe and Anne Sofie Roald represent a religious studies' approach to Islam. Geertz, the founder of interpretative anthropology, is included here as a classic example of how "Islam" has been treated within the discipline of anthropology. Asad's way of conceptualizing Islam as a "discursive tradition" is in many ways a classic example of today's anthropological approach to Islam. His approach to Islam is widely used and referred to and therefore included here. Like Asad, the sociologist Sayyid also sees Islam as a discursive construction, but his terminology and objectives differ from those of Asad. What these attempts from the social sciences have in common is that they in their effort to avoid essentialist presentations of Islam "transform" Islam into something other than religion.

In contrast to these "reductionist" views, there is a tradition within religious studies to define Islam as a religion[6]. Even so, there is still the task of many scholars of religion to conceptualize the different religions in a way that explains why they should be recognized as *one* religion even though their expressions and receptions seem to vary enormously according to time and place. The "Islamic basket" model by Hjärpe is a conceptualization strategy that claims to explain Islam's unity, diversity, continuity and change. Because of this, it is included here. Roald has developed Hjärpe's Islamic basket further by adding a migrant-minority perspective to it. The main objective of Roald's Islamic basket model is to explain how the migrant-minority situation might influence how Muslims define and practice Islam and is therefore highly relevant for my study.

2.2.1 Orientalist and anti-Orientalist approaches

One popular way of describing the different approaches Western scholars have had to the study of Islam is in terms of the two categories of the Orientalist approach and the anti-Orientalist approach. What characterizes the Orientalist approach to Islam is that it is "essentialist, empiricist and historicist" (Sayyid 2003: 32) and often oriented around theology

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[6] This does not mean that scholars of religion do not have a reductionist view of religion or that they restrain from using reductionist definitions of religion. This will be further elaborated in Chapter 3.

(Roald 2001: 9-10). The "West" and "Islam" are also often presented as binary oppositions by subscribers to this approach. For a considerable period of time, this was the dominant approach by Western scholars to the study of Islam and the Orient's society, history and language. But after Edward Said published his *Orientalism* (1978), in which he criticized the Western study of Islam and the Orient, this approach became debatable (Said 2001 [1978]; Sayyid 2003). According to its critics, Orientalists' approaches to Islam fail to capture Islam's diversity and also the internal and external processes that lead to change within the religion. Instead, Islam is presented as a static and uniform religion that stands in strong contrast to the fluid, developing, and always changing modern West (Sayyid 2003: 31-33).

Markussen and Natvig, the editors of *Islamer i Norge* (Islams in Norway), use the plural form "Islams" to refer to Muslims' different understandings and ways of practicing Islam. By using "Islams" instead of "Islam," they emphasize that Islam is diverse and that it has a multitude of expressions and manifestations – a multiplicity they believe to be hidden in the Norwegian media discourse about Islam and in terminology such as "Muslims in Norway" and "Islam in Norway" (Markussen and Natvig 2005: 7, 11). Markussen and Natvig's use of the plural form of Islam is a good example of an anti-Orientalist approach to Islam. What characterizes these approaches is that they reject essentialist presentations of Islam and therefore refuse to see Islam as a fixed analytical category. Instead, the users of this approach advocate seeing Islam as a diverse phenomenon because they do not think that there exists such as thing as "Islam" – only "Islams" (Sayyid 2003: 36-40).

This "pluralization strategy" has faced some critique. Several researchers on Islam avoid and warn against using this strategy because it does not solve any problems; it only displaces them. For instance, Jacobsen points out that the pluralization strategy does not solve the problem of essentialism. Instead, it can lead to new forms of essentialisms where one "essentializes" different kinds of Islam (Jacobsen 2006: 326-330; Sayyid 2003: 40).

The Orientalists and the anti-Orientalists have opposite views when it comes to what they see as determining what it is that Muslims think and do. To put it simply, the "Orientalists'" claim that everything Muslims do (including politics, economics, etc.) is determined by Islam, whereas "anti-Orientalists" claim that other socio-political factors shape religion and what Muslims believe and do. So, while the Orientalist sees Islam as the principal causal explanation for what Muslims think and do, the anti-Orientalist sees "Islam" as believed and practiced by Muslims as the fruit of something else. Næss, who is one of the authors in *Islamer i Norge,* criticizes how Norwegian media is making essentialist presentations of Islam and how they use "Islam" and "Muslim culture" as causal explanations

for young Pakistanis' (illegal) actions. In doing so, the Norwegian media is overlooking the young Pakistanis' complex backgrounds and therefore also social, situational, historical and individual factors that may help explain their actions (Næss 2005). The other articles in *Islamer i Norge* emphasize the importance of recognizing Muslims' heterogeneity. To explain what Muslims who participate in their studies think and do, they point at several factors, such as social status, social organization (i.e., clan-affiliation), social situation (minority, migrant), culture, tradition, politics, ethnicity, socialization, religious- and cultural surroundings and aesthetics in addition to Islam and different traditions of knowledge within Islam. In this way, it becomes clear that they do not think it is only "Islam" that determines what Muslims think and do in relation to religion and in general but that Muslims' beliefs and practices must be seen in relation to the historical, social and cultural contexts within which they are performed. Here, the migrant-minority situation for Muslims in Norway is considered to be a relevant factor, in addition to religion, in explaining social and religious organization among Muslims living in Norway (Næss 2005; Markussen 2005; Irgan 2005; Assal 2005; Lien 2005).

2.2.2 Causality explanations: A critical view of the "culturalist approach"

Roy is one of the most prominent researchers on globalized Islam. He criticizes what is called the "culturalist approach" to Islam. "The culturalist approach," or "culturalism," implies in his definition that Islam is seen as "the issue" in all cases and debates related to Muslims. This means that Islam is used as an explanatory concept and as a casual mechanism in all events and matters that involve Muslims. For instance, it tries to explain current events by asking questions such as "What does Islam say about women?" or "What does Islam say about jihad" The main problem with this approach is that it regards Islam as a separated unit that consists of a set of coherent ideas and values that can be used as an explanatory cause in all events involving Muslims (Roy 2004: 1-17). In this way, it corresponds with the "Orientalist approach" as described above.

Both critics and defenders of Islam are caught in the culturalist approach, according to Roy. It is widespread and accepted among Orientalists from different parts of society, including social scientists, politicians, academics, journalists and people in general, but also among conservative Muslims and fundamentalists who thinks that everything concerning Islam is related to, or should be related to, passages in the Qur'an. Roy finds this perspective highly irrelevant and does not think that current affairs such as processes of Islamic radicalization – in other words, Islamization – can or should be explained with references to Islamic scriptures, such as the Qur'an, or to particular periods of Muslim rulings, such as the

Ottoman Empire. We should rather see these affairs in relation to modern processes of globalization and the Westernization of the Muslim world (Roy 2004: 1-17).

One of the reasons that the culturalist approach has gained such a great impact is because of the constant confusion between Islam as a religion and "Muslim culture," according to Roy. Islam as a religion is made up of the Qur'an, the *Sunna* (the Prophet Muhammad's life and teaching) and the commentaries from the *ulama* (Islamic scholars). Muslim culture, on the other hand, consists of literature, traditions, social relations, science and historical and political paradigms, among others. These types of cultural aspects are difficult to recognize when they are not historically or geographically embedded. Therefore, all problems concerning today's Muslims, ranging from "the oppression of women" to "terrorism," are explained with reference to Islam. What this approach to Islam misses, as stated by Roy, is that the Qur'an is a sacred text that needs to be interpreted – it cannot speak for itself. Different interpreters and interpretations provide the Qur'an with a multitude of meanings. Therefore, we should not ask, "What does Islam say about that?" but rather "What do Muslims say the Qur'an says about that?" following Roy[7]. If we do this, we will find that Muslims often disagree on this point, while at the same time they claim that that the Qur'an is "clear" and "unambiguous" (Roy 2004: 1-17).

Roy asserts that the culturalist approach is grounded in a philosophical assumption that culture is something that exists on its own, *sui generis,* independent of time and place. Culture is thought to be transmitted from one generation to the next and operates as the ultimate explanatory model for all societies. The main problem with this approach is, according to Roy, that it sees culture as a homogenous set of values and that it overlooks internal differences and conflicts. By applying this approach to Islam and Muslims, analysts overestimate Islam's role when it comes to how it influences contemporary societies and overlook other important factors that determine how Muslims view Islam. For instance, modern Islamic radicalization is a global phenomenon, in Roy's view. Islamization should therefore be seen as a current phenomenon that expresses the globalization and Westernization of the Muslim world and not only be explained with references to Islam (Roy 2004: 1-17).

It is mainly Orientalists' (and other essentialist) approaches to Islam that are affected by Roy's criticism. The following attempts to conceptualize Islam in the subsequent

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[7] Hjärpe has illustrated the same point by pretending to "listen" to the Qur'an by stating: "I cannot hear anything." It is important for both Roy and Hjärpe to remind their audience that "Islam" does not say or do anything, but that it is Muslims and others who interpret Islam's sacred texts who claim that Islam "says" or "does" this and that (Roald 2009: 17).

presentation can be seen as attempts that explicitly avoid such essentialist and culturalist presentations of Islam and Muslims.

2.2.3 Islam as a discursive tradition – An anthropological approach

In Western academia, Islam has been a field of research for several hundreds of years, with contributions from many different disciplines, including philology and linguistics, literature, history, sociology and ethnography/anthropology. The problem area of how to conceptualize Islam has been explored perhaps most intensively by anthropologists. An early example is Clifford Geertz, who sees religion as a cultural system. In *Islam Observed,* Geertz aims at describing religious change in both Indonesia and Morocco. Here he takes an anti-essentialist approach to Islam and points out that even if it is Indonesia's and Morocco's affiliation to Islam that makes them the same, it is also what makes them different. The two countries are described as the antipodes of the Muslim world by Geertz. He explains:

> Religious faith, even when it is fed from a common source, is as much a particularizing force as a generalizing one, and indeed whatever universality a given religious tradition manages to attain arises from its ability to engage a widening set of individual, even idiosyncratic conceptions of life and yet somehow sustain and elaborate them all (Geertz 2012 [1968]: 68).

Thus, Islam cannot be studied as an isolated object, according to Geertz, but must be seen in relation to the historical, social and cultural context within it is practiced (Geertz 2012).

A now-classic example is Talal Asad's "Anthropology of Islam." Even though Asad takes an anti-essentialist approach to Islam, he disagrees with other anti-essentialist approaches that emphasize the multiple forms of Islam as equally true and worth describing and, in this way, dissolve "Islam" as an analytical category (Asad 1986: 1-2). Asad therefore argues for seeing Islam as a consistent discursive tradition because this way of conceptualizing Islam opens up for the diversity of notions and practices found among Muslims and maintains the distinctive and unifying Islamic identity and frame of reference (Asad 1986).

According to Asad, the Anthropology of Islam should start where Muslims start, that is, "from the concept of a discursive tradition that includes and relates itself to the founding texts of the Qur'an and the *hadith*. Islam is neither a distinctive social structure, nor a heterogeneous collection of beliefs, artifacts, customs, and morals. It is a tradition" (Asad

1986: 14). In this regard, a tradition consists basically of "discourses that seek to instruct practitioners regarding the correct form and purpose of a given practice that, precisely because it is established, has a history" (Asad 1986: 14) – discourses that relate themselves conceptually to a past and a future through a present. In this way, an Islamic discursive tradition is, according to Asad, "simply a tradition of Muslim discourse that addresses itself to conceptions of the Islamic past and future, with reference to a particular Islamic practice in the present (Asad 1986: 14).

Asad aims at theorizing Islam in a way that can explain the occurrence of a variety of practices and traditions that all claim to be "Islamic" and that legitimize their claim by invoking the authority of Islam. Here, his view of "orthodoxy" becomes relevant. Asad does not see orthodoxy as a static set of doctrines but as a "relationship of power." This "relationship of power" unfolds "Wherever Muslims have the power to regulate, uphold, require, or adjust *correct* practices, and to condemn, exclude, undermine, or replace *incorrect* ones" (Asad 1986: 15). A practice is therefore not "Islamic" by itself but becomes "Islamic" when the Islamic discursive tradition authorizes it. Thereafter, it is transmitted, or taught, to Muslims by institutionalized authorities (i.e., an Islamic scholar, *alim*, an *imam*, a *Sufi sheikh*) or lay people (e.g., grandparent, parent, uncle). Islamic practices are not passively transmitted from one generation to the next or from one Muslim to another, according to Asad. Rather, Islamic practices are constantly negotiated, reasoned and discussed within this "relationship of power." This explains Islam's heterogeneity and thus the occurrences of diverse Islamic practices in past and present and in different locations. To increase our knowledge about Islam, we have to investigate this "relationship of power" and how it unfolds: how do these powers work, what are their conditions (social, political, economic, etc.) and what kind of resistance do they meet? In this way, power and resistance become relevant for the development and exercise of any traditional practice and must therefore be explored regardless of whether one is studying Islam in the past or present, rural or urban places, according to Asad (Asad 1986: 15-17).

As opposed to Orientalists' views, Asad does not think Islam determines everything Muslims think and do. Rather, it is the Muslims who participate in the discursive tradition who determine what should or should not be recognized as "Islamic," as he sees it. Asad does not have a migrant-minority perspective because he focuses on doing something else – conceptualizing Islam and writing an anthropology of Islam. However, because he insists that anthropologists of Islam should concentrate on understanding the historical conditions that make the production and maintenance of a particular discursive tradition possible, or its

transformation and its participants' attempt of receiving a feeling of unity, he argues that Muslims are influenced and influence the conditions (historical, social, political, economic, cultural, etc.) that they live in, and not only Islam. Thus, Muslims should be studied within the contexts where they live. So, by seeing Islam as a discursive tradition, highly influenced by time, place and population, he has found a way to conceptualize Islam that captures both its unity and diversity.

Since Asad first theorized Islam as a discursive tradition, several others have embraced this conceptualization (see, for instance, Amir-Mozami and Salvatore 2002 and Irgan 2005). For instance, Bruinessen conceptualizes Islam as a discursive tradition in his article "Producing Islamic Knowledge in Western Europe" (2011). Bruinessen expands upon Asad's understanding of tradition to include non-discursive elements as embodied forms of knowledge as well to get an overall picture of which processes are involved in Western Muslims' knowledge acquisition and production of Islamic knowledge (Bruinessen 2011: 1).

Jacobsen is another who has embraced Asad's conceptualization. Jacobsen sees the essentialist and anti-essentialist dilemma in relation to how to deal with the relationship between unity and diversity within Islam. According to Jacobsen, Asad's way of defining Islam as a discursive tradition is an alternative way of conceptualizing Islam in an anti-essentialist way. By looking at how young Norwegian Muslims' religiosity is taking place within a discursive tradition, she offers an alternative perspective on individualization to understand processes of *change* within Islam. She uses Asad's definition of Islam as a discursive tradition as a starting point to explore how her informants' religious identities and practices are rooted in a wider tradition of Muslim discourses. This perspective allows her to investigate how normative Islamic discourses continue to form a basis for the young Muslims' collective and individual identities despite the processes of individualization, contestations and debates that they engage in and how they recognize themselves as particular subjects with certain ethical valorizations. According to Jacobsen, the understanding of Islam as a discursive tradition allows us to manage unity and diversity, continuity and change within the religion without inscribing a clear dichotomy between tradition and modernity and without dissolving "Islam" as an object of study (Jacobsen 2006: 50-53, 214, 325-326).

Because Jacobsen uses Asad's conceptualization of Islam as a discursive tradition, several of their approaches and perspectives to Islam are the same. Both avoid making essentialist presentations of Islam, and they share the view that religious identities and practices must be studied in the socio-historical context in which they unfold. Jacobsen argues that religious identities and practices should be recognized as dynamic and processual.

Throughout her thesis, she shows how the young Muslims' relationship to Islam, their beliefs and practices, are influenced by the socio-historical contexts within which they live their lives and by internal individual differences in age, generation, gender, ethnicity and education, among others (Jacobsen 2006: 109-150, 370-378).

The migrant-minority perspective is well integrated throughout her thesis as she shows how her informants engage with, influence and are influenced by global, European and Norwegian (national) discourses about Islam as well as their friends, peers in the Muslim youth organizations and their family and parental generation, the latter of which possess different views on Islam. How the young Muslims think of themselves and Islam is, according to Jacobsen, influenced by their awareness of the religious pluralism within Islam and the majority society's effort in constructing Muslims as "the other." In connection to this, the young Muslims aspire to separate religion from culture (Jacobsen 2006: 373-374).

> The situation of belonging to a minority group means that the young Muslims cannot take their religion for granted, and that they must engage in the redefinition of identity/difference and of Islamic traditions. In their ways of forging Muslim identities and practices, the young Muslims I worked with have moved from an Islam based around localized cultures and moulded to the culture of homelands, to an increasingly transnationally embedded Islam of Muslims from many difference (sic) countries and cultures. This development presupposes both the local situation of religious and ethnic pluralism, and the existence of a global normative space of Islamic reference and debate (Jacobsen 2006: 374).

In this way, Jacobsen shows how the young Muslims' identity politics are related to migration and globalization and the Muslims' minority situation in Oslo.

2.2.4 Islam as a "master signifier" – Another discursive construction

Like Asad, Sayyid thinks it is fruitful to see Islam as a discursive construction. Sayyid is critical of the essentialism in the Orientalists' approaches to Islam as well as the structuralism in the many anti-Orientalists' approaches that focus on multiple "Islams." Islam should not be seen as having a historical essence, nor should it be dissolved as an analytical category because: "despite its polysemy it retains its singularity" (Sayyid 2003: 40) According to Sayyid, there is only one Islam, but there are many interpretations of Islam. These various interpretations should not be seen as different "Islams," one for each ethnic, national or

socioeconomic group, but rather as different interpretations that struggle for the right to define the meaning of Islam and what should be included in the concept (Sayyid 2003: 31-49, 157-160).

In his book *A Fundamental Fear. Eurocentrism and the Emergence of Islamism*, Sayyid conceptualizes Islam as a "master signifier" to explain the "Islamists' project." By "master signifier," he means that there is only one Islam, and that Muslims ascribe themselves, and are recognized by others, as belonging to this religion. The ascription of one Islam must be seen in relation to different struggles over an interpretation of Islam that emphasizes one set of relations and practices above another. There exist numerous interpretations of Islam, but the interpreters and their followers still view Islam as one religion and recognize some interpretations as more important than others. According to Sayyid: "The Islamist-inspired "awakening" has re-ignited a "war of interpretation" throughout the Muslim Ummah, a struggle for hegemony over the meaning of Islam, a struggle that makes little sense if we presume a world of "multiple Islams"" (Sayyid 2003: ix). What unites and gathers the Muslim *Ummah* is the name of Islam as well as the different interpretations and practices that invoke that name (Sayyid 2003: vii-xxii, 31-49).

Both Asad and Sayyid view Islam as a discursive production. But where Asad conceptualizes Islam as a discursive tradition, Sayyid conceptualizes it as a master signifier. He is also interested in *how* Islam appears in the discourse either as a signifier, nodal point or master signifier. To get a better understanding of Sayyid's conceptualization of Islam as a master signifier, we must look at how he distinguishes between the different roles Islam can play in various Muslim discourses and how he uses the concepts "signifier," "nodal points" and "master signifier."

Sayyid distinguishes between the "signifier" and the "signified," where the latter is produced by the former. A "signifier" can refer to several "signifieds" depending on the context. Islam can, according to Sayyid, have several "signifieds," but it can never be without a signified. A nodal point is the "key concept" of a discourse and the concept that the other elements of that discourse gain their meaning in relation to. The function of the nodal point is therefore to retrospectively give meaning to the other elements in the discourse. In a totalizing universe of meaning, there are numerous nodal points that structure the chains of significance but only one master signifier, in Sayyid's view. The master signifier designates the totality by its mere presence. It is the signifier that all the other signifiers are united by and refer to, and it forms their identity. It has a symbolic authority that guarantees and maintains the correlation to the whole universe of meaning (Sayyid 2003: 41-46).

Islam is for Muslims the most significant "signifier" because Islam constructs narratives about "Muslimness." It is also the most abstract "signifier." This allows "Islam" to operate in general terms. For most Muslims, Islam is another word for "Goodness incarnate," or the "good," Sayyid argues. This means that for the majority of Muslims, the definition of Islam must be the definition of the good. According to Sayyid, we can improve our description of Islam by seeing it as a crucial nodal point. He gives examples of a number of discourses in which Islam can be seen as the nodal point, including the discourse of Islamic jurisprudence, *fiqh*, in the discourse of various Sufi orders and in the discourse of various practicing Muslims. The Islamists' project is, according to Sayyid, to transform Islam *from* being a nodal point and (significant) "signifier" in various discourses of Muslim communities and *into* a "master signifier." And there is particular interest for the Islamists to make Islam a master signifier in the political order of Muslim communities, as he sees it. While Islam functions as an important signifier for many Muslims at an ethical level (in their private sphere), the Islamists articulate Islam as a master signifier at all levels and spheres and in particular at the political level. In this way, Islam becomes the unifying point for the Islamist discursive production (Sayyid 2003: 41-49, 155-160).

Sayyid wants to explain the Islamists' project and to investigate under which conditions it is possible to "Islamize" a Muslim community. The migrant-minority perspective is therefore not relevant for his study, which is localized to Muslim-majority states and societies. An Islamist is, according to Sayyid, a person who centers his/her political practices on his/her Muslim identity, and Islamism is a political discourse that attempts to make Islam the centrum of the political order. Even though Islam can be a significant signifier for many Muslims, it does not have to be the master signifier in all Muslims' discourses as it is for Islamists. Sayyid illustrates this by referring to what he calls "Kemalist regimes," where Islam was seen as the binary opposition to modernity and the West and was therefore reduced from being "the master signifier of a political order into just another element" (Sayyid 2003: 70). In these regimes, Islam continued to be a significant signifier, and a nodal point, in "ordinary" Muslims' ethical discourses but was no longer the master signifier in political discourses. So, where Islamists want to make Islam determinative for everything they say and do, the rulers of the "Kemalist regimes" wanted quite the contrary because they saw Islam as an obstacle to modernity and development. The Islamists want Islam to be the determining factor in all spheres and in all levels of society. However, this is not the case for most Muslims, as Sayyid's research clearly shows. According to him, we can say that Islam functions as an important signifier at an ethical level for many Muslims but that Islam is not a

master signifier for them. Rather, for Sayyid, this is what distinguishes "Muslims" from "Islamists" (Sayyid 2003).

2.2.5 The Islamic basket – A religious studies approach

The Swedish Professor Jan Hjärpe's approach to conceptualizing Islam in the West differs from those already mentioned. He wants to explain and display Islam's complexity and to discuss diversity and change both within Islam and in the meeting between "Islam" and the "West." To do so, he uses the metaphor and model of "the Islamic basket." Hjärpe defines the basket as "the set-up or area of traditions in a specific religion or ideology, as we can find it in its activities, i.e. all the rituals, narratives, historiography, categorizations, terminology and observances that constitute a group's heritage" (Hjärpe 1997: 267). Even though the creed and theology are not explicitly mentioned in this definition, Hjärpe considers these elements to be a part of the "basket." According to Hjärpe, the creed functions as a "group marker" that separates one group from another. It is what the group members subscribe to and what separates them from others. The creed should therefore not be seen as a summary of the most central elements in an individual religiosity – that is, a person's religious life (Hjärpe 1997: 267-269; Hjärpe 1998: 34-36).

The content of the Islamic basket has both individual and collective functions, according to Hjärpe. At the individual level, he relates the basket to a person's perception. Here he argues that the contents of the basket provide and function as patterns of interpretation and expression of personal religiosity, feelings and experiences in daily life. At a collective socio-political level, it is what unites the group and draw the line against those who are not part of the group – "the others" (Hjärpe 1998: 34-36).

In all the world religions, the "baskets" are full. Nevertheless, not all of their contents are "taken out" and activated at the same time. One takes from the basket only the contents that are given relevance in a given situation. However, some "things" and events are activated at all times by some groups because they are regarded as more important than others. This is also so for Islam. Some of the contents in the Islamic basket are highly valued by all Muslims in any given situation, such as the creed and the narratives about the life of the Prophet and his companions; in contrast, other parts of it are of great importance for some groups of Muslims but less important for others. As an example, Hjärpe points to the stories about the battle of Karbala in 680. Shia Muslims consider this as one of the most significant events in their historiography, while the same event is of minor importance for Sunni Muslims. This illustrates that it is significant who chooses from the "basket" (Hjärpe 1997, 1998).

Accordingly, "the Islamic basket" can be said to contain everything in the Islamic tradition, but what one chooses to activate or put on display from the Islamic basket depends on the *situation* (time and place) and *who* makes the choices.

When Hjärpe claims that the "Islamic basket" contains the set-up of Islam, he is also saying that Islam has a "substance" and that Muslims have something in common, such as rituals, narratives, historiography and vocabulary (Hjärpe 1997: 267). In this way, Hjärpe has an essentialist approach to Islam since he identifies Islam with an essence – the content of the Islamic basket. However, Hjärpe clearly states that not everything is activated from the basket and considered significant at all times by everyone. This means that Muslims "pick and choose" from the basket and that questions such as "who chooses or picks," and "in which situation," become highly relevant. Another important feature of Hjärpe's Islamic basket is that it is not "clogged": "baskets leak from inside and absorb from outside, i.e. that old concepts might leak out and new ones might be absorbed" (Roald 2001: 84). This means that activities that once have been in use may be returned to the basket and never used again, while others might "leak out" and disappear forever. Some activities have also been added to the basket during history as the Islamic tradition has been influenced by its surroundings (Hjärpe 1998: 34). In this way, Hjärpe uses the "basket" metaphor to explain diversity within Islam, both geographical and cultural differences, but also between (groups of) Muslims. He also uses it to describe changes: both internal changes and changes that can be seen as a result of the meeting between "Islam" and "non-Islamic environments," particularly the "West."

Hjärpe is not explicitly dealing with what he considers to be determinative for what Muslims think and do, but he shows how the contents of the Islamic basket can function on both personal and collective levels. He emphasizes that *what* Muslims choose to take from the basket and activate must be seen as situational and therefore related to "who picks," "where," "when" and "why." In this way, Hjärpe cannot be accused of seeing Islam as determinative for everything Muslims say or do. He rather explains how Muslims "use" Islam as a way to express personal religiosity, emotions and expressions and as a group (affiliation) marker and a method to legitimize and delegitimize power (Hjärpe 1998: 34-36). Since Hjärpe emphasizes that what is activated from the basket is *situational*, his model opens up for a migrant-minority perspective even though he does not develop it further.

Anne Sofie Roald has developed Hjärpe's Islamic basket further to describe how Arabic-speaking Muslims in a migrant-minority situation are influenced by different cultural influences – or cultural base patterns, as she calls it. Roald has done several studies of Muslims in the West and has in particular studied Muslim women in Western countries' view

on Islamic legalization, human rights and gender relations. She uses the Islamic basket to explain how different factors, such as different cultural base patterns, individual differences and different cultural backgrounds and levels of integration into the majority society, influence the Muslim migrants' attitudes toward Islamic legalization and gender relations (Roald 2001).

Roald combines Hjärpe's Islamic basket metaphor with a model called the "normative field." This model can, according to Roald: "portray how new attitudes originate in the tension between different cultural patterns, and it can also demonstrate how such changes of attitude influence the formation of Islamic law in a new context" (Roald 2001: 88). Roald has borrowed the concept of "the normative field" from the Swedish Professor of Law Anna Christensen. According to Christensen, legal regulations are often based on moral principles that build on a society's ideas concerning what is right and wrong. She identifies a pattern that she calls a "normative base pattern" in the content of legal regulations. She further argues that we can find different forms of normative base patterns, independent of each other, within the different fields of law. The different normative base patterns are each other's opposites and struggle for control over the legal regulations. Like this, the normative field becomes a social field of jurisprudence. In most societies, the legal regulations are grounded on general values and attitudes, according to Christensen (Roald 2001: 88-90).

When Roald links the model of the "normative field" with "the Islamic basket," she gets a "basket" that contains two main cultural patterns – the "Arab cultural base pattern" and the "Western cultural base pattern" – which figure as opposite poles, and a normative field that is located in between the two poles and that consists of Islamic sources and literature. The two cultural patterns are again divided into "sub-patterns," which might be related to factors such as nationality and age (Roald 2001: 88-89).

Roald's basket[8]
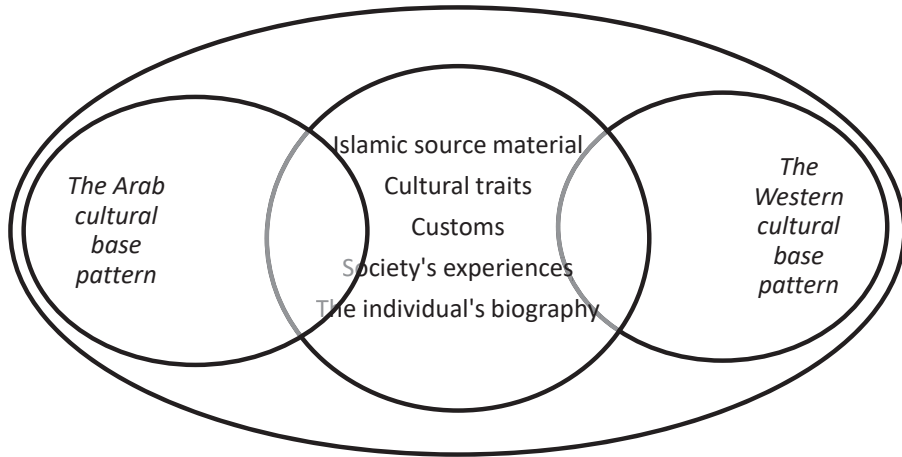
The "Arab cultural base pattern" and the "Western cultural base pattern" are *ideal* cultural base patterns that Roald defines as a pattern of "patriarchal gender structures" versus a pattern of "equality gender structures." When Arabic-speaking Muslims settle down in a Western country, there will be a tension between the two poles, which Roald calls the "normative field." This is where the processes of interpretations take place. The migrants' selection and interpretations of the Islamic texts are influenced by both cultural base patterns. What kind of attitudes and ideas that arise from the normative field depend on which of the two poles dominates at a given time. It also depends upon the migrants' level of integration into their host country. Migrants who are poorly integrated into the "new" society and spend much of their time with people who share their geographical and cultural background are most likely to reproduce cultural and religious traditions. Alternatively, migrants who have a good deal of direct contact with the majority society can either be totally assimilated into the wider society where the "Western cultural base pattern" dominates, or they can be influenced by both cultural base patterns and find themselves somewhere in between. Either way, the individual Muslim's selection and interpretation of the contents from the "Islamic basket" are, according to Roald, dependent on which position s/he has in relation to the normative field (Roald 2001: 88-92).

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[8] The figure is taken from Roald 2001: 89.

2.2.6 Summary: The strategies of conceptualizing Islam and their identified weaknesses

Orientalists' approaches fail to capture Islam's diversity and continuous developments, while anti-Orientalists' approaches embrace and emphasize these sides of Islam. Orientalists' approaches recognize Islam as one singular religion, while traditional anti-Orientalists' approaches refrain from doing so. These two approaches have different views on what determines Muslims' beliefs and practices as well. Where Orientalists tend to use Islam as an explanation for everything Muslims think and do, as Roy has pointed out, anti-Orientalists emphasize contextualization and refer to more complex causality factors than just Islam to explain Muslims' beliefs and practices.

Researchers from the social sciences seem to maintain anti-essentialist approaches to Islam to capture Islam's unity, diversity, continuity and change. To avoid essentialist definitions, they often conceptualize Islam as something other than religion. In this way, they are able to explain how different socio-historical conditions may influence how Muslims understand and practice Islam. In relation to knowledge acquisition and the practice of Islam, these studies emphasize that it is Muslims who determine which beliefs and practices are to be regarded as Islamic or not through different forms of negotiations and by participating in various forms of Islamic discourses. In this way, they highlight Islam, and religion, as a form of social construction that is influenced by, and influences, its contextual surroundings.

Researchers from religious studies have different approaches and rely on different strategies to conceptualize Islam. Some, such as Markussen and Natvig, embrace the pluralization strategy to highlight Islam's diversity and heterogeneity among Muslims' beliefs and practices. Hjärpe and Roald conceptualize Islam as *one* religion but use the Islamic basket metaphor to explain and illustrate unity, diversity, continuities and changes in what Muslims believe and do. Where the pluralization strategy has been criticized for not solving the problem and only displacing it, the Islamic basket can be criticized for identifying Islam with an essence – the content of the basket. However, the purpose of the Islamic basket is not to give a static and uniform presentation of Islam but rather the opposite: to explain and display Islam's complexity by stressing that what is activated from the basket is dependent on the context and which group or person picks and chooses from the basket. Both Markussen's and Natvig's and Hjärpe's and Roald's approaches and strategies of conceptualizing Islam see Islam as a social construction, and are designed to highlight how Muslims, due to shifting and various surroundings and times, understand and practice Islam in different ways.

The conceptualization strategies presented here vary in whether and how they try to describe and explain unity, diversity, continuity and change within Islam and what they see as

determinative for Muslims' beliefs and practices. Orientalist approaches do not pay any attention to diversity and changes within Islam but view Islam as a static and uniform entity, nor do they include causality factors other than Islam to explain Muslims' behaviors. Instead, they present Islam as a binary opposition to the "West" and Muslims as "the other." Anti-Orientalist and/or anti-essentialist approaches, as represented here by Asad, Jacobsen, Markussen and Natvig, among others, and Hjärpe's and Roald's approach, aim at doing the opposite. They want to display that Islam is what the Muslims define it to be and in this way highlight how important it is to contextualize Islam and to study Islam within the context it is practiced. This means that all of them, implicitly or explicitly, use more and other causality explanations than just Islam to describe and explain what influences Muslims' beliefs and practices. Since researchers have different objectives, not all of them include the minority-majority perspective directly in their studies, such as Jacobsen, Markussen, Hjärpe and Roald do. However, it is possible to include this perspective in all the different anti-Orientalist and anti-essentialist strategies to conceptualize Islam as mentioned above since all of them emphasize contextualization in the study of Islam and Muslims. The main difference between these various approaches is how to deal with Islam. Is it possible to conceptualize Islam as "one religion" and at the same time maintain the heterogeneity among Muslims' beliefs and practices and explain changes and continuities within the tradition? Or, can we give a more accurate description and explanation of this diversity if we transform Islam into something else? This presentation has showed that Hjärpe and Roald, through their use of the Islamic basket, believe it is possible to conceptualize Islam as *one* yet diverse and dynamic religion. While the other anti-Orientalists' and anti-essentialists' approaches seem to hold that diversity and change in Muslims' beliefs and practices are better explained and understood if we conceptualize Islam as something other than religion – or refer to it as "Islams."

In the beginning of the next chapter, I will address the individualization and the conceptualization debate to discuss how I think we should study processes of individualization in Muslim women's knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam in Trondheim. Then follows a presentation of how I will approach the individualization debate through my conceptualization of Islam and the perspectives, concepts and methods I use in this study. In other words, in the next chapter I will construct the methodology of this thesis.

Chapter 3. Methodology

The purpose of this chapter is to explain *how* this project will contribute to and approach the problem area "*knowledge acquisition and formation and their implications for research on individualization processes among European Muslims.*" This means that I will use this chapter to clarify this project's positions, perspectives, theories, concepts and methods – that is, the project's methodology.

To study individualization processes among Muslim women in Trondheim, I will look at how these women acquire knowledge about and practice Islam in Trondheim and how the local context might influence their practices. I have chosen to look at the women's knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam since several of the studies of individualization processes among Muslims in the West and Europe directly or indirectly deal with this problem area (Fadil 2005; Jacobsen 2006; Roy 2004). The orientation around how the "new" context and the Muslim-minority situation are reshaping Western and European Muslims' religious identities and practices is similar for all studies that deal with individualization processes among Muslims. According to these studies, it is the new geographical and cultural context(s), and thus the minority situation, that trigger transformations and processes of individualization in the Western/European Muslims' relationship to Islam (see sections 2.1-2.3). Due to this, the context of Trondheim is significant for this study. To explore how the local context of Trondheim might influence Muslim women's knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam, I will look at what Islamic and non-Islamic fields the women in this study are engaged in and how these different fields may influence their quest for knowledge.

By using the previous research on religious individualization and individualization processes among Muslims in Europe and the West as a backdrop, I will discuss whether we can find any of the processes that are referred to as individualized in Muslim women's knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam in Trondheim. However, trying to identify processes of individualization among Muslim women in Trondheim by referring to prevalent theories of individualization is only one of the things I aim at doing. By approaching the study of individualization processes in Muslim women's knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam in Trondheim from various perspectives, both etic and emic, and by using contemporary and historical source materials, I want to raise a discussion about the prevalent theories of individualization's applicability to studies concerning Islam and Muslims in Europe. In what follows, I will use the critique against the individualization concept and the theories of

individualization as a starting point to clarify *why* and *how* I will do this. Then I will address and clarify my positions in relation to the conceptualization debate before I continue the presentation of this thesis's perspectives, theories and methods.

3.1 Addressing the individualization debate

Roy has been criticized for not including a historical perspective in his studies of individualization processes among Muslims in Europe. The same critique can also be directed toward Cesari's, Fadil's and Jacobsen's studies (see section 2.1.9). This means that the different forms of religious individualization among Muslims in Europe and the West, as presented in Chapter 2, are the result of the researchers' use of qualitative and quantitative methods and *contemporary* sources. In line with Mandaville's critique against Roy's theory of individualization, I find it relevant to discuss whether or not it is problematic that those who use these individualization theories in their projects about Islam and Muslims in the West seldom add a historical perspective to their object and subjects of study and instead rely on contemporary sources and perspectives. This because I suggest that in studies where a historical perspective is left out, it is easier to perceive an old or internally familiar phenomenon as something new than in studies where a historical perspective is included. For this reason, I find it relevant to question how insufficient consideration of the Islamic tradition of knowledge may influence our findings when we study knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam among Muslims in Europe. For instance, can it prevent us from finding continuities between traditional Islamic methodologies and European Muslims' current sources and methods to Islam and thus make us see "common" or "old" methods as new? Or, does it make us assume that since the context for the Muslims' practices is new, then their actions and practices must be new as well?

I do not have any objections to using contemporary sources when the area of research is lived religion among Muslims in Europe today. On the contrary, it would be absurd to base one's research on anything else. Yet, when the research area is individualization processes in European Muslims' knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam, adding a historical perspective makes it possible to discuss and evaluate whether the processes and practices we identify as newly individualized are a continuation of the Islamic tradition of knowledge or, alternatively, whether they represent entirely new phenomena and thus a rupture with it. If we do not include a historical perspective, we might ground our research on the wrong basis. Let us use Roy's theory of religious individualization as an illustration.

Roy's theory is largely based on contemporary source materials. It is obvious that he must use contemporary sources to describe processes of religious individualization among

Muslims in Europe today. However, when he grounds his research on this material, he misses the historical aspect of the authority debate within Islam. This has repercussions for his theory of religious individualization. Roy argues that the pluralized and fragmentized leadership within Islam in the West is a *consequence* of the globalization and deterritorialization of Islam. Furthermore, he thinks that a pluralization and fragmentation of Islamic authority *leads to* processes of religious individualization among Muslims in Europe and the West (see section 2.1.3). However, as we have seen, Mandaville does not share Roy's view on the evolvement of Islamic authority. Instead, he claims that the authoritative knowledge production within Islam has always been plural and decentralized and refers to the history of Islam and the Islamic traditions of knowledge to support his claim (Mandaville 2007: 101-115; see section 2.1.9).

Mandaville's and Roy's different views on Islamic authority make it relevant to question one of the fundamental assumptions that Roy's theory of individualization rests on: If the authoritative knowledge production in Islam has always been pluralized and fragmentized, can this be used to explain the occurrences of processes of religious individualization among Muslims in Europe? To a certain degree, it can. As Mandaville points out, the globalization of Islam and new media technologies have strengthened an already fragmented and plural Islamic authority (Mandaville 2007: 101-115). That this trend has been reinforced by engaging more people and by becoming more intense may have activated processes that lead to religious individualization among a higher number of people than before. One the other hand, it cannot be highlighted as the main explanation for these individualization processes. If Mandaville is right, that there is nothing new about a fragmented and plural Islamic authority, it would be strange if "more of it" and an intensification of it should lead to processes of individualization among Muslims in Europe.

I will argue that Roy's and Mandaville's contradictory views on the religious authority in Islam support the fact that it is important to see the processes of individualization among Muslims within a historical context and to use different kinds of data – contemporary and historical – in our research. If some of the processes and practices we identify as individualized are to be found again within the Islamic tradition of knowledge, it is interesting to discuss whether they should be recognized as new or if there is anything about them except the context in which they take place that can be identified as new. If we cannot find similar processes and practices within the Islamic tradition of knowledge, this will strengthen Roy's theory that these processes are a consequence of the globalization and deterritorialization of Islam. However, to be able to discover changes in the ways Muslims are acquiring knowledge about Islam in Europe, we must compare today's practices in Europe with something. This is where the

historical perspective becomes relevant. By looking at how knowledge about Islam has traditionally been produced, maintained and transmitted, we can evaluate whether today's knowledge acquisition continues or breaks with the Islamic tradition of knowledge.

To avoid comparing today's practices with an idealistic past, and thus being criticized for painting an inaccurate picture of the past, I will also add an institutional contemporary comparative perspective to this study – this to compare the Muslim women's methods and practices of gaining knowledge about Islam with local Islamic institutionalized methods for gaining such knowledge. This means that I not only see the Islamic tradition of knowledge as a historical phenomenon, but I also recognize it as a contemporary phenomenon that is made up of different Islamic methodologies of gaining and producing knowledge about Islam. By applying an institutional contemporary comparative perspective, I think it is possible to explore if and how the local context of Trondheim in the form of the Islamic and non-Islamic fields the women are engaged in may influence their knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam.

If we do not see individualization processes among Muslims in Europe in light of the Islamic tradition of knowledge historically and contemporarily, it is difficult for the researcher to evaluate whether these processes are a European or Western phenomenon or if the phenomenon can be found in other parts of the world as well. Roy (2004), Fadil (2005) and Jacobsen (2006) do ask questions in relation to this, but if we look at how they deal with this issue, it seems that they consider it a Western phenomenon, or at least that the processes of individualization are more widespread and further developed in the West than elsewhere.

The processes that we call "religious processes of individualization" are not only to be found in Europe and the West. Charles Hirschkind has described how audiotapes of Islamic lectures were widespread and very popular in Egypt. By listening to the audiotapes, people increased their knowledge about Islam. This improved their religious awareness and made more people engaged in the religious debate (Hirschkind 2001: 3-34). The increased accessibility to Islamic knowledge, and the increased number of participants in the religious debate in Egypt, as described by Hirschkind, are the result of the development of new media technology and globalization and have nothing to do with the Western context.

McGuire argues that the practice of bricolage, in which the individual more or less constructs his/her own beliefs and practices by putting together "bits and elements" from various religions and traditions, should not be seen as unique to our time or to the Western cultural context (McGuire 2008: 185-213). In line with this, Cesari points out that, like Muslims in the West, Muslims in Muslim-majority countries reflect upon their relationship to Islam and make individual decisions in relation to Islam as well. In this way, they go through processes

similar to those of Muslims in the West (Cesari 2004: 44-53). This means that it is not only the Western context that triggers processes that we refer to as "religious individualization processes among Muslims" but that other factors, such as new media technologies and globalization, contribute to this development as well.

Western Muslims' knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam should be compared with practices we can find within the Islamic traditions of knowledge. If not, we may exaggerate the individualization phenomenon in general and overstate how independent and isolated individual Muslims are from institutionalized Islamic methodologies. By approaching the problem area from various perspectives, and by using various forms of sources, I think we will be better equipped to discuss whether the processes we refer to as individualized should be seen as new or old, as continuations of or ruptures with the Islamic tradition of knowledge, and whether or not they are a Western/European phenomenon.

Some of the theories of individualization used to describe inventions in European Muslims religious' practices were not originally constructed for this purpose. Instead, they developed within a European context to describe secularization processes in the West and how these processes led to a new relationship between individuals and religion. For instance, some of the individualization theories from the sociology of religion, such as "religion à la carte" and the "bricolage," are built on data analyses from Christian countries in the West, especially the USA and France but also other European countries. Here they are meant to describe the Church's decrescent impact on society and how with this individuals have proportionally gained more religious freedom to choose their religious beliefs and practices (McGuire 2002: 285-300; Hervieu-Léger 1998).

Since the theories of individualization developed within, and are based on, a Western context, it might be problematic to use them on Islam and Muslims (even though they live in the West) without problematizing them. If we do that, we are asserting that Islam in Muslim-majority countries has been organized and structured in the same ways as Christianity in Western-Christian countries and that both types of societies have undergone similar changes and developments. That the individual's quest for religious knowledge is regarded as something new in a Christian-Western context, and as the result of religious development in modern societies, does not mean that it is something new within a "Muslim" context (see sections 1.1.1 and 4.2). Due to the theories' ethnocentric perspective, I find it interesting to explore whether the various forms of "individualism" the different theories of individualization are grounded upon should be seen as new phenomena or if these are already rooted in Islam. I think we can find answers to these questions by looking at the Islamic tradition of knowledge and its history.

Even though I argue for a historical perspective in the study of individualization processes among Muslims, my main intention is not to compare Muslims' knowledge acquisition in the *past* with how they do it *today*. Rather, I am interested in gaining knowledge about past and present Islamic methodologies and analyzing Muslim women in Trondheim's methods of gaining knowledge in relation to these.

The empirical data I have produced through observations and qualitative interviews need to be explored through the lens of history. In conversations about their quest for Islamic knowledge, the young Muslim women have asserted that their practices do not represent innovations or something "new" but that they are part of the Islamic tradition of knowledge and have "always" been. I am not going to write a historical thesis about the Islamic tradition of knowledge or of Islamic methodologies. I wish, however, to apply a historical and a contemporary comparative institutional perspective to some of the elements that are identified as new and because of the modernization, globalization, deterritorialization and Westernization of Islam. I believe that to study individualization processes in Muslim women's knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam in Trondheim, we must approach the problem area from the following three different perspectives: first, a contemporary lived religion perspective to study how and why Muslim women gain knowledge about and practice Islam in Trondheim; second, an institutional contemporary comparative perspective to compare how the women's sources and methods to Islam relate to local and global institutionalized Islamic methodologies and how the local context of Trondheim might influence the women's knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam; and third, a historical perspective to form a historical backdrop and context we can view today's methods and practices in relation to.

3.1.1 Addressing the conceptualization debate

Which perspectives we include in the study of individualization processes in European Muslims' knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam are in many ways related to our disciplinary backgrounds. Due to different backgrounds, we have different views of how to conceptualize Islam and different opinions about how it is possible to study Islam and Muslims. Our conceptualization strategies influence how we study individualization processes in European Muslims' knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam, what we look for and how we interpret and explain our findings. Do we conceptualize Islam as a dynamic religious tradition that embraces a multitude of beliefs and practices? Or do we conceptualize it as a uniform and fixed entity, with defined and crystallized beliefs and practices? Do we conceptualize Islam as a religion or as something other than religion? Moreover, how do we imagine the relationship

between "Islam" and "Muslims"? The choices we make in relation to these questions, and our answers to them, influence how we approach the problem area.

I view the debate as to whether we should use Orientalist or anti-Orientalist, or essentialist or anti-essentialist, approaches to the study of Islam in relation to how we view Islam and religion in general and how we should respond to the relationship between Islam's unity and diversity particularly. Orientalist and essentialist approaches to Islam aim to describe or define Islam with an essence: "Islam is…." In this way, they treat Islam as an autonomous entity that determines humans' beliefs and practices. Anti-Orientalist and anti-essentialist approaches, on the other hand, do not treat Islam as an independent or isolated entity but as the product of what Muslims say and do with reference to Islam – that is, as the product of human behaviors. According to these, Muslims determine what Islam is, not the other way around. Because of this, they reject essentialist presentations of Islam and refuse to see Islam as a fixed analytical category. Instead, they see Islam and religion as products of human (social) behavior and highlight diversity among Muslims. Many of them also use this diversity as their starting point when they conceptualize Islam in a plural form, as "Islams."

By conceptualizing Islam as a discursive tradition or as a master signifier, Asad and Sayyid show that it is possible to capture Islam's unity and diversity, and continuity and change, without deconstructing Islam as an object of study (Asad 1986; Sayyid 2003; see sections 2.2.3-2.2.4). But even though their definitions preserve Islam's complexity and avoid presenting it in essentialist ways, I do find their ways of conceptualizing Islam a bit problematic. My main objection to these ways of conceptualizing Islam is that their starting points are to "transform" Islam from being a "religion" into discursive productions. I do not understand why these "reductionist" approaches to Islam (and religion in general) should give us a more comprehensive picture of the phenomenon called Islam than conceptualizations that recognize Islam as a religion can do.

Within religious studies, there have been numerous debates and opinions about how to conceptualize and understand religion. Within the discipline, the concept "religion" is not seen as a neutral or objective category or term but one highly influenced by Western and Christian opinions about what religion "is" or "ought to be." It was not until the 18th century that the term began to be used to refer to coherent systems of beliefs. The different understandings of religion that have been prevalent within religious studies can be roughly divided between two conflicting perspectives – those who saw it as a unique phenomenon with a value of its own and conceptualized it as a "religious" phenomenon and those who saw it as any other product of human behavior and conceptualized it as a secular phenomenon. Promoters of the first

perspective argued that religion must be understood and studied on its own terms, identifying it with a particular "essence" and conceptualizing it as something existing on its own, *sui generis[9],* that is, independent of the human sphere. Its opponents, on the other hand, criticized the idea of religion as something that exists on its own. Instead they regarded it as a human, social and cultural phenomenon and thus as the product of human behavior (Andreassen 2016: 52-55; Gilhus and Mikaelsson 2001: 30-44; Gilhus 2009: 21-22).

The various understandings of religion have resulted in a variety of approaches and definitions of religion. Within religious studies, and the sociology of religion, it has been common to distinguish between substantive and functional definitions and approaches to religion. Substantive definitions emphasize what religion *is* by defining some of its content. These are content-based definitions, where the "content" is often determined by what religious "experts" within the respective religion emphasize as important. This means that substantive definitions of religion are often based on normative institutionalized or "official" descriptions and not religion as *lived*. Substantive approaches to religion are therefore oriented toward the content of religious beliefs and practices. Functional definitions of religion define religion according to what it *does* for individuals, groups and communities. These definitions are determined by the function(s) religion fulfills and are because of that less concerned about the content of religious beliefs and practices. Thus, functional approaches to religion are concerned with what religion does for humans and the underlying sociological or psychological factors that, according to these theories, are causing religious behavior (Andreassen 2016: 52-53; McGuire 2002: 8-13; Pals 2006: 12-15).

The "reductionism" identified within the social sciences' Islam studies is characteristic of sociological and psychological functional definitions of, and approaches to, religion. Approaches to, and definitions of, religion that do not recognize religion as a "phenomenon," or religious performances as "natural" forms of human behavior, are referred to as reductionist. Reductionist definitions and approaches see religion as the expression, the effect or sometimes the "symptom" of something else. This means that religious beliefs and practices cannot be explained with reference to religion but must be explained within a non-religious frame of reference. Karl Marx and Sigmund Freud are classic representatives of this approach. Marx defined religion as "the opium of the people" (Marx quoted in Pals 2006: 134), explaining it as the effect of a class struggle and as a consequence of economic injustice. Freud, on the other hand, treated religion as a personality disorder to explain it (Pals 2006: 53-84, 118-148).

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[9] As classic representatives of this position, it is worth mentioning Rudolf Otto and Mircea Eliade, among others (Gilhus and Mikaelsson 2001: 30-44; Gilhus 2009: 21-22; Pals 2006).

Opponents of reductionism want to preserve religion as an analytical category. They do not want to explain religion away and criticize reductionists' approaches of "throwing the baby out with the bathwater" (McCutcheon 1999: 132). Thus, anti-reductionists' approaches and definitions of religion, which can be functional or substantive, or a mix of both, recognize religion as a human, social and cultural phenomenon and religious beliefs and practices as natural forms of human behavior (Pals 2006: 292-320). Today it is common to conceptualize religion in secular ways within religious studies. This means that we still use the term and category "religion" but that we understand and approach it as the product of human expressions, beliefs and behaviors and not as a phenomenon that exists on its own (Gilhus 2009; Andreassen 2016: 56). Thus, the "religious" understanding of religion – that is, the understanding of religion as a unique and distinctive phenomenon that exists *sui generis* – is no longer prevailing within the discipline (Gilhus and Mikaelsson 2001: 30-35; McCutcheon 2003: 191-210).

The secular understanding of religion and the secular "religion" concept are based on a non-religious understanding of religion. This means that religion is regarded as a culturally and socially constructed phenomenon. The different scholars of religion do not unite around *one* understanding or *one* definition of religion. Rather, the secular approach and definition of religion refer to all the different approaches and definitions that view religions and religious expressions as human, cultural and social products. This means that we view "religions" as something that is produced, maintained, reproduced, negotiated, defined and redefined through human interaction and thus as dynamic systems of meaning. Contextualization is therefore crucial in the study of religion. If we want to describe or say something about a religion, we must make clear who or what we are describing, where, at what time and in which situation. This means that we do not operate with static definitions of religions, nor do we regard religions as clearly defined entities (Andreassen 2012: 45-52; Gilhus and Mikaelsson 2001: 32-35; Gilhus 2009; McCutcheon 2003: 201).

The secular understanding of religion is grounded on an idea that religions and religious expressions, such as "god" or "sacred texts," can only be studied through human expressions and representations because these are the only things available for the researchers. The religious studies approach to religion is also "comparative, historical, humanist and social scientist" (Andreassen 2012: 53; McCutcheon 2003: 149). It is not and should not be normative. Adherents to the different religions will always negotiate between what should be recognized as right or wrong, authentic or inauthentic within their respective religions. The scholar of religion's task is not to take a normative stand in these discussions but rather to display the various views and opinions on these questions and thus diversity within and between religions

(Andreassen 2012: 45-52; Gilhus and Mikaelsson 2001: 32-35). This means that within religious studies we have preserved "religion" as an analytical category but that we operate with a secular concept of and approach to it. This secular concept of religion allows us to study religions as dynamic systems and as products of human and social behavior and expressions.

3.1.2 The insider/outsider problem

Questions concerning how to approach and define religion are closely connected to debates regarding how to study religion – what to study, how, from what perspective and by "whom." Within religious studies, this is referred to as the insider/outsider problem or debate. The opposite sides in the insider/outsider debate put different emphases on the terms "understand" and "explain." The promoters of the insider perspective wanted to interpret and understand the meaning of people's religious beliefs and practices, while the latter wanted to describe how people believe and act and to explain why people believe and act as they do. Those who argued that the study of religion should be oriented toward understanding religious beliefs and practices emphasized the private and emotional sides of religion. Since they highlighted "understanding," they argued that the best equipped to study religion are the "participants," meaning those who are religious and who have experienced religious beliefs and practices themselves – the insiders – or those capable of exploring and "re-living" the religious experience of the other. The insider perspective is based on an idea that it is possible for the researcher to understand the meaning behind other people's beliefs and actions. According to this idea, all human beings have "something" in common, such as a capacity, tendencies, a "spirit" or "experiences," that distinguishes them from other beings and "nature" as a whole. Since all humans have something in common, it is possible for a researcher to understand the meaning behind other people's beliefs and actions. Thus, it is possible to study and re-live the religious experiences of another despite gaps in time, culture, etc., according the promoters of the insider perspective (McCutcheon 1999: 2-7).

Representatives of the outsider perspective refused the idea that the meanings behind other people's beliefs and practices are available for the researcher. Instead, they claimed that it is impossible for the researcher to get "inside" and "re-live" the experience of the other. The researchers of religion should therefore not waste their time trying to understand "religion" but rather aim to describe how people believe and act and explain why they believe and act as they do. Promoters of the outsider perspective regarded humans as part of nature and argued that human beings are subject to the laws of nature like other beings. The study of religion should therefore be oriented toward what is empirically observable, such as human behavior, rather

than meaning and experiences. Because of this, they saw it as the task of the scholar of religion to search for patterns of human behavior, to determine the reasons behind and regularities in human beings' beliefs and practices. To be able to do this, one must study religion from the outside since this perspective is not determined or colored by the insiders' understanding of religion. Those best capable of studying religion from the outside are, according to this perspective, the non-participant outsiders (McCutcheon 1999: 4-7).

Contemporary religious studies' "solutions" to the insider/outsider problem have been to develop and establish a secular understanding and concept of religion that most researchers can agree on and to develop, and accept, positions in the study of religion other than the insider/ outsider perspectives. This does not mean that we have solved the insider/outsider problem for the last time but that we accept other approaches to the study of religion as well (see McCutcheon 1999: 215ff.). One of the most used approaches is called methodological agnosticism. It aims to study religions from a "neutral" and non-normative approach. The users of this approach do not believe that they can be completely neutral or objective in the study of religions. Instead, they recognize their lack of "neutrality" and "objectivity," and because of it they refrain from taking a stand in relation to truth claims from the insiders. This implies studying human behavior, beliefs and expressions in relation to religion without evaluating whether these "religious" beliefs and expressions are true or false (Andreassen 2012: 45-47; McCutcheon 1999: 215ff.).

The methodological agnosticism approach is often described as a middle position in relation to the insider/outsider problem. It does not promote one perspective over another but sees it as the task of the scholar of religion to describe and compare religious beliefs and expressions without making value claims over who is right or wrong. With this perspective, the scholar of religion approaches her objects or subjects of study with an analytical distance. This means that we use the same descriptive and distanced approach to all the religious beliefs and expressions we study without favoring one over the other. In this way, the methodological agnosticism approach implies studying religion from the outside, without taking the outsider position in the insider/outsider debate (Andreassen 2012: 47; McCutcheon 1999: 5-8, 215ff.).

3.1.3 The emic/etic debate

The insider/outsider debate within religious studies has some similarities but is not identical to the emic/etic debate. Like the insider perspective, the emic perspective aims to approach and describe human behavior from the inside of a specific system, while the etic perspective, in line with the outsider perspective, approaches and describes human behavior from the outside of a

system (see section 1.2). However, the emic perspective is not just an "insider perspective." It includes the study of the insider perspective as well.

> The emic perspective, then, is the outsider's attempt to produce as faithfully as possible – in a word, to describe – the informant's own description or production of sounds, behavior, beliefs, etc. The etic perspective is the observer's subsequent attempt to take the descriptive information they have already gathered and to organize, systematize, compare – in a word, redescribe – that information in terms of a system of their making – the International Phonetic Alphabet for example (McCutcheon 1999: 17).

The emic perspective is the researcher's description and study of the insider perspective. Since the emic perspective emphasizes the insiders' understanding of religion, it represents the academic perspective that most "insiders" can identify with. The etic perspective, on the other hand, is not grounded in the insiders' description of religion. Instead, it uses scientific theories, methods, models of analyses and categories to describe and explain how and why people believe and act as they do. This means that the etic perspective studies human behavior in the form of religious beliefs and practices from the outside of a specific system, such as religion, and because of that uses explanatory models other than those of the "insiders" (McCutcheon 1999: 15-22; Pike 1999: 28-36).

Where the different positions within the insider/outsider debate have been arguing about how to study religion, what to study, from what perspective and by whom, the emic/etic debate has mainly been oriented toward the authority of the two perspectives: Should the emic or the etic perspective be given authority in the study of religion? Russel T. McCutcheon and Bruce Lincoln are scholars of religion that have questioned the use of the insider perspective and the emic perspective in the study of religion. In "Theses on Method," Lincoln lists as the 13th thesis the following:

> When one permits those whom one studies to define the terms in which they will be understood, suspends one's interest in the temporal and contingent, or fails to distinguish between "truths", "truth-claims", and "regimes of truth", one as has ceased to function as a historian or a scholar. In that moment, a variety of roles are available: some perfectly respectable (amanuensis, collector, friend and advocate), and some less appealing (cheerleader, voyeur, retailer of import goods). None, however, should be confused with scholarship (Lincoln 1999: 398).

Lincoln is very clear: the insider perspective shall not be given authority over the outsider perspective in the study of religion. If we let the insiders define and design our research projects, we are no longer studying religion in scientific ways, according his view, which McCutcheon shares (McCutcheon 1999: 367ff.). The two scholars' opinion about the authority of the insider and the emic perspectives must be seen in relation to their understanding of religious studies and what they regard as the main task of the discipline and its scholars. McCutcheon's description is quite normative. According to him, the scholar of religion should study *how* people believe and behave and explain these in the form of theorizing *why* they believe and act as they do. Thus, McCutcheon does not see it as the scholar of religion's task to ask questions concerning what religion means to people (McCutcheon 2003: 148-151). In relation to this, McCutcheon argues for an etic and an entirely outsider approach in the study of religion. The insider, or the emic, perspective can be of some value, he continues, if it is used as an assurance that the researcher's description of a specific religious behavior or expression is correct. Still, since the scholar of religion's main task, according to him, is to determine *why* people act as they do from an outsider perspective, he ascribes the insider and the emic perspectives little relevance (McCutcheon 1999: 18).

Other researchers believe both perspectives, the emic and the etic, should be emphasized in the study of religion. Pike, for instance, argues that the emic and etic approaches should not be seen as dichotomous but rather as a method to present the same data from two viewpoints (Pike 1999: 32-33). Some claim that it is an ideal within religious studies that the adherents to the various religions can recognize themselves in the researcher's description of them or their religion (Bird and Scholes 2011: 89). However, this does not mean that the "insiders" should recognize or agree with the researcher's interpretations, scientific explanations or analyses of religious behavior or religion or that a specific description of a religious expression should aim to correspond with the emic understanding and description of that expression. Rather, the researcher's further analyses of a religious expression – that is, the etic description of what happens and why – should not aim to correspond with the emic understanding of it (Andreassen 2012: 52-53).

To a certain point, I agree with Lincoln and McCutcheon. As long as the "insiders" are not academics within our field and discipline, they cannot have authority to define and design our research projects or, as Lincoln put it, "define the terms in which they will be understood" (Lincoln 1999: 398). However, I disagree with them on the purpose of religious studies. I do think that researchers of religion should ask questions about what religion means to people and ask "insiders" questions about how and why they believe and act as they do. It is also possible

to ask about their views on aspects of the academic study because their "insider" knowledge of a religious tradition and its sources and practices may add valuable critical perspectives. By using emic and etic approaches in the study of religion, we can approach beliefs, "truth claims" and behavior from different angles and thus gain more knowledge about the forms of human behavior and expression we term "religion"/"religious." This does not mean that I favor the emic perspective over the etic but that I think emic perspectives should be taken seriously in our scientific studies as a complement to etic ones. As researchers of religion, we must critically approach emic descriptions and not treat the insiders' claims as "truths," as Lincoln warns against. We must reflect methodologically upon the insiders' claims and ask questions concerning what "knowledge" we can generate from our methods and perspectives: what are their strengths and limitations? We should also approach emic descriptions with a critical eye and look for correlations and miscorrelations in what the insiders say they do and what they actually do – that is, ideal and actual descriptions.

None of the conceptualization strategies presented in Chapter 2 aims to present Islam from a Muslim's point of view or in accordance with an emic perspective. All of them deal with Islam from an etic/outsider perspective: One sees Islam as a binary opposition to the West. Another fails to recognize Islam as *one* phenomenon and prefers to speak of "Islams.". And the third approach conceptualizes Islam as something other than religion to display internal diversity and changes (see section 2.2.3). Jacobsen, for instance, emphasizes that "Islams" is an entirely etic concept that Muslims who see Islam as one religion from God might be offended by. According to her, an approach that overlooks the expressed unity of Islam may be perceived as offensive by many Muslims (Jacobsen 2006: 326-330).

Even though Hjärpe's model neither pluralizes nor "reduces" Islam to be something else than religion, his model of the Islamic basket is also an entirely etic construction. Muslims do not refer to the "Islamic basket" when they talk about Islam. According to Roald, some might even find this concept blasphemous because it is contradictive to a general notion shared by many Muslims about "one truth" within Islam (Roald 2001: 84-85). Sayyid reminds us that the emic and etic meanings of words can be quite different. While researchers are occupied with conceptualizing Islam, this is of minor importance for Muslims, who see Islam as "the good" even when they differ over what Islam implies of faith and practice. In this way, Sayyid illustrates that the word Islam may evoke very different associations for Muslims and non-Muslims (Sayyid 2003).

3.1.4 Stating my own positions

Within religious studies, "religion" and "Islam" are used as both etic and emic concepts and categories. They are etic because they are used as analytical categories to study specific forms of human behavior and expressions, and they are emic because they are concepts used by the insiders to describe beliefs and practices (see section 3.1.1). Because of that, I think there are several reasons why I should conceptualize Islam as a religion in this study of individualization processes among Muslim women's knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam in Trondheim.

First, this way of conceptualizing Islam corresponds with emic understandings of Islam since Muslims regard Islam as one religion. Methodologically speaking, this means that I and the participants in this study, being the research's subjects, view the subject matter (Islam) in similar ways – as one distinct religion. Conceptualizing Islam as a religion, also means recognizing it as having a history, as having different views of how to gain knowledge about Islam and as a religion with its own vocabulary and "sciences." This means that the participants and I can speak the same "language" in the form of referring to the same things and using the same terminology and concepts in our conversations about how they gain knowledge about Islam in Trondheim. By showing the participants that I have some prior understanding of the phenomenon, it may be easier for us to establish some common points of reference through which to orient our conversations. Instead of taking the role as the complete or uninformed outsider who must be taught everything about Islamic knowledge acquisition, I can take the role as the outsider with some prior understanding of the phenomenon. This will make it easier for me to discuss different aspects of Islamic knowledge acquisition with the participants than if I had taken the first-mentioned role and/or if we had operated with different understandings of Islam.

Secondly, by conceptualizing Islam as a religion, we also include the faith factor as an important identifying and unifying factor among Muslims. What makes Islam one distinct religion is the creed[10], *aqida*, and the fact that interpretations and deliberations over what Islam implies for faith and practice are made with reference to a given set of scriptures, the Qur'an and *hadith*, and authoritative institutions. Thus, the creed "There is no god but God and Muhammad is the Messenger of God[11]," what Muslims have faith in, is a significant unifying

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[10] The creed in its simplest form is the *shahada,* also referred to as the "double testimony" (Hallaq 2009: 225). However, it can also refer to the Islamic Creeds, *aqida*, which in Sunni Islam consist of the six articles of faith: faith in God, His Angels, His Books, His Messengers, Judgment Day and Predestination (and its good and evil) (Roald 2004: 107-112). The Twelvers Shia's Creeds differ from that of the Sunni and consist of five articles of faith: the faith in the Divine Unity, the Prophethood, the Resurrection, the Imamate and the Divine Justice (Momen 1985: 176-178).

[11] The translation is taken from Hallaq (2009a: 225).

factor within Islam[12]. The creed not only unites Muslims; it can also define Muslims at an individual level. To convert to Islam, you simply must utter the Islamic creed *shahada* in Arabic in front of Muslim witnesses (Vogt 2005: 60-61).

The faith factor is important in relation to the emic perspective because Muslims often relate and define themselves as Muslims through their faith, *iman*, and not only their religious practices. This became evident in the first interviews I did with the Muslim women in Trondheim. Here I asked them: "What makes you a Muslim?" As an answer to this question, most of the women referred to their faith in the creed – their faith in the one God and in Muhammad as His messenger. The women regarded their religious practices as secondary to their faith because the practices were a consequence of it and not a premise for it. This does not mean that they regarded their religious practices as unimportant or irrelevant. Rather, their religious practices were regarded as a confirmation of their faith and what made them "practicing" or "religious Muslims." However, had it not been for their faith, their religious practices would have been worthless, they argued. The women believe that it is their faith in the creed that defines them as Muslim: If you do not have faith, you will not receive any religious reward no matter what you do.

Many anthropologists and social scientists tend to overlook the Islamic creed and its contents, meaning and function as a unifying factor for Muslims. For instance, in *The Anthropology of Islam Reader,* the four practical pillars of Islam – the prayer, the fast, the almsgiving and the pilgrimage – are given two chapters each, while the creed, *shahada*, has none (Kreinath 2012). A sole focus on Islamic and Muslim practices makes it is easy to overlook the faith factor. And if one overlooks the most significant uniting factor within Islam, it is easy to argue that the pluralization strategies are the most accurate or the best to describe the manifold of practices among Muslims or, alternatively, that Islam can be conceptualized as something else that might function as decent explanatory models for Muslims' practices. Still, Islam is recognized as a distinct religion among Muslims and non-Muslims. In addition, it has a creed that unites its adherents even though they understand it and practice Islam differently.

Last, but not least, if we conceptualize Islam as a religion and a faith, we must also take its tradition of knowledge into consideration. The historical perspective that I argue for above is an emic perspective on Islamic knowledge acquisition. The same is true for parts of the contemporary comparative institutional perspective I wish to add to this study. By seeing the

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[12] Both Sunni and Shia Muslims unite around the *shahada*, or the double testimony (Momen 1985: 176). However, Shiite Muslims may also add a third part to the *shahada*, which establishes Ali as the friend of God (*wali allah*): "and Ali is the friend (*wali*) of God" (Vogt 2005: 188).

Muslim women in Trondheim's methods for gaining knowledge about Islam in relation to local, global, historical and family-based Islamic methodologies – that is, other emic approaches to Islamic knowledge – I will have a framework within which to discuss the theories of individualization. In the study of individualization processes in European Muslims' knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam, I do not think that we can solely look at how the new context influences these practices but that we must base our analyses on another basis of comparison as well. In relation to this study's problem area, I believe that this additional basis of comparison should be other emic perspectives on Islamic knowledge acquisition.

I will argue that in the study of individualization processes in European Muslims' knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam, we should emphasize the new context *and* the Islamic tradition of knowledge in our analyses. We cannot anticipate that it *is merely* the new context and new media technologies that influence Muslims' knowledge acquisition, but we must open our analytical framework to the possibility that the Islamic traditions of knowledge may influence these processes as well. To do so, I will approach the problem area with both etic and emic perspectives. I will explore how the Muslim women in Trondheim are gaining knowledge about Islam and see their methods and practices in relation to local and global institutionalized Islamic methodologies. This means that the women's emic descriptions of how to gain knowledge about Islam will be compared with other emic descriptions of Islamic knowledge acquisition, namely local, global, historical and family-based Islamic methodologies, and analyzed and discussed within an etic framework oriented around theories of institutional conditioning.

3.1.5 Chapter outline

In part two of this chapter, I will give a brief presentation of how I will use a religious studies model to study individualization processes in Muslim women's knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam in Trondheim. In part three, I introduce the "lived religion" perspective and concept, which I will use to approach the Muslim women's knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam and to describe and explain how and why they search for Islamic knowledge. In part four, I introduce Pierre Bourdieu's concepts of "field" and "capital" and describe how I will use them to explore if and how the context of Trondheim may influence the women's knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam.

I want to explore whether the Muslim women in Trondheim's sources and methods to Islam are a continuation of or if they represent a rupture with the Islamic traditions of knowledge. To explore the relationship between an individual and a field – that is, whether and

how an individual stands out from or assimilates into a field – we need knowledge about both and a tool that can help us describe how individuals may operate within fields. As a tool for this purpose I have chosen to use Michel de Certeau's concepts of "strategy" and "tactic." In the fifth part of this chapter, I will clarify these concepts and how I use them in this study. In part six of the chapter, I introduce my development and local adjustment of Roald's Islamic basket, namely "the renewed Islamic basket," and describe how I will use it. In part seven, I will summarize the concepts, perspectives and models that make up the theoretical and analytical framework of this thesis.

A presentation of the project's applied methods follows in part eight of the chapter. This includes presentations of how I have approached the "field universe" and selected participants for this study in addition to an institutional presentation of the main women informants. Furthermore, I provide a presentation of the methods I have used to produce material about individualization processes in Muslim women's knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam in Trondheim. Finally, it includes an account of the methodological and ethical considerations I have made throughout the study and when writing this thesis.

3.2 A religious studies' model

The scholar of religion Ninian Smart has developed a tool to describe religions that can be used to compare religious phenomena both within and between religions. According to Smart, religions can be categorized into seven dimensions. These dimensions shall help us describe religions as they exist in the world today and should not be seen as an attempt to define religion (Smart 1998: 11-12, 21-23).

Smart's seven dimensions of religion include (1) the Practical and Ritual Dimension, (2) the Experiential and Emotional Dimension, (3) the Narrative or Mythic Dimension, (4) the Doctrinal and Philosophical Dimension, (5) the Ethical and Legal Dimension, (6) the Social and Institutional Dimension and (7) the Material Dimension. The seven dimensions are closely interrelated. A religious phenomenon can therefore pertain to several dimensions. For instance, a ritual is tied together by the practical and ritual, the mythic and the experiential and emotional dimensions. A ritual has a physical expression, it is something we do and that may consist of actions, movements, gestures, utterances, words, etc. In the mythic dimension, we find the story or the history behind the ritual, while in the experiential and emotional dimension we can find the point of departure/basis for the feeling the ritual is supposed to generate (Smart 1998: 11-22).

Smart's categorization of religions in dimensions is by many seen as a "neutral" and "non-normative" approach to religion[13] and represents a methodological agnostic approach (McCutcheon 1999: 216-217). However, his model of dimensions has also faced a great deal of criticism. Some have pointed out that his dimensions are modeled after Christianity and therefore most suitable for describing so-called revealed and monotheistic religions of Judaism, Christianity and Islam. Others have questioned its "neutrality" and argued that it is grounded on a Christian and religious understanding of religion (Andreassen 2012: 93-94). Smart's model has also been criticized for being "idealistic" because it is grounded in "official" forms of religions and not religion as lived. In this way, it presents religions as fixed and uniform entities and does not display religious diversity and pluralism within religions (Midttun 2014: 331-332).

Despite the criticism, I find Smart's dimensions useful as a categorical tool because they make us approach religions as complex systems. This means that if we want to gain more overall knowledge about a religion and to describe how it exists in the world, it is not enough to approach just one of its dimensions. We must approach *all* its dimensions and gain knowledge about how the various dimensions interrelate. This means that if we want to increase our knowledge about a ritual, it is not enough to look at how it is performed. We must also gain knowledge about who performs it, why it is performed, its function and its background. Thus, to deepen our understanding of a religious phenomenon, we should approach it from several perspectives, and that is what Smart's dimensions encourage us to do. Even though the dimension model may be more suitable of describing Judaism, Christianity and Islam, it is still applicable to other religions, such as Hinduism or Buddhism, as well. These religions "have" rituals/practices, they invoke feelings, they have teachings, they have stories, they have rules of conduct and regulations, they organize in different ways and they have physical and material expressions. The model can also help us compare religions and/or point to what is characteristic for a religion. It can, for instance, show us that various religions emphasize the dimensions differently or that some dimensions are more central within a religion than other dimensions. It is also possible to use the model as a categorical tool to approach and describe religious branches and denominations or individuals' understanding of religion and in this way expose diversity and pluralism within religions. If we are aware of the criticism of the model, its identified weaknesses and take these into consideration, I think Smart's model can be a useful

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[13] In Norway, Smart's dimensions of religion are incorporated in the curriculum of the "Religion and Ethics" subject, which is mandatory for all pupils in upper secondary school. Here the pupils are trained to use Smart's model as an analytical and "neutral" tool to present and discuss religions in relation to each other (Utdanningsdirektoratet 2006).

tool with which to approach religions since it reminds us to bring additional factors into our studies of religion.

3.2.1 How Smart's dimensions will be used in this thesis

In this study, I will use Smart's dimensions as a categorical tool to approach Islam as a complex religion. I will use them as a tool to explore the young women's understanding of Islam and what it means to be a Muslim and to describe and distinguish between various types of Islamic knowledge and sources to Islam. In my analyses, I will therefore refer to Smart's dimensions to distinguish between *what types of knowledge* about Islam the women are seeking, such as ritual and practical, doctrinal and philosophical or ethical and legal knowledge. Furthermore, will I use the model to distinguish between *what types of sources* the women are using, such as practical/ritual sources, as in watching other women pray or perform religious rituals; social or institutional sources, as in Islamic law schools, religious authorities, educational activities within the mosques or discussions with fellow Muslims; or material sources, as in founding texts about myths/doctrines/ethics/jurisprudence and so on. By using Smart's dimensions of religion as a categorical tool, I can categorize types of Islamic knowledge and sources and in this way translate emic types of knowledge and concepts into etic categories.

3.2.2 The case for Roald's "Islamic basket"

I have chosen to use the Islamic basket metaphor as an analytical tool to describe unity, diversity, continuity and change within Islam. I find the Islamic basket metaphor efficient in describing how different Muslims can emphasize different aspects of Islam and how different Muslims can highlight different beliefs and practices as more important than others and still be recognized as practitioners of the same religion. The Islamic basket makes it possible to describe how Islam can be interpreted, presented and practiced differently among Muslims. It makes it possible to describe how Islam is practiced variously by Muslim women in Trondheim because it is grounded in an idea that what is activated from the Islamic basket is dependent on the context, the group or individual who choose from it as well as time, situation and conditions (Hjärpe 1997, 1998; Roald 2001; see section 2.2.5). Even though it builds on an etic and secular understanding of religion, the Islamic basket model is a way to conceptualize Islam as a religion. This is in line with emic understandings of Islam. Included in the Islamic basket is also the faith factor, which is recognized as an identity marker among individuals and as a unifying factor among Muslims (see section 3.1.4).

I find Roald's development of a normative field within the Islamic basket to be highly relevant for this study because it can help me explain the existence of various interpretations and practices of Islam in relation to European Muslims' migrant-minority situation (Roald 2001: 88). Muslims, like non-Muslims, influence and are influenced by their surroundings. This is reflected in the prevailing theories of individualization that emphasize how the new geographical and cultural context(s) and the Muslim-minority situation function as triggers for transformations and individualization processes in European and Western Muslims' relationship to Islam (see sections 2.1-2.2). In relation to this, *I will explore how and to what degree the context of Trondheim influences the Muslim women's knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam and whether and how the local context may trigger individualization processes among the women.*

However, I am not going to copy either Hjärpe's or Roald's Islamic baskets in their current forms, as presented in Chapter 2. To be able to use the Islamic basket model in this study, I must adapt it to the context of Trondheim. Roald uses the Islamic basket metaphor to explain how different factors, such as cultural base patterns, individual differences, cultural backgrounds and level of integration into the majority society, influence the Muslim migrants' attitudes toward Islamic legalization and gender relations (Roald 2001). Since her Islamic basket model is oriented toward theoretical questions concerning Islamic legalization, I cannot apply it in its present form to this study. Nor are the two ideal cultural base patterns Roald's basket operates with, the Arab cultural base pattern and the Western cultural base pattern, transferable to the participants in this study. The participants in Roald's study are Arabic-speaking Muslim migrants, while the women participants in this study have different geographical, cultural, social, economic and language backgrounds. Because of this, Roald's binary opposition between a patriarchal gender structure pattern versus an equality gender structure pattern is not applicable to this study's material.

In part six of this chapter, I will develop Roald's Islamic basket to explain how the context of Trondheim may influence the Muslim women's knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam and how the Muslim women are making local adjustments in relation to their migrant-minority situation. However, before I do that will present the perspectives, concepts and theories this thesis draws upon.

3.3 Lived religion

To be able to study Muslim women's knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam, we need a specific approach to religion. We need to see religion as it is practiced and understood by the

women themselves – how Muslim women practice Islam and live as Muslims in Trondheim. A historical approach to the issues above can give us an understanding about how knowledge about Islam has been produced, maintained and transmitted throughout the history of Islam and how this can be done within and in accordance with the Islamic traditions of knowledge and methodologies. However, a historical approach cannot give us any knowledge about how this is done among Muslim women in the city of Trondheim today. An institutional perspective to these issues can, on the other hand, give us knowledge about how the different Islamic institutions in Trondheim, such as the mosques, are producing, maintaining and transmitting knowledge about Islam in Trondheim. In other words, an institutional perspective can give us information about how this is done locally today at an institutional level. Even though it is important for this project to get information about how this is done at an institutional level, it will not necessarily give us adequate descriptions of the individual Muslim women's knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam. To be able to study this, we must approach the women themselves and see, hear and ask what they are doing. We need to study Islam as it is lived.

3.3.1 A concept and a perspective

The lived religion concept and perspective have attracted attention from several researchers of religion in recent years. Articles have been written that encourage and defend such a perspective (Orsi 2003), and several studies have been conducted of people's lived religion (Ammerman 2007; McGuire 2008) and of lived Islam (Dessing et al. 2013). The lived religion concept refers to how religion is lived – meaning how it is practiced, experienced and expressed in the lives of laymen and women. Thus, it refers to individuals' religion and religious beliefs, practices and expressions in the lives of individuals (McGuire 2008).

According to one of the pioneers of the concept, Meredith McGuire, we should not regard a person's individual religion as just a miniature version of a group's "official" or institutionalized religion. People change, and so do their religious lives. At an individual level, it is common for people to be religiously active and practicing in some periods of their lives and not in others. Thus, at this level, we cannot expect to find a "fixed, unitary or even coherent" religion because "all persons' religious practices and the stories with which they make sense of their lives are always changing, adapting, and growing" (McGuire 2008: 12). McGuire argues that the concept lived religion "is useful for distinguishing the actual experience of religious persons from the prescribed religion of institutionally defined beliefs and practices" (McGuire 2008: 12). However, even though the lived religion concept applies to the individual, McGuire

stresses that individually lived religion is fundamentally social since religious worlds are constructed through human interaction (McGuire 2008: 12-13).

For Nancy Ammerman, lived, or "every day," religion, which is the term she uses and is one of the pioneers of, means emphasizing the religious experience of the non-experts – those who do not make a living of their religion (Ammerman 2007: 5). The everyday lived religion concept and perspective orient around practices and activity that unfold outside organized religious institutions. Yet, it does not underestimate the power and influence religious institutions may have on such practices and activities. It rather represents a shift in research focus from institutions to individuals (Ammerman 2007: 5). To increase our understanding of religion as a phenomenon, we must pay attention to individuals and their everyday religion *and* religious institutions and their social structures, Ammerman argues (Ammerman 2007: 245).

Robert Orsi's view of the lived religion perspective is in line with both McGuire and Ammerman. He emphasizes that the lived religion perspective brings to light the mutual and dynamic relationship between the individual, the social and the contextual. According to Orsi, studying religion as lived means contextualizing religion, that is, studying religion in the cultural, social, political and historical contexts in which it is practiced. In this way, the perspective orients around the individual and the social structures that surround it:

> Rethinking religion as a form of cultural work, the study of lived religion directs attention to institutions *and* persons, texts *and* rituals, practice *and* theology, things *and* ideas – all as media of making and unmaking worlds. The key questions concern what people *do* with religious idioms, how they use them, what they make of themselves and their worlds with them, and how, in turn, men, women and children are fundamentally shaped by the worlds they are making as they make these worlds (Orsi 2003: 172).

To study religion as lived means acknowledging religion as a social product and bringing additional factors into our studies. To do this, we must study what people do with and out of their religion and how as well as pay attention to emic descriptions of why and at the same time pay attention to the social structures and conditions within which people practice their religion, according to Orsi (Orsi 2003: 172).

The concept and perspective have increased their impact on religious studies due to a growing awareness of the gap between "official" religion and what people do and make out of their religion. "Official" religion refers to institutionalized forms of religion, as defined and developed by religious experts or religious elites. Historically, have there been some people

who have educated and specialized in religious matters within each religion. This has created religious experts or elites, who have developed and produced their religions' official ideas, doctrines, rituals and practices. Thus, a religion's official forms are how the religion is being articulated through institutionalized ideas, dogmas, moral norms and prescribed rituals and practices, as deduced from the religion's so-called sacred texts through institutionalized interpretations and elaborations. This means that a religion's official forms make up how the religion is presented to the public for members and non-members and that the religious experts or elites that produce, maintain and transmit these forms become its official spokespersons (McGuire 2002: 99-113).

A lived religion perspective means that we must broaden our approaches to religion and study it within the context within which it unfolds and to include the religious experiences of the non-experts. The perspective does not underestimate the importance of official and institutionalized religious ideas but explores how these ideas are used by non-experts. The pioneers and users of the lived (everyday) religion perspective stress that it should not be an alternative to or replacement for other approaches to religion. It should rather be complementary (Ammerman 2007; McGuire 2008; Dessing et al. 2013: 2).

3.3.2 A women's perspective

To explore individualization processes in Muslim *women's* knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam in Trondheim, it is necessary to include a lived religion perspective in this study. Women and their points of view have been, and still are, rare to find among the managers of the "official" religion and its sources (Gilhus and Mikaelsson 2001: 149-150). The "official" forms of Islam are grounded on Islam's scriptures – the Qur'an and the *sunna* of the Prophet Muhammad, as recorded in the *hadith* literature. The *Sunna* consists of the Prophet Muhammad's "words, silences, actions and inactions" (Vishanoff 2011: 4). These texts are not gender neutral similar to most other religious texts within other religions. Within the Islamic tradition there are, and have been, specialized religious elites who have recorded, produced and interpreted these texts. Historically, these religious elites have been made up by male scholars. Because of this, mostly men have produced and maintained the "official" forms of Islam. This does not mean that there has never been any female participants in the religious elites or that women have never contributed to produce "official" forms of Islam because there has, and they have. Still, the female scholars have been few compared to the male scholars and moreover have not always been officially recognized as scholars (al-Qadi 1995; Gilhus and Mikalesson 2001: 149-150; Khalafallah 2014; Vogt 1992: 282-283, 306; see sections 1.1.2 and 4.2).

The lack of women and women's perspectives within the Islamic religious elites means that we cannot only approach Muslim women's knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam from historical or institutional perspectives. To include the experience of the women and the non-experts, we must approach it from a lived religion perspective as well.

3.3.3 How the lived religion concept and perspective will be used in this thesis

I will use the lived religion perspective to broaden my approach to Islamic knowledge acquisition and the practice of Islam to include a woman and a non-expert perspective, which will be used complementarily to the thesis's historical and institutional perspectives. I will use the perspective and concept to study and describe how a selection of Muslim women gain knowledge about and practice Islam in Trondheim. I will explore what sources and methods the women use to gain Islamic knowledge and their reflections around these. Furthermore, I will use the perspective and concept to study and describe the women's understandings and reflections around what it means to be a Muslim, what Islam means to them and how Islam is practiced and intertwined in their everyday life. In this way, the lived religion concept is meant to refer to all the various ways Muslim women may seek knowledge about Islam in Trondheim and all the different sources and methods (institutionalized or not) they use in these processes in addition to how the women practice Islam and reflect upon their religious practices in Trondheim.

An important issue in my project is to explore how the institutional context of Trondheim, in the form of Islamic and non-Islamic fields, may influence the women's knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam. To be able to do this, I have to identify which fields the women engage in and discuss whether and how these can be said to influence their knowledge and practice of Islam. This type of information I cannot get from any others than the Muslim women themselves. The lived religion perspective, which presupposes a contemporary approach to religion at an individual level, lets me explore this. By combining a focus on the individual, the social, the institutional and the contextual, the lived religion perspective lets me explore how specific historical, geographical, cultural and situational conditions may influence how a religion is understood and practiced among some of its adherents.

3.4 Field and individuals

The participants in this study form the subject matter "Muslim women in Trondheim." However, in real life they are also daughters, sisters, mothers and wives as well as someone's

neighbor, friend, fellow student, colleague, "sister in Islam," etc. They live in Trondheim and are part of different social fields, such as "the municipality of Trondheim," "work," "the educational system" (university/college/school), "Islamic institutions," "women's networks," "national networks and associations," "family," "friends," "leisure activities," etc. The various social fields the women engage in may vary in form and content. Rules and codes of conduct that may be valid in one field may be invalid in another. What is recognized as important within one field may be insignificant in another. In relation to this, *I want to explore which social fields make up the context of Trondheim for the women in this study*. Furthermore, *I will explore whether and how these social fields may influence the women's knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam.* To do this, I will use the French sociologist and anthropologist Pierre Bourdieu's concepts of "field" and "capital" as analytical categories.

3.4.1 Field(s)

I want to use Pierre Bourdieu's "field" to describe what social arenas or "social universes" the Muslim women are part of. "Field" is, according to Bourdieu, all about relations:

> (…) a field may be defined as a network, or configuration, of objective relations between positions. These positions are objectively defined, in their existence and in the determinations they impose upon their occupants, agents or institutions, by their present and potential situation *(situs)* in the structure of the distribution of species of power (or capital) whose possession commands access to the specific profits that are at stake in the field, as well as their objective relation to other positions (domination, subordination, homology, etc.) (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992: 97).

In Bourdieu's attempt to construct a theory of practice, he not only regards field relationally, but he also describes the social world, the reality, as consisting of objective relations (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992: 97). The social cosmos in "highly differentiated societies" is made up by numbers of fields (social microcosms), which are autonomous to a certain degree and consist of specific logics, rules and norms that distinguish them from other fields, according to Bourdieu. He compares a "field" with a game to elaborate the meaning of the concept. There is something at stake in all games and fields that the participants compete over, he claims. The participants have made an investment in the field just by participating, and their participation acknowledges the field and its "stakes." Thus, solely by participating in the field, the participants automatically confirm that the field and its "stakes" are worth "playing" for. Still,

games and fields are not the same, Bourdieu argues. What distinguishes a field from a game is that the field is not a deliberate product of a creative act and that its rules are not explicit and codified (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992: 97-98).

3.4.2 Capital

Within each field, there is a hierarchy of different active species of capital. The species of capital get their value from the field. Their value depends on the field and the fact that a field exists where they can be "used," either as means or as a reward worth fighting for. Thus, a species of capital is what is effective in a given field. In this way, a species of capital is what "allows its possessors to wield a power, an influence, and thus to *exist*, in the field under consideration, instead of being considered a negligible quantity" (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992: 98).

By capital, Bourdieu means "accumulated labor," which makes it possible for individuals or groups of individuals to acquire social energy in the form of objectified or "living labor." There are three fundamental species of capital, according to Bourdieu: *economic* capital, *cultural* capital and *social* capital. Economic capital is self-explanatory. This form of capital can easily be converted into money (here and now), and it can be institutionalized in forms of property rights. Cultural capital, which Bourdieu also refers to as "informational capital," is, however, a more complex phenomenon. It is under certain conditions convertible to economic capital, and it can be institutionalized through academic qualifications. Cultural capital can appear in three different states, including the embodied state (in the form of persistent dispositions of the body and mind), the objectified state (in the form of cultural goods [i.e., books, pictures, machines, etc.]) and in an institutionalized state (i.e., in the form of educational qualifications) (Bourdieu 2006: 5, 8).

In its most elementary state, cultural capital is related to the body and presupposes a process of incorporation. It takes time to accumulate cultural capital in the embodied state, time the investor must invest personally because it is impossible to incorporate cultural capital *for* someone. To illustrate this, Bourdieu compares it with a suntan or a muscular body – if you want it, you must acquire it yourself. No one else can get it for you. However, it is possible to acquire this form of cultural capital more or less unconsciously through different forms of socialization, but only to a certain degree. It is also difficult to measure cultural capital in the embodied state. Bourdieu points out that one of the "least inaccurate" ways to do it is to look at how much time it takes to acquire it (Bourdieu 2006: 8-10; Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992: 118-120).

The embodied state of cultural capital makes it possible to "consume" cultural capital in its second and objectified state. These two states of cultural capital must therefore be seen in relation to each other, Bourdieu maintains. Objects in a materiel form and media, such as scriptures, books, paintings, instruments, monuments, etc., are all examples of cultural capital in the objectified state. These forms of cultural capital are easily transformed into economic capital. But, it is only the material objects' ownership that is transmitted, not the "know how" (i.e., the means and qualifications) that makes it possible to consume the object the way it was intended. To illustrate this, Bourdieu uses a machine as an example. If you possess economic capital, you can buy a very expensive, advanced and technical machine. However, owning such a machine does not imply that you have the skills or qualifications needed to use it the way it was intended. To be able to do this, you must either possess an embodied form of cultural capital regarding how to use the machine, or you can hire and pay a person who possesses these qualities to use it for you. Like this, cultural goods can be acquired both materially through economic capital and symbolically through cultural capital (Bourdieu 2006: 10-14).

The third form of cultural capital is the institutionalized state, where it appears in the form of educational qualifications. Bourdieu argues that educational qualifications can be seen as a certificate of cultural competence: they transmit to their holders a juridical-guaranteed cultural value. By institutionalizing a person's cultural capital in the form of academic qualifications, it becomes possible to compare people who possess the same types of qualifications and replace them with each other. It also makes it possible to establish conversion rates, or exchange rates, between cultural capital and economic capital by guaranteeing the monetary value of a certain academic qualification – in other words, the monetary value a person's cultural capital can be changed into in the labor market (Bourdieu 2006: 15-16).

Social capital is the third species of capital that Bourdieu operates with. It is: "(…) the sum of the resources, actual or virtual, that accrue to an individual or a group by virtue of possessing a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition" (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992: 119). This means that a person's volume of social capital depends on the size of the network of connections she can mobilize and the volume of capital (economic, cultural and symbolic) she possesses through each of these connections (Bourdieu 2006: 17).

In addition to the economic, cultural and social capital, there is also a form of capital Bourdieu calls symbolic capital. This is not a species of capital on its own but rather: "(…) the form that one or another of these species takes when it is grasped through categorizes of

perception that recognize its specific logic, or, if you prefer, misrecognize the arbitrariness of its possessions and accumulation" (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992: 119).

3.4.3 Individuals within fields – The relationship between fields and individuals

The different forms of capital only have value because they exist and are used within a field. Thus, field and capital must be seen in relation to each other. According to Bourdieu, it is two sides of the same issue to define a field and identify the species of capital that are active in it (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992: 98-99). If we summarize the capital a person has in a given field, we get what Bourdieu calls the "individual's volume of capital." How a person approaches and relates oneself to the field depends on one's volume of capital. Agents with same amount of capital can position themselves and "behave" differently in the field, dependent on whether they possess a lot of economic capital and little cultural capital or the opposite. In other words, your movements in the field depend on your volume of capital and its composition (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992: 98-99).

A person's strategies and ways of playing (acting/behaving) within a field not only depend on one's volume of capital at a given time but also reflect the capital volume's development over time and in structure. By this Bourdieu means that a person's strategies and ways of playing also depend on her social trajectories and the dispositions (habitus) developed in relation to the objective chances of receiving any kind of reward. The "players" (actors/agents) of a field do not have to adapt passively to the "rules" of the field. They can also try to change the relative value, or the conversion rate, between different species of capital. This can be done by using strategies that aim to increase the value of the species of capital one possesses most of and decrease the value of other species of capital. For Bourdieu, many of the conflicts in the overall field of power are based on the conversion rate, or the valuation of different species of capital (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992: 99).

A person's strategies within a field depend on her position in the field, her volume of capital and her approach to the field, understood as a function of her view from a specific position in the field. The individual is sort of a product of the field, according to Bourdieu. An intellectual exists as such only because there exists an intellectual field, and an artist exists as such only because there exists an artistic field, and so on. In this way, a field and an individual are two relational entities that exist in relation to each other. Within the field of social sciences, individuals should be recognized as social agents who are socially constructed and active within the limits of a given field because they possess the properties that make it possible to exist and work in the field. Because of this, Bourdieu thinks that "fields" should be the primary concern

in all sociological research. He argues that it is first and foremost through knowledge about the fields in which the individuals exist that it can be possible to understand the individuals' distinctiveness – meaning how and in what ways they "stand out" from the field (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992: 102, 105-107). In his words: "(…) it is knowledge of the field itself in which they evolve that allow us best to grasp the roots of their singularity, their *point of view* or positions (in a field) from which their particular vision of the world (and the field itself) is constructed" (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992: 107).

3.4.4 How Bourdieu's concepts will be used in this thesis

A good deal of Bourdieu's research is grounded in and tested out on empirical materials from France and the Kabyle people in Algeria (Berbers). Still, his theories about fields and species of capital are general models applicable to studies of all societies. Hardly anyone will deny that our complex social reality is made up by a multitude of social fields that relate themselves to each other in various ways and that there are different issues at "stake" within each field. Anne Sofie Roald's "cultural base pattern(s)" builds on the same ideas – that the moral principles of different societies are based on different ideas concerning what is right and wrong and that this can explain cultural differences in relation to values, norms, attitudes and behavior (Roald 2001: 88-91; see section 2.2.5). I therefore think that Roald's "cultural base pattern" can be integrated in what Bourdieu calls cultural capital, that is, the values, norms, qualities, etc. that are appreciated and valuated within a field. I therefore treat Roald's cultural base pattern as equivalent with Bourdieu's cultural capital.

I find Bourdieu's concepts of "field" and "capital" fruitful for exploring which social fields, institutional and non-institutional, make up the context of Trondheim for the women in this study. For Bourdieu, in empirical work, to define a field and its active species of capital are "two sides of the same coin" (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992: 98). I will not use his concepts to make a thorough analysis of all the fields and their limits, or all the positions, relations and practices that take place within a field, but I will use his concepts to describe which social fields the women engage in regularly and to show what species of capital the women have access to, are in possession of and thus experience as active within each field. Furthermore, I will analyze *if* and *how* the different fields, and their species of capital, influence the women's knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam in Trondheim. Of particular interest is to identify the capital attributed to the women's Islamic knowledge within the different fields and how this may influence their quests for knowledge and practice of Islam.

In the study of individualization processes in Muslim women's knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam in Trondheim, I find Bourdieu's emphasis on "knowledge about the field" highly relevant (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992: 102, 105-107). To be able to evaluate and discuss whether the Muslim women's sources and methods of gaining Islamic knowledge represent innovations or continuities of the Islamic traditions of knowledge, it is necessary to have knowledge about the Islamic methodologies, historically and locally. By this I mean that we cannot see the women's quests for knowledge as isolated practices but we must see their sources and methods in relation to other emic perspectives on Islamic knowledge and knowledge acquisition. In this study, the emic perspectives are represented by the local Islamic institutions, the Islamic traditions of knowledge and their Islamic methodologies. This means that I will compare the women's sources and methods to Islam with those of their local Islamic institutions and discuss how the local Islamic institutions' sources and methods to Islam correspond with global and historical Islamic methodologies.

In this way, I treat the Islamic traditions of knowledge and their Islamic methodologies as historical and global meta-fields wherein Islamic knowledge is produced, maintained, transmitted and changed and the local Islamic institutions as micro-fields wherein Islamic knowledge is dealt with locally. To discuss whether the Muslim women's sources and methods to Islam should be acknowledged as a continuation of the Islamic tradition of knowledge, or if it represents a rupture with it, I will compare them to both local and global Islamic methodologies. Thus, to raise a discussion about the prevalent theories of individualization and their applicability, it is necessary to have knowledge about emic perspectives on Islamic knowledge and knowledge acquisition.

3.5 Established social orders and individuals

How an individual operates within a field is, according to Bourdieu, determined by the individual's volume of capital and its composition as well as the individual's social trajectories and disposition (habitus), which have been developed in relation to objective chances of receiving any form of reward (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992: 98-99). By "habitus[14]," which are one of Bourdieu's key concepts in addition to field and capital, Bourdieu refers to "dispositions,

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[14] Even though Bourdieu is usually given credit for the habitus concept, and that it is his use and meaning of the concept that are most well-known, it was Marcel Mauss who first developed it. Habitus is, according to Mauss, a "set of specific cultural bodily techniques, a particular type of behavior" (Neumann 2004: 48). By bodily techniques, he refers to the various ways humans in different societies learn to use their bodies. Among other things, he shows that both gender and life stage influence how we (learn to) use our bodies (Mauss 2004: 65-97).

a structure, a way of being" (Neumann 2004: 47). These dispositions may in some situations and for some individuals lead to a specific type of behavior; in other words, they are a precondition for behavior and thereunder practice (Neumann 2004: 48).

In this study I will explore which social fields the Muslim women engage in and what species of capital they are in possession of, have access to and experience as active within each field. Of particular interest is to explore how the Muslim women relate to local and global Islamic institutions, that is, local representations of the Islamic traditions of knowledge and the traditions in general. After reading French scholar Michel de Certeau's *The Practice of Everyday Life* (1984), my impression is that Bourdieu's habitus concept includes and hides some of the practices I would like to put on display. de Certeau writes in a dialogue with Bourdieu to point out what he identifies as the weakness with Bourdieu's theory of practice. In a short and simplified way, we can say that de Certeau criticizes Bourdieu of putting too much emphasis on structures of power and of hiding the many forms of "tactics" in the habitus concept. This means that de Certeau accuses Bourdieu of overestimating how much power institutions and other systems of power have over individuals and their ways of operating. Because of this, de Certeau argues that Bourdieu overlooks that individuals are consciously making maneuvers in and through and between these structures of power and that they through tactical practices are fooling and playing tricks upon them and use them in a number of autonomous ways. de Certeau claims that Bourdieu hides or disguises these tactical practices in the habitus concept, where they are described as "invisible" and "unconscious" practices and therefore very difficult to study in detail[15] (de Certeau 1984: 50-60).

I am not going to evaluate whether Bourdieu "misses" the tactical practices in his theory of practice or if de Certeau has misread Bourdieu at this point. But, I have chosen to use concepts and theories that I think can shed light upon the Muslim women's practices when it comes to knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam. Because of this, I have chosen to use de Certeau's concepts of "strategy" and "tactic" to describe the relationship between an individual and an institutional order – that is, the relationship between Muslim women in Trondheim and Islamic institutions.

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[15] de Certeau is not the only one who has criticized Bourdieu's view on the amount of power institutions and other power structures have over individuals. In *An invitation to Reflexive Sociology* (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992), Bourdieu answers some of the critics. Here Bourdieu claims that his critics have misunderstood his intended meaning and that individuals are not completely controlled by the systems of power, as his critics claim that he says they are (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992: 120-140).

3.5.1 Individuals in institutional orders

To be able to give actual descriptions of what individuals do, we must see their actions within and in relation to the fields they engage in. This corresponds with Bourdieu's view that it is only through knowledge about the field wherein the individual exists that we can understand in which ways they stand out from the field and their uniqueness and position within the field (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992: 107). To avoid spending too much time on trying to define the women's habitus, I will use de Certeau's descriptions of how individuals operate within established orders.

Individuals within established orders are often described as "users" or "consumers" and are often assumed to be passively steered by established rules, which is a misleading image, de Certeau maintains, because the users have different ways of operating within established orders. His objectives in *The Practice of Everyday Life* is therefore:

> to make explicit the systems of operational combination which also compose a "culture", and to bring to light the models of action characteristic of users whose status as the dominated element in society (a status that does not mean that they are either passive or docile) is concealed by the euphemistic term "consumers". Everyday life invents itself by *poaching* in countless ways on the property of others (de Certeau 1984: xi-xii).

The presence and representation of a social phenomenon does not tell us much about what it is for its users, that is, what they make or do with it. To gain more knowledge about this, we must analyze what the users (or consumers) of a representation make out of it, or how they use it. Only then can we look for similarities and differences between the production of the representation and the secondary production of the representation that are hidden in the utilization process. The theoretical framework de Certeau uses is a model concerning the construction of individual sentences with an established vocabulary and syntax. Here he shows that within linguistics, it is common to differentiate between "performance" and "competence." The "act of speaking" cannot be reduced to competence regarding a language. Therefore, he wants to make the "enunciation perspective" the main subject for his study (de Certeau 1984: xii-xiii).

According to the "enunciation perspective," the act of speaking operates within a field of a linguistic system: "it effects an appropriation, or reappropriation, of language by its speakers; it establishes a *present* relative to a time and place; and it posits a *contract with the*

other (the interlocutor) in a network of places and relations" (de Certeau 1984: xiii, 33). The characteristics of the speech act are also to be found in many other practices as well, such as "walking," "talking," "cooking," etc., de Certeau holds. This approach assumes that users make several small changes within and of the established order they are a part of to adjust it to their own interests and rules. de Certeau regards this as a collective activity and thinks it is the sociologist's task to determine its procedures, bases, effects and possibilities (de Certeau 1984: xiii-xiv).

The users must also be recognized as producers, according to de Certeau – something he stresses by referring to them as "unrecognized producers, poets of their own acts" and "silent discoverers of their own paths in the jungle of functionalist rationality" (de Certeau 1984: xviii). In relation to the act of speaking, de Certeau points out that through their practices, the users produce something he considers to be: ""indirect" or "errant" trajectories obeying their own logic" (de Certeau 1984: xviii). Even if these trajectories are made up by the established language's vocabulary, and subordinated the prescribed syntactic forms, they consist of more than this. They also contain other interests and desires that are not determined or captured by the systems they have developed in (de Certeau 1984: xviii).

3.5.2 Strategies and tactics

de Certeau explains the main differences between how an established order and an individual, or a group of individuals, operates by using the concepts of strategies and tactics. Strategies are the domain of established orders as institutions or structures of power, or the "producers," as he also calls them. A strategy is, according to de Certeau,

> (..) the calculation (or manipulation) of power relationships that becomes possible as soon as a subject with will and power (a business, an army, a city, a scientific institution) can be isolated. It postulates a *place* that can be delimited as its *own* and serve as the base from which relations with an *exteriority* composed of targets or threats (customers or competitors, enemies, the country surrounding the city, objectives and objects of research, etc.) can be managed (de Certeau 1984: 35-36).

There are several advantages to being able to establish a "place of its own," a place that separates one from "its others." First, a place of its own is a place to withdraw to where one can capitalize on one's advantages and prepare one's future moves. It also makes one less dependent on one's surroundings and independent of time. Because of this, de Certeau calls it "*a triumph*

of place over time" (de Certeau 1984: 36). Second, a place of its own means a place from where one can observe and measure "its other." It gives one the opportunity to control them and either include or exclude them in one's vision. When one sees "its other," one also has the opportunity to predict what is going to happen next. Thus, a place of its own makes it possible "to run ahead of time by reading a space" (de Certeau 1984: 36). Third, within the strategies there exists a certain kind of knowledge, knowledge that is both determined and sustained by the certain power one needs to establish a place of one's own. The knowledge and the power are dependent upon each other: "*a certain kind power is the precondition of this knowledge* and not merely its effect or its attribute. It makes this knowledge possible and at the same time determines its characteristics. It produces itself in and through this knowledge" (de Certeau 1984: 36).

While strategies are the domain of established orders and power structures as institutions – the "producers" – tactics are the domain of the "consumers." Whereas the strategies have a place of their own, the tactics do not. In fact, it is the lack of a place of its own that determines a tactic. A tactic is a calculated action that takes place in the space of others. Because it finds its place in the space of others, it must: "play on and with a terrain imposed on it and organized by the law of a foreign power" (de Certeau 1984: 37). de Certeau describes a tactic as the "art of the weak." It has neither the power nor the means to keep itself at a distance, or to itself. It is more like a maneuver within the enemy's terrain and field of vision. A tactic cannot plan its future moves because it is dependent on time. It finds its place within isolated actions. It does not have the possibility to withdraw to a base of its own, where it can gather its achievements, strengthen its position and plan its future. Therefore, it must recognize opportunities when it sees them and use them. What a tactic wins, it cannot keep. It must always try to manipulate events and transform them into opportunities. Many everyday practices are tactical, for example, to talk, read, walk, etc., holds de Certeau, who regards them more generally as ways of operation (de Certeau 1984: xix, 36-37).

de Certeau wants to challenge the prevailing image of the consumers as passive and immobile, as the "receivers" who only reproduce and follow the producers like a herd of sheep. An image that, according to him, rests on notions that consumers are formed by the products forced upon them and that producers in this way form social practices through their products. To assume that the products shape the act of consumption is always a misunderstanding, de Certeau maintains, because if one assumes this, one overlooks the creativity among the consumers – the ways they are putting their mark on the product, making it their own, appropriating and re-appropriating it (de Certeau 1984: 165-166). To exemplify this, de Certeau uses the act of reading, which he sees as a fundamental aspect of consumption. To read is "to

wander through an imposed system (that of the text, analogous to the constructed order of a city or a supermarket)" (de Certeau 1984: 169).

According to de Certeau, it is common to distinguish between the two activities of writing and reading, where the first is recognized as "producing," while the latter is seen as passively receiving, or "consuming." According to this view, the readers are satisfied with the product, and they keep on reproducing it the way intended by the producers. This is an inaccurate picture, de Certeau argues, because "every reading modifies its object" (de Certeau 1984: 169). The reader can never fully put herself in the place of the author or take the author's position. She must give the text a meaning, using the verbal system and the system of signs that make up the text. In this way: "The text has a meaning only through its readers; it changes along with them; it is ordered in accord with codes of perception that it does not control" (de Certeau 1984: 170). The reader discovers and invents something in the text that might differ from the original intention behind the text. By combining bits and fragments from the text, the reader creates something unknown in the space of the text because the text's organizational structure opens for ambiguity. By using reading as an example, de Certeau shows that the readers cannot be seen as passive receivers; instead, there is a lot of creativity hidden in the act of consumption. Individuals are putting their mark on the products forced upon them. Therefore, consumption, as reading, should be characterized by "advances, retreats, tactics and games" played with the products, such as texts (de Certeau 1984: 175, 167-169).

3.5.3 Strategic and tactical religion

I am not the first to combine de Certeau's concepts of strategy and tactic with a lived religion perspective. This has also been done in *Everyday Lived Islam in Europe* (2013) by Dessing, Jeldtoft, Nielsen and Woodhead. According to Linda Woodhead, when applied to religion, de Certeau's ideas and concepts illuminate power dynamics. By seeing religion as a "set of patterned practices, objects and relations," it is possible to recognize that "these favor some more than others, and serve to structure various forms of inequality" (Woodhead 2013: 16). In relation to this, strategic religion is what provides the powerful with a space and place and the form of religion that is most profitable for the already powerful. Woodhead uses a priest as an example. A priest gets his power from the institution he oversees – a power he has an interest in pursuing in a way that no layman will ever have. Strategic religion has an interest in creating sacred places that can be separated and guarded from profane ones and from where it can consolidate its power. Tactical religion is, on the other hand, constantly trying to delegitimize such processes of sacralization by re-enchanting places, objects and bodies that have been

defined as profane and of less or no value for the strategic religion. Where strategic religion relies on its own space and place, tactical religion prefers it portable and brings with it "forms of the sacred" in the shape of bottled holy waters, prayer rugs, amulets, etc. Tactical religion will try to get inside the strategies and implement parts of them and supplement others; moreover, it gives them a new meaning, a new range of use, and in this way gain some control over them (Woodhead 2013: 16).

Strategic religion wants symbiosis with political power and social elites. But the more independent they become, the larger the gap between themselves and their adherents' everyday worries becomes. And the more that strategic religion seeks alliances with political power, the more likely it is that tactical contributors will take over their embodied and explicit functions and practices. The increased gap between "official" religion and its adherents is one of the reasons for the growth of tactical religion in Europe (Woodhead 2013: 18). Because of this, tactical religion in Europe cannot only be localized to the private domestic sphere, but it is finding its way into the public life as well. Tactical religion has no clear limits, and this is the main reason for its success: it inscribes itself within structures that cannot see it coming (or either expect it). The study of tactical religion is therefore not only the study everyday life as lived in the private sphere but also includes the study of all those who are pushed into tactical modus because of their various distance and concentration of religious and social power (Woodhead 2013: 18-21).

3.5.4 How de Certeau's concepts will be used in this thesis

I find de Certeau's concepts of strategy and tactic effective for describing the relationship between the Muslim women and the Islamic institutions they are affiliated with. I will use *tactic* to describe and explain what is going on, meaning the women's actual practices, in their search for Islamic knowledge. And I will use *strategy* to describe the views and methods the Islamic institutions represent in relation to Islamic knowledge and knowledge acquisition. This will help me analyze how the Muslim women operate within the Islamic structures of power they are surrounded by. This means that I will look at how Muslim women in Trondheim relate themselves, and operate, within the structures of the local Islamic institutions in their quests for knowledge and how their ways of operating can be seen in relation to Islamic methodologies that are the products of the Islamic schools of jurisprudence – that is, the Islamic tradition of knowledge in general.

I find it fruitful to combine de Certeau's strategy and tactic concepts with a lived religion perspective. This makes it possible to look at the women's lived religion, the actual choices and

practices they make and do, as tactical operations they perform in relation to an established Islamic order. This means that all the choices the women make and methods they use to acquire knowledge about Islam, moreover, the different ways they define and practice Islam, can be described as tactical operations they do within an established order, namely Islam and its traditions of knowledge. The Islamic tradition of knowledge, as it is represented by the Islamic methodologies, is an established order with fields of its own wherein knowledge about Islam is produced, maintained, transmitted and changed. The Islamic traditions of knowledge consist of various "norms," "rules" and "opinions" concerning what should be defined as "Islamic knowledge" or not and how one should proceed to acquire such knowledge. The different views and methods are represented by the Islamic schools of jurisprudence and their methodologies. This means that Islamic methodologies are the products of the Islamic schools of jurisprudence because they are the ones who produce, reproduce, maintain and transmit it (see Chapter 4).

In their search for Islamic knowledge, it is impossible for the Muslim women to isolate or distance themselves from the Islamic traditions of knowledge; rather, they must move within their framework and on their terrain. The women must deal with the Islamic traditions of knowledge even though they may not have much knowledge about them or do not want to follow (some of) the requests and rules these entail. In relation to this, I will treat the Islamic traditions of knowledge as meta-fields of Islamic knowledge (see section 3.4.4) and their various Islamic methodologies as *strategies* for how to acquire knowledge about Islam. In their quest for Islamic knowledge, the Muslim women cannot escape the Islamic traditions of knowledge or their methodologies, but they can make different maneuvers and operations within and across them and in this way put their own "mark" on the quest and its outcome. In other words, by using *tactics* within the fields of Islamic knowledge, the Muslim women can express a certain amount of subjectivity within the fields and autonomy from them.

I do not see any contradictions between what Bourdieu defines as "fields" and what de Certeau defines as established orders, or structures of power. They both refer to relationally defined places of one's own, to put it simply. I therefore choose to refer to de Certeau's established orders and power structures as *institutional fields* in this thesis. Subsequently, the Islamic traditions of knowledge will be treated as meta-fields of Islamic knowledge, and the local Islamic institutions in Trondheim will be treated as micro-fields and local institutional representations of one or more of these meta-fields and their *strategies,* being Islamic methodologies. The Muslim women will be treated as users or agents that are surrounded by these fields, both at a meta-level (i.e., the Islamic traditions of knowledge) and a micro-level (i.e., the local Islamic institutions) in their quest for Islamic knowledge. The women's choices

and practices will therefore be described as tactics when I see them in relation to both these fields – how knowledge about Islam is produced, maintained and transmitted locally at a micro-level and how knowledge about Islam is produced, maintained and transmitted globally and historically at a meta-level. In this project, I will therefore refer to the Muslim women's lived Islam as *tactical* operations, which are developed within the framework of several strategic or official forms of Islam – the Islamic traditions of knowledge as represented by the different Islamic schools of jurisprudence and the different Islamic institutions in Trondheim that represent strategic or official Islam locally.

3.6 The renewed Islamic basket

I have renewed Roald's Islamic basket to explain how the context of Trondheim may influence the Muslim women's knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam and how the Muslim women are making local adjustments in relation to their migrant-minority situation. Because of this, I have added more elements to the basket:

The renewed Islamic basket

Normative field

Islamic source material

Cultural traits

Customs

Society's experiences

The individual's biography

Islamic fields
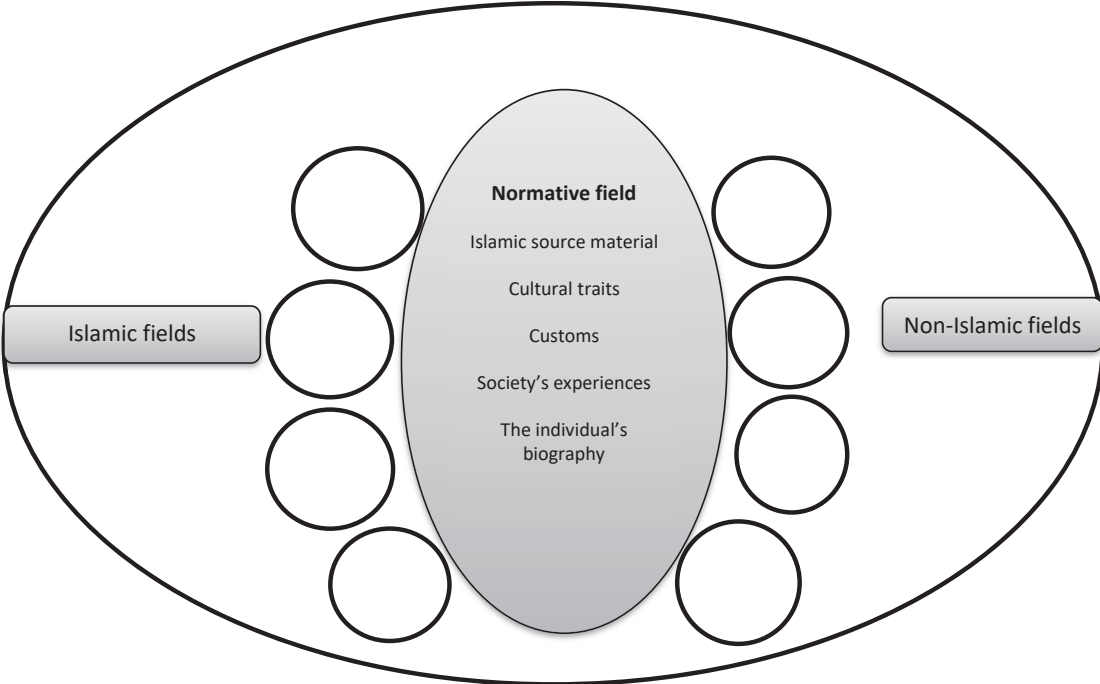
Non-Islamic fields

The renewed Islamic basket is adapted to what makes up the context of Trondheim for the Muslim women in this study in the form of the institutional and non-institutional fields the women are engaged in. The women's various fields are divided into two categories, which I have termed "Islamic" and "non-Islamic" fields. "Islamic fields" refers to fields in Bourdieu's sense, where the women meet and interact with other Muslims and engage in religious activities, such as rituals, educational activities, etc. (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992: 97-98; see section 3.4.1). These are the institutional and non-institutional fields the women participate in because they are Muslims and where they practice Islam in various ways. "Non-Islamic fields" refers to other fields the women participate in, such as work, studies, family and friends. Even though the women can engage in religious activities within these fields as well, the women's religious affiliation is neither the only nor the primary reason why they are involved in them. Within the non-Islamic fields, the women have relationships and positions (or relational bonds) that are not merely religious but a result of their positions as family members, employees, colleagues, students, compatriots, friends, etc. A further presentation of the women's Islamic and non-Islamic fields follows in Chapters 4, 6 and 7.

My development of the Islamic basket is based on a hypothesis that Muslim women in Trondheim are faced with different forms of "knowledge" about and attitudes toward Islam within the various fields they engage in and that this might influence their knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam. I have therefore developed the basket to include more fields and more varied forms of capital than Roald's does (Roald 2001: 88-92; see sections 2.2.5 and 3.2.1). By including the women's Islamic and non-Islamic fields in the basket, I wish to portray how the various fields, and their capital, might influence individualization processes in the Muslim women's knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam in Trondheim.

The different Islamic and non-Islamic fields and their various forms of capital must not necessarily be binary oppositions, or as each other's opposites, since they may have points of resemblance. For instance, within the Islamic fields the women meet and interact with other Muslims. Within the non-Islamic fields, the women meet and interact with both Muslims and non-Muslims, depending on the field. This means that it is their adherence to Islam and their Muslim identity that creates relational bonds between the women and the other participants in the Islamic fields. In some of the non-Islamic fields, however, it may be the same two "qualities" that make the women stand out from the field and thus place them within a minority position (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992: 105-107; see section 3.4.3). Just as we cannot regard the different fields and their capital as each other's opposite, likewise we cannot assume that all of them represent similar views on Islam and Islamic knowledge. Since Muslims make up a

religious minority in Trondheim, we can expect to find different understandings of and attitudes toward Islam and Islamic knowledge within the Islamic and the non-Islamic fields and particularly those among the latter that are dominated by a non-Muslim majority. Furthermore, because the participants in this study are involved in different Islamic institutions in Trondheim, we might expect to find institutional differences in how they view Islamic knowledge and the sources and methods they use to gain such knowledge.

In relation to this, I want to use the renewed Islamic basket to describe and explain how the Muslim women in Trondheim, due to their migrant-minority situation, make local or contextual adjustments in their knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam. This means that I want to describe and explain how the various fields, and the fields' forms of capital, might influence the women's "normative field" and thus their knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam. According to Roald, the normative field is where the selection and interpretation of Islamic sources and literature take place (Roald 2001: 88-92). It is therefore of special importance for this study. Islamic source materials and Islamic methodologies are fundamental elements in the Islamic basket since Muslim discourses concerning "what is Islam" and "what does it mean to be a Muslim" are made with a reference to these. Different Islamic source materials and methodologies emphasize the content of the basket differently. The selection and interpretation that take place within the normative field will therefore influence how the Muslim women live and practice Islam in Trondheim. It is therefore relevant to look at how the local context may influence the women's normative field in the form of what Islamic sources and methods they choose to activate from the Islamic basket because this will influence what other elements the women choose to activate from the basket and their interpretations of these. In other words, it is the normative field, as described by Roald, that determines how the women relate themselves to the Islamic basket. Because of this, I think the renewed Islamic basket provides an efficient model to describe and explain how the different Islamic and non-Islamic fields and their capital might trigger different individualization processes or trigger individualization processes in the Muslim women's knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam differently.

3.7 Summary: Theoretical framework

This study builds around the following three perspectives: a *contemporary lived religion* perspective, a *contemporary comparative institutional* perspective and a *historical* perspective. The lived religion perspective will be used to explore how Muslim women acquire knowledge about and practice Islam in Trondheim. The contemporary comparative institutional perspective

will be used to explore how the local Islamic and non-Islamic fields the women are engaged in might influence their knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam. To address the individualization debate, and to be able to discuss whether the women's sources and methods for gaining knowledge about Islam are unique or common, in continuation with the Islamic tradition of knowledge or not, I will apply a historical perspective on Islamic knowledge and knowledge acquisition. In line with these perspectives, the women's sources and methods to Islam will be compared with the sources and methods of their local Islamic institutions, with those of their parents, and with Islamic methodologies in general.

The etic concepts, theories and models, or analytical categories, introduced in this chapter are "dimensions of religion" (Smart), "lived religion" (McGuire), "field" and "capital" (Bourdieu), "strategy" and "tactic" (de Certeau) and the "renewed Islamic basket" (Hjärpe/Roald). The etic categories of *"dimensions of religion"* and the *"Islamic basket"* will be used as models to conceptualize Islam as a complex religion with a history and a tradition of knowledge. I will use the "dimensions of religion" model to explore the young women's understanding of Islam and Muslims and to distinguish between different types of Islamic knowledge and sources to Islam. In this way, I will use it as a categorical tool to translate emic types of knowledge and concepts into etic categories.

The *lived religion* concept will be used to describe what the women really do when they acquire Islamic knowledge and practice Islam in Trondheim. The women's reflections concerning individual practices in relation to this, and their individual definitions and reflections concerning what it means to be a Muslim, are also included in the lived religion concept. The concept will in this way both include institutionalized and non-institutionalized sources, methods, beliefs and practices.

Bourdieu's *field* concept will be used to refer to all the different social fields the women in this study engage in regularly. This includes institutional as well as non-institutional social fields. Established orders, or structures of powers as de Certeau calls it, will be referred to as *institutional fields*. *Capital* will be used to refer to the fundamental forms of capital Bourdieu describes as active within a field, including Islamic knowledge capital. I will use Bourdieu's distinction of species of capital – economic, cultural and social – to analyze and concretize what kinds of capital the women are in possession of, have access to and experience as active within each field. In relation to this, I will pay particularly attention to what capital is attributed to the women's Islamic knowledge.

To describe and explain how the women operate within the Islamic and non-Islamic fields they engage in, including the "normative field of the Islamic traditions of knowledge," I

will use de Certeau's concepts of *tactic* and *strategy.* Strategies will refer to the different views and methods that make up Islamic methodologies, represented globally and historically by the Islamic schools of jurisprudence and locally by the local Islamic institutional fields. Tactics will refer to the different ways the women operate within, on and with the Islamic institutions and methodologies, in other words the strategies, that surround their quest for knowledge (see Chapter 6). Furthermore, in Chapter 7, I will use "tactics" to describe how the women relate themselves to the questions, attitudes and prevailing pictures of Islam that they encounter within their non-Islamic fields. I find "tactics" more illuminating than "lived religion" in relation to *how* the women's various fields may influence their knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam. This is because the concept emphasizes how the women operate *within*, *on* and *with* already established fields of Islamic knowledge, or a dominating picture of Islam, which they cannot escape. However, by using "tactics," the women have the possibility to express subjectivity within the Islamic and non-Islamic fields as well as a certain amount of autonomy from them.

Even though the two concepts of "lived religion" and "tactical religion" can be used synonymously, I have chosen to use "lived religion" because it is already an established concept and perspective within religious studies. However, since I do not think the lived religion concept is explanatory enough when it comes to describing how individuals operate, or what they really do, within the institutional and non-institutional fields in which they engage, I have chosen to use "tactics" when I refer to individuals' or groups of individuals' ways of operating within fields.

The *"renewed Islamic basket"* will be used to describe and explain individual and institutional differences in relation to how Muslim women gain knowledge about and practice Islam in Trondheim. This means that I will use it to describe how the local Islamic and non-Islamic fields may influence the women's "normative field" and how the local fields and their capital might influence individualization processes in the young Muslims women's knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam.

The next part of the chapter presents a description of the study's applied methods, methodological and ethical considerations and an institutional presentation of the study's main informants.

3.8 Applied methods

To produce data about individualization processes in young Muslim women's knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam in Trondheim, I have used a combination of methods, so-called method(ological) triangulation (Roof 2011: 74-75). To gain knowledge about the women's lived Islam, self-definition as Muslims, sources and methods to Islam, reflections around Islamic knowledge and source materials and a generational perspective on these matters, I have used observations and qualitative interviews. Interviews and observations are also the methods I have used to produce data concerning the local Islamic fields' methodologies and methods of gaining, maintaining and transmitting knowledge about Islam. To gain knowledge about Islamic hermeneutics and methods, including their formation and development, I have used literature studies. These have provided information about Islamic methodologies and thus traditional and prevalent ways of gaining knowledge about Islam. To be able to discuss whether the Muslim women in Trondheim's knowledge acquisition should be recognized as individualized or not, and whether their sources and methods for gaining knowledge about Islam are in continuation with the Islamic tradition of knowledge or not, I have compared them with local, global and traditional institutionalized Islamic methodologies. In this way, I have used the historical perspective as a *method* to gain a more complex understanding of individualization processes in Muslim women in Trondheim's knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam by seeing the women's and the local Islamic fields' sources and methods to Islam in relation to contemporary and historical institutionalized Islamic methodologies.

3.8.1 Approaching local Islamic institutions and Muslim women in Trondheim

To be able to analyze individualization processes in Muslim women's knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam in Trondheim, I needed information about how Muslim women in Trondheim are gaining knowledge about Islam, individually and in interaction with others. Moreover, I needed information about the women's reflections around Islamic knowledge – how they view it, how they gain it (sources and methods), why they gain it and how they use it. Thus, to get this information I needed access to activities and social situations where Muslim women participated and interacted with "Islam," and more specifically with "knowledge about Islam," and I needed to find Muslim women who lived in Trondheim and who were willing to participate in this study. To be able to compare the women's sources and methods to Islam with local institutionalized Islamic methodologies, I needed information about the local Islamic institutions' sources and methods.

Since I was going to collect and handle personal data in the form of indirectly identifiable personal data, such as information about place of residence, institutional affiliation, gender, age, occupation, etc., and sensitive personal data, including information about religious beliefs, my project was subject to notification due to the Personal Data Act and the Personal Data Regulation, § 7-27 (Lovdata 2015). In the preliminary stage, I therefore reported the research project to Norsk Samfunnsvitenskapelig Datatjeneste (Norwegian Social Science Data Services [NSD]), which is the data protection official for all Norwegian universities (NSD 2015a). The data protection official gave their "recommendation" to the project on October 6, 2009 (see Appendix 1), and throughout the project period I have regularly updated them and the participants in this study about its progress.

As a result of my master's thesis in religious studies, which was also localized to Trondheim, I had some knowledge about local Islamic institutions and organizations and an established network consisting of Muslims affiliated with one of the local Islamic institutions, namely the Muslim Society Trondheim (MST). To get an overview of potential activities and situations to observe, and to find potential participants, I used my network and asked individuals if they were engaged in or had information about any form of "Islamic" educational activities in Trondheim. Parallel with this, I mapped the local Islamic "scene" with the help of my network, official records and documents about Islamic and Muslim institutions, organizations and associations in Trondheim as well as through archive searches in online local newspapers and web searches. Before I started to approach the various Islamic institutions and Muslim organizations, and women affiliated with these, I wrote an information letter about the project to hand out to potential participants (see Appendix 2[16]). To make sure that the information letter included all the necessary information, I followed NSD's "Requirements for Informed Consent" (NSD 2015b).

Both a Norwegian and an English copy of the information letter were enclosed in the first emails I sent to the various local Islamic institutions and Muslim organizations and associations. In the letter, I introduced the project and myself and asked if they were willing to help me with more information about their respective establishments and to put me in contact with women affiliated with these. When I later met with representatives from the various establishments and got access to various educational activities and learning situations where Muslim women participated, I handed out written copies of the information letter and gave verbal presentations of the project as well. Participation in research projects such as my own

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[16] I updated the information letter as the project progressed since I approached and met potential participants at different stages of the project. In Appendix 2 follows two different versions of the letter.

must be voluntary, and "in order to define a consent as valid, the consent must be a freely given, specific and informed declaration" (NSD 2015b; Bird and Scholes 2011: 87-88). Because of this, it was important for me to make sure all potential participants in this study were informed about the project, its purpose, its methods and what the information would be used for as well as that all participation in the project was voluntary and that all participants could withdraw from the project at any time.

My network, the local Islamic institutions and Muslim organizations were positive about and supportive of my study. Due to their response, I got information about various Islamic educational activities in Trondheim and got in contact with men and women who were involved in these activities in one way or another. Based on this information, I started to evaluate from which activities and situations it could be possible to generate knowledge about how Muslim women in Trondheim were gaining knowledge about Islam in interaction with others, that is, which situations and activities were relevant for this project.

To get access to relevant educational activities and social situations where Muslim women meet and interact regarding Islamic knowledge, I used "key persons" and "gatekeepers." A key person is someone who in one way or another holds a leading position within an institution, organization or group and who may function as an expert of the respective field (Bremborg 2011: 312). A gatekeeper is a person who can help you gain access and admittance to the group or situation you wish to study. If you win the gatekeeper's trust, the person can help you establish a relationship and trust with the rest of the group. A gatekeeper should therefore be a person who is trusted and respected within the group you want to study. Since the gatekeeper in many ways controls your access to a group and influences the information you can get from that group, it is important to be critical in the choice of gatekeepers (Flick 2002: 142; Holme and Solvang 1996: 107; Berremann 1962). Key persons may function as gatekeepers as well (Bremborg 2011: 312). In this study, some of the key persons have partly functioned as such since they introduced me to relevant situations and persons within their respective Islamic field.

Since I wanted access to educational activities and learning situations within several Islamic institutions and Muslim organizations in Trondheim, I had to use several key persons and gatekeepers as these institutions and organizations are separate Islamic fields. Women from my network in MST helped me get access to the educational activities and learning situations they were engaged in within this institution. With the help of some of these women, I got in contact with Muslim women affiliated with other local Islamic institutions and Muslim organizations, which again helped me gain access to Islamic learning situations and introduced

me to more women within their respective fields. In this way, I used the "snowball method" to get in contact with Muslim women and to gain access to educational activities. To avoid recruiting participants to this study from merely one group of friends, and thus a biased sample, I used several entrances to the local Islamic fields (Bremborg 2011: 314). For instance, one woman, who later became an important gatekeeper into one of the local Islamic institutions, recruited herself to the study after attending a guest lecture about "Islam in Norway" that I had been invited to hold in a local public institution. After the lecture she approached me, introduced herself as a Muslim and wanted to learn more about my study. Later, she asked if I was interested to learn more about "her" local Islamic institution and invited me to her mosque, where she introduced me to other female members.

Men in leading positions have functioned as key persons and sometimes partly as gatekeepers into their respective Islamic institutions or Muslim organizations as well. These men responded to my emails, provided information and put me into contact with members in their respective fields. That the leaders were informed about my project and gave their consent to my presence was a premise for my observations on some of the activities within their institutions and organizations (Bremborg 2011: 312). However, since the leaders were men, they did not participate in women's Islamic educational activities themselves. They could only inform me about these activities and put me in contact with women engaged in them.

Imams, teachers and persons who hold central positions within the local Islamic institutions and Muslim organizations, men and women, have functioned as key persons and contributed with information about local Islamic methodologies. In doing so, they have provided this project with essential information about their respective institutions' or organizations' sources and methods to Islam (see sections 4.1.3 and 4.3.1).

3.8.2 Selection of participants

This study is localized to Trondheim and Muslim women in Trondheim. One of the main challenges with localizing a study to a city is the city's complexity. The greater the city's population, the more challenging it is to get an overview of the inhabitants and their activities. The Norwegian anthropologist Kathinka Frøystad has pointed out that the main differences between doing anthropological fieldwork in a city compared to a village is that the "city anthropologist" must be more aware and make more reflected choices when it comes to defining her or his "field universe" – what should it consist of, and how large should it be? In relation to this, the city anthropologist can, according to Frøystad, define her field universe out of different principles, among them theme, network and geography. In a theme-defined field universe, the

participants will be selected according to one or more shared qualities, such as they are all musicians, Swedish labor immigrants or Muslims. In a network-defined field universe, the participants will be selected according to the relationships they have to each other, be they kinship, institutional affiliation, shared workplace, etc., even though these universes are theme-oriented as well. And in a geographically defined field universes, the participants are selected due to where they are or live, such as a workplace, a mosque or a neighborhood (Frøystad 2003: 45-46).

I am not doing anthropological fieldwork in Trondheim, nor is my aim to get an overview of Trondheim or its population. Still, my "field universe" is selected around the above-mentioned principles of theme, network and geography. The main informants in this study share the qualities of defining themselves as Muslim and of practicing Islam. They also share the qualities of being women and "young" – since they are between 16 and 40 years old. Clearly, I needed female participants since this study explores individualization processes in Muslim women's knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam. Secondly, I wanted young Muslim participants because researchers on Islam in Europe seem to agree that individualization processes are affecting the young Muslims' relationship to Islam in particular (Cesari 2004; Fadil 2005; Jacobsen 2006; Peter 2006; Roy 2004; see sections 2.1-2.2). My field universe is also network-defined because the participants are selected due to the relationship they have to each other through one (or more) of the local Islamic institutions or the activities that take place within them. Because I am interested in how various Islamic (and non-Islamic) fields may influence the women's knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam, I have chosen to include women with different institutional affiliations in this study and to look for institutional similarities and differences when it comes to Islamic methodologies and the women's access to Islamic knowledge. In this way, my field universe is defined through *networks*, not just one network. In one sense, since all the participants are resident in Trondheim, my field universe can also be geographically defined but, in another, not, since the women live in different parts of the city, use different mosques and do not have one "place" in common. Rather, one of my aims has been to explore what makes up the context of Trondheim for the women in this study, and to get an overview of which Islamic and non-Islamic fields they engage in, to be able to analyze whether, and how, these fields may influence their knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam. In this way, my goal has been to display diversity among Muslim women, who are often presented as one homogenous group.

When I approached the field universe at the beginning of 2010, there were three well-established Islamic institutions, or mosques, in Trondheim – MST, Trondheim Mevlana

Cultural Organization (Mevlana) and Ahl O'Bait (AOB) – and one in the making, Dar El Eman Islamic center (DIC)[17]. There were also some Muslim associations and organizations organized around religious identities and other themes and network principles, such as the Muslim Student Association Trondheim (MSAT) and the Indonesian Muslim Society Trondheim (KMIT). After several meetings with representatives from MSAT, I discovered that even though they had several female members on their mailing list, none of them participated in its regular activities. Through conversations with Indonesian Muslims, I also discovered that the majority of KMIT's members were institutionally affiliated with MST. I therefore made the choice of recruiting women from the three established local Islamic institutions as participants in this study. In this way, the participants have certain qualities that unite them – they are Muslims, they are women and they are in a certain age range – while they are divided through their different institutional affiliations. By choosing participants from various Islamic institutions, I hoped to gain a greater understanding of whether and how local Islamic institutional fields may influence individualization processes in the women's knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam in Trondheim.

Since the participants in this study were selected due to the qualities they share, their institutional ties and their place of residence, they are necessarily more homogenous than if they had been more randomly chosen (Frøystad 2003: 46). This means that the informants in this study cannot be representative of Muslims in Trondheim, or of Muslim women in general in Trondheim, since Muslims in Trondheim have more diverse backgrounds: they are of both sexes, are of all ages and life situations, some have Islamic institutional or organizational ties while others do not, some are devout Muslims, others do not care much or at all about Islamic practices, etc. Moreover, the participants are not representative of all women within the Islamic institutions they are affiliated with because they were selected due to certain specific criteria. However, as young practicing Muslim women in Trondheim with ties to one or more of the local Islamic institution or their activities, the participants in this study are highly representative for my theme, network and geographically based field universe. Furthermore, since they have diverse backgrounds and nationalities, they can also to a certain degree reflect parts of the complexity and diversity that exist among the group of women categorized as "Muslim women" in Trondheim.

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[17] Since 2013 there have been five Islamic institutions, or mosques, in Trondheim: The Muslim Society Trondheim, Trondheim Mevlana Cultural Organization, Ahl O'Bait, Dar El Eman Islamic Center and the Afghan United Society (Regjeringen.no 2018a). The Afghan United Society was established in 2013, *after* I had recruited the main informants to this study. Because of this, neither the institution nor any of its members were included in this study.

3.8.3 Institutional presentation of main informants

In total, 16 women function as the "main informants" in this study. The main informants participated in interviews, and some of them, though not all, also participated in Islamic educational activities, or settings/situations, which I observed. I have chosen to present the main informants through the local Islamic institutional field they are affiliated with, as members and/or participants in activities that take place within these institutions. The institutional presentation entails some inconsistency regarding how I report about the women's nationalities and backgrounds. I only report nationalities that are obvious due to the women's local institutional affiliation and backgrounds that are characteristic for specific national groups in Trondheim to avoid reporting too detailed information about each woman and to protect their anonymity. For the same reasons, all women have been given pseudonyms (see section 3.8.7).

From MST, I interviewed 10 women. Five of these, Dorthe, Emma, Frida, Ida and Hanne, are from Indonesia and were in their late 20s or early-to-mid-30s during the interviews. The Indonesian women have similar backgrounds: they moved to Trondheim as adults for educational, professional or family reasons – some to study, others to accompany a husband who was going to study or work in Trondheim. When the interviews took place, their stay in Trondheim had lasted between three to 10 years. All the Indonesian informants were married, but only four of them lived together with their husbands. One husband lived in Indonesia, so the informant lived on her own with no family members present in Trondheim. Two of women had children whom they lived with. Except husbands and/or children, the Indonesian interviewees did not have any family members present in Trondheim.

The Indonesian members of MST are distinguished from other national groups by being made up of students and their families whose membership in MST and stay in Trondheim are mostly temporarily. After graduation, some immediately return to Indonesia, while others stay some additional years to work. Because of this, the Indonesian group is more "diasporic" than other member-groups at MST. Other members of MST move as well; however, there is a difference between student-members and members with backgrounds as refugees or asylum seekers when it comes to how they see their future in MST, Trondheim and Norway. Among the latter groups, several members have become Norwegian citizens, or wish to become so, and picture a future in Norway. The Indonesian members are also distinguished from other national groups by having a very active national-religious community that arranges social and religious activities. Many of the Indonesian members of MST want to increase their knowledge about Islam and organize and participate regularly in Islamic educational activities that take place within their national-religious community. Since the Indonesian members of MST are active

and engaged seekers of Islamic knowledge, I interviewed five women from this group. The Indonesian interviewees' backgrounds are representative of the Indonesian members of MST. However, as a quite homogenous group, they cannot be said to represent the rest of the members of this multinational local Islamic institution.

The other five interviewees from MST, Anna, Barbro, Camilla, Guro and Julie, have more diverse backgrounds. They were in the early 20s, mid-30s or somewhere between during the interviews and had different countries of origin: four of them were born in African countries and one in Scandinavia. Some of them had come to Norway as refugees or asylum seekers alone or together with family members and had lived here for approximately 10 years or more. Others had moved to Trondheim with their husbands and/or family for educational or professional reasons and had only lived here for two to three years when the interviews took place. Anna, Camilla and Guro were married and had children. Julie was married but did not have children. Barbro was unmarried and lived with siblings.

Anna's, Barbro's, Camilla's, Guro's and Julie's backgrounds are characteristic, but maybe not representative, of the women members of MST. Characteristic because they have different nationalities and/or cultural origins, they moved to Trondheim for various reasons, they are in different life situations and their level of involvement in MST's activities varies, in line with other female members of the institution. However, since they are selected as informants because they fulfil the criteria of being "young," they cannot be said to represent all the women of the MST institution since they are of all ages.

From Mevlana, I interviewed three women, Kathrine, Mai and Lene. Two of them were under the age of 20, while one was in her late 20s during the interviews. All identify as Kurds from Turkey. Kathrine and Mai lived with their parents and siblings, while Lene, who was a single mother, lived with her children and had less than a handful of relatives present in Trondheim. Kathrine and Mai have lived most, or all, of their lives in Trondheim. One was born here, while the other had moved to Norway from Turkey with her family as a child. Lene moved to Norway as an adult with her husband at the time and had lived here less than 10 years. The interviewees from Mevlana have similar backgrounds as other women their age at the institution. Many of the female members in their late 20s or older were born in Turkey and had lived a substantial part of their life there. Among the younger ones, it is equally common to have been born in Norway as in Turkey. All of them have strong ties to Turkey in the form of family members, relatives and friends who live there.

The informants from AOB were Oda, Petra and Nina. Oda was under the age of 20, while Petra and Nina were in their 20s during the interviews. Oda and Petra lived with their

parents and siblings in Trondheim. Nina had established a family of her own and lived together with her husband and children. In addition, she had parents and siblings present in Trondheim. Petra and Nina were born in Iraq but fled the country at a young age together with their families. Oda was not born in Iraq but identifies as an Iraqi like her family members. The interviewees came to Norway with their families as young girls. Compared to the other Iraqi members of AOB, the women's background can be said to be representative for the younger generations of Iraqis within the institution.

3.8.4. Observations

I have used (field) observations to gain knowledge about how Muslim women in Trondheim interact with other Muslims in various activities and situations to increase their knowledge about Islam. Furthermore, have I used observations to gain knowledge about the women's lived Islam, meaning how they practice Islam and live as Muslims in Trondheim. Observation is a qualitative method that aims to create a deeper understanding of the phenomenon under study (Holme and Solvang 1996: 15). It has been pointed out that one of the challenges with the method is to select situations where the research questions' focus can be observed. In this study, I have used observation as a method for various situations. My use of the method is therefore best described as a process that includes different phases of descriptive, focused and "going-along" observations (Flick 2002: 140-142).

In 2010, I approached various local Islamic institutions, Muslim organizations and groups in Trondheim through emails, visits and meetings as well as by using my network at MST. In the first half of 2010, I participated in various arrangements in MST's mosque and in arrangements held outside the mosque that involved MST members. Here I met and talked with a variety of members from the institution. From October 2010 to January 2011, I made *descriptive observations* of activities held in the established local Islamic institutions. This included Qur'an and Islam classes for children held by female teachers, weekly meetings, monthly lectures and various celebrations held within the mosques. In addition, I met and talked to women and men affiliated with local Muslim organizations and groups about themselves and their activities. The purposes of the descriptive observations were to orient myself in the various local Islamic institutional fields, to get an overview of their activities (religious and social) and to establish contacts. The non-specific descriptions these observations provided informed my selection of relevant Islamic educational settings to observe in more depth. Furthermore, it

informed my knowledge and presentation of the various local Islamic fields and thus my overall analyses (Flick 2002: 136, 140-141; see Chapter 4).

Two Islamic educational activities stood out as relevant to observe: the Sister Group's meetings within MST and Mevlana's Friday activities for women. From May 1, 2011 to May 13, 2012, I made *focused observations* on the Sister Group, an Islamic study group for women, which held weekly meetings at MST's mosque (see sections 4.1.4, 4.2.3, 4.5-4.5.2 and 6.2). From January 20 to March 2, 2012, I made *focused observations* of Mevlana's Friday activities for women. These weekly activities gathered female members from the institution for collective performances of religious rituals, lectures about Islam and social mingling (see sections 4.3.2 and 6.6).

The Sister Group's meetings were selected since the group and I had corresponding "target groups": Muslim women in Trondheim who were in search of Islamic knowledge. It was also the only Islamic educational activity that regularly gathered women within MST's mosque during the period 2010-2012. Mevlana's Friday activities for women was selected since it was the activity that gathered most female members in the institution weekly for collective rituals and lectures about Islam from autumn to spring 2011/2012. It was also the only Islamic educational activity that any of the three main women informants from Mevlana engaged in during the time span. AOB did not offer Islamic educational activities to their women members from 2010 to 2012. Because of this, I did not make focused observations of any of its activities.

The purpose of the focused observations was to gain detailed knowledge about how and why Muslim women in Trondheim interact with other Muslim women to gain knowledge about Islam and what sources and methods they use in these situations. It provided specific descriptions of the form and content of the Sister Group's meetings and Mevlana's Friday activities for women. The specific descriptions informed my research questions in various ways. They provided new material and information about Muslim women's collective searches for knowledge and their collective sources and methods to Islam. Moreover, they supplemented materials provided by the qualitative interviews with some of the main informants. In the interviews, the women talked and reflected about what sources and methods they used in their individual and collective quests for Islamic knowledge. With the specific descriptions the focused observations provided, I had the possibility to flesh out the women's descriptions of what they were doing within these collective educational settings and to look for correspondences and disagreements in what they women said they were doing and what I could observe being done. The focused observations also helped me formulate specific questions about the women's collective quests for Islamic knowledge. This informed my development

and individual adjustment of the interview guides that I used during the second round of interviews with the main informants (Flick 2002: 140-142).

For more than a year, I made observations of the Sister Group's meetings. Mevlana's Friday activities for women, on the other hand, I observed less than six weeks. The discrepancy in time spent observing each educational activity was due to the activities' structure, content and language as well as my access to information within each group. The Sister Group was in its initial phase and evolving when I got access to its meetings in May 2011. The year I observed its meetings, the meetings proceeded from being unstructured to become well-structured as the group evolved, became more organized and developed a core of regular members. Since the Sister Group is an Islamic study group driven by and for women, it was relevant to follow the group's meetings over a longer period because it evolved around some of my main research questions, including *How do Muslim women in Trondheim interact to gain knowledge about Islam? What types of Islamic knowledge do they search for and why?* and *What sources and methods to Islam do they use in their collective quest for knowledge and how and* why? During the year I observed the Sister Group's meetings, the group developed a stable structure and a type of canon of Islamic sources and methods that its members agreed upon. All these processes were observable and accessible to me since the group held it meetings in Norwegian and/or English.

Mevlana arranged several Islamic educational activities for its members. These educational activities were, however, less accessible to me since they were held in Turkish or Kurdish, which I do not speak or understand. Because of this, I chose to make observations of the activity that gathered the most women weekly and to make thorough preparations before I started my observations. Through conversations with key persons and participants in Mevlana's Friday activities for women, I gained information about the activities' structure, contents and purpose. For this reason, I was much more informed and prepared for what I could expect to observe during these activities. This made it easier for me to narrow down and focus my observations early on. Since I could only observe the rituals, actions and interactions that took place within these activities, I needed someone to talk to during the meetings who could translate parts of what they talked about and discussed. The woman who functioned as my gatekeeper into these activities usually took on the role as my personal translator. Yet, in situations when she was occupied, other participants voluntarily stepped in and took her role. My gatekeeper was also very helpful in complementing my observational notes by answering my questions and telling or mailing me more detailed notes about the contents of the Islamic lectures that were held during these activities.

The Friday activities in Mevlana were well established and organized when I made the observations. Due to this and my preparations, I rather quickly got an overview of the Friday activities' structure and contents and thereby what sources and methods to Islam were used in these meetings. My lacking language(s) skills limited my access to detailed information about the Friday activities' contents and thus what information I could deduce from the observations. Because of this, I realized quite early on that the material in the form of specific descriptions of Muslim women's sources and methods to Islam that I could produce from these focused observations was limited since the material soon started to replicate earlier descriptions and thus reached a form of saturation (Stausberg 2011: 389). Instead of continuing with the focused observations of the Friday activities, I ended them after six weeks and gained more information about them through conversations and interviews with participants and key persons. Ethical considerations underlay my decision to make fewer observations on Mevlana's Friday activities than the Sister Group's meeting as well. In the Sister Group, I mastered the spoken languages and could follow the group's activities and discussions without help from other participants. In the Friday activities, however, I occupied both the time and the attention of those who voluntarily helped me with explanations and translations. In this way, my presence disturbed these women's engagement in the Friday activities more than it did within the Sister Group. Thus, to limit my interruption in regard to these women's level of involvement in the activities, I limited my presence in the activities.

From January 2011 to July 2012, parallel with the focused observations, I "*went along*" with participants to various arrangements and activities and spent time "hanging out" with them. I accompanied the women to the different mosques and the lectures, seminars and celebrations held within them. Moreover, I attended parties for brides, weddings and other social and religious celebrations. I visited several of the women's homes and invited them to visit me and just hung out in various settings. In April 2012, I attended Islam Net's annual Peace Conference in Oslo together with some of the participants in the Sister Group and my supervisor, Ulrika. In June of that same year, I attended an evening lecture held by an international Salafi preacher invited to Trondheim by Islam Net with the help of the Sister Group and MSAT. Observations I made during the "going-along" phase provided me with both non-specific and specific descriptions of what it is like to live as a Muslim and practice Islam in Trondheim. Those observation also provided descriptions of how and in which situations knowledge about Islam is made relevant for the women in this study. This means that these observations deepened my knowledge about why Muslim women need knowledge about Islam and in which situations and, furthermore, what it is like to gain this knowledge and practice Islam in Trondheim.

My level of participation in the observations varied between and within the different phases of the observation. In the beginning and the descriptive phase of the observations, I approached the local Islamic institutions and Muslim organizations and their arrangements and activities. In this phase I approached different persons, established contacts to gain information and access to various activities and was active initiating contact. However, when I attended specific activities, such as Friday sermons, meetings and lectures within the mosques, I took the role as the passive observer who observed the situations without engaging in them.

During the focused observations in Mevlana's Friday activities, I played a similar role. In the beginning, I actively introduced my research project and myself. In the social sessions that followed these activities, I actively mingled, approached and talked to different participants and answered their questions and in this way continued the self-presentation. However, during the religious and educational parts of these activities, when the women were performing rituals, were reciting from the Qur'an and were being lectured about Islam, I did not participate and only observed what they did. Yet, I was not entirely passive since I sat with the women and communicated, though in a whispery tone, with whomever functioned as my personal translator(s).

In the Sister Group's meetings, I participated more in the activities. This group gathered fewer participants than Mevlana's Friday activities, and as a study group it demanded more involvement and engagement from its participants, including me. If I had only been passively observing their activities, my inactivity would probably have influenced these activities more than when I tried to blend in and do what I felt was expected from me a researcher. In the educational parts of the Sister Group's meetings, I could ask questions to the group about the topic they were discussing or the sources they were using without disturbing their activities since they expected me to do that. The trick was to find the right moments when it felt natural to ask questions or the moments when my questions would not interrupt or end the processes I was there to observe. As a study group driven by and for women, the women talked, discussed and asked and answered each other questions all the time. They also asked me questions in relation to my disciplinary (and personal) background. In these situations, I provided short answers to the questions I knew the answers to and offered to come back with answers to the ones I could not answer. Thus, my participation in the form of questions and sometimes answers made me blend in more than stand out from the group. However, even though I was active within the Sister Group meetings, both they and I were aware that we did not participate on equal terms or for the same reasons. They were there to learn more about Islam. I was there to learn more about how and why they search for knowledge about Islam. So, even though I

influenced the Sister Group's meetings with my presence, questions and answers, I tried to limit my influence on the content and structure of their meetings. This means that I did not get involved in the women's discussions about what topics they would study next, what activities they should engage in or how they should organize their meetings, nor did I hold presentations about Islam like the other participants did or introduce them to any "new" Islamic sources. Sometimes, I brought my Norwegian translation of the Qur'an to the meetings because the group had only one copy of it to share. In these situations, the women seldom used it as source but rather as an example of a Qur'an translation to compare other translations to. Or, they compared the Norwegian translation of the *sura*s with the meaning of the *sura*s as it was expressed in the Qur'an commentary, *tafsir*, they used. When the women prayed, I watched. When they recited from the Qur'an, I listened and watched. Sometimes they encouraged me to read small passages from the Qur'an. In these situations, I stumbled through the phonetic letters with varied success with their backing and encouragement. In the social sessions of their meetings, I participated in line with the rest. I listened to the women's stories; shared from my personal life; asked questions; answered questions; brought cake, tea or coffee and shared a nice time. I was included in the group as a friend and a "non-Muslim sister," yet we were all aware that I was there as a researcher with the purpose of studying Muslim women's knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam.

My level of participation also varied in the "going-along" phase of the observation. In social settings, I was involved in various activities in line with other participants and did what they did – shared a snack at a café, got involved in talks and discussions, worked out at the gym, went for a walk, etc. If invited to a wedding, I brought a gift. If invited to festivals, parties or celebrations, I usually brought a cake or a snack, like the other participants did. When I went along to arrangements at the mosques, my level of participation varied depending upon the activities. During seminars, lectures and Friday sermons I listened and observed. During prayer, I watched and sometimes looked after the women's children. In mingling situations at the mosque, I mingled.

I wrote field notes after the observations, never during them. Even though I practiced overt observations, I was afraid that writing notes would attract more attention to my role as a researcher and maybe restrict or negatively influence the other participants' involvement in the activities by constantly reminding them of being watched. I tried to write the field notes as close to the observations as possible. When this was impossible, I wrote notes I could use to write out the field notes later. The field notes included descriptions from the observations in addition to my reflections, thoughts and questions about what I had observed. To prepare for an

observation, and particularly the focused observations, I read through earlier field notes. The field notes I produced after the descriptive and the going-along observations provided me with unspecified descriptions of the situations I attended or participated in. I have used these descriptions to deepen my knowledge about my "field universe" and how it is to live as a practicing Muslim in search of knowledge about Islam in Trondheim. I do not quote from this material or present "raw data" from it in this thesis. This because it sometimes involves persons in addition to those who have consented to participate in this project. Yet, it has very much informed my understanding and presentations of the local Islamic institutions and their activities. The specific descriptions of educational activities that I produced after the focused observations are used more directly in this thesis. The participants within these groups have both given me access and consent to observe their activities and to use my findings in this thesis. Much of my presentations of the Sister Group and Mevlana's Friday activities are based on these since they include descriptions of activities, interactions, discussions and sources and methods used within these educational settings.

3.8.5 Interviews

I have used semi-structured interviews to produce material about young Muslim women's knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam in Trondheim. A semi-structured interview is a qualitative interview built around some main themes and questions but with an open ending. This makes it possible for the interviewer and the interviewee to bring up new themes and questions during the interview and together "create" nuanced and complex material (Bremborg 2011: 310-313). I have interviewed young women to gain knowledge about their individual sources and methods to Islam in Trondheim and how the context of Trondheim may influence their knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam. Moreover, I have interviewed some women together with their mothers to gain knowledge about family and generational differences when it comes to Islamic sources, methods and practices. Finally, I have interviewed key persons within local Islamic institutions to gain knowledge about the institutions' sources and methods to Islam and how knowledge about Islam is (re)produced, maintained and transmitted within the respective institutions. In this way, I have used semi-structured interviews to produce new material about Muslim women's knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam in Trondheim and local Islamic methodologies and educational activities. Furthermore, I have used the method in combination with and as a complement to my observations.

The 16 main informants gave their consent to participate in two semi-structured interviews. The first round of interviews took place between March 15, 2011 and February 11,

2012[18]. Two of the women wished to be interviewed together, and the rest were interviewed separately. One of the women wanted me to merge the content of interviews one and two due to a busy schedule. This was a woman I recruited from my network in MST and whom I knew quite well before the interview, so I had the possibility to comply with her wish[19]. One woman wanted to have another participant in this project present during our first interview because she was afraid that her Norwegian and/or English was not good enough. Although it was good enough, I complied with her wish. Together the women and I found suitable dates, times and places for the interviews. The lengths of the first interviews varied from 1 hour and 7 minutes to 2 hours and 44 minutes; however, only four of them exceeded two hours. The purpose of the first round of interviews was to gain more knowledge about the young Muslim women and how they define themselves and live as Muslims in Trondheim. Consequently, they provided material about the women's backgrounds, their self-presentations and self-definitions as Muslims as well as their individual sources and methods to Islam (see Chapter 5). They also provided material about what makes up the context of Trondheim and the women's capital within their various Islamic- and non-Islamic fields. The material informed my analyses in the form of which Islamic and non-Islamic fields I have included in this thesis (see Chapters 4, 6 and 7). Furthermore, it informed my development of the second interview guide and made it possible to adjust it individually to each woman.

From October 31, 2011 to June 6, 2012, I conducted the second round of semi-structured interviews[20]. Two of the 16 main informants were prevented from participating in the second interview. Three of the women were interviewed together with their mothers. Due to their wishes, two of the women were again interviewed together, while the rest were interviewed separately. The interviews lasted from an hour to almost three hours, where eight of them exceeded two hours. In the second interviews, I wanted more detailed information about the women's religious practices and the knowledge and the sources that precede and influence these practices. I wanted to learn more about the women's individual sources and methods to Islam in addition to their views, evaluations and reflections around these. The women were also asked to talk about their relationship to Islamic denominations, law schools, other religious authorities and local Islamic institutions and Muslim organizations and their views of these. Inspired by

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[18] The exact dates for the interviews were March 15, 2011; March 18, 2011; March 28, 2011; March 30, 2011; April 14, 2011; May 25, 2011; June 6, 2011; June 7, 2011; July 4, 2011; September 21, 2011; September 28, 2011; September 30, 2011; December 5, 2011; and February 11, 2012.
[19] This interview took place April 2, 2012.
[20] The exact dates for the interviews were: October 31, 2011; November 15, 2011; December 16, 2011; March 8, 2012; March 13, 2012; March 18, 2012; April 3, 2012; April 15, 2012; April 17, 2012; May 13, 2012; June 1, 2012; and June 6, 2012.

the prevailing theories of individualization, the women were asked to reflect upon different ways their minority situation in Trondheim may influence their knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam and about their views of various types of sources to Islam, including the media's presentation of Islam and Muslims. In the second interview, I also wanted a family and generational perspective on Islam, Islamic practices and knowledge acquisition. In relation to this, the women were asked questions about their parents' relationship to Islam, religious practices and Islamic sources and authorities and to reflect upon similarities and differences between their parents' and their own relationship to these topics. For three of the women who had their mothers present in Trondheim, the second interview was designed as a mother-daughter interview. During it, the mothers and daughters were introduced to the same topics and questions and asked to share their individual answers, to compare them with each other and to reflect upon individual similarities and differences. In this way, the second interviews provided me with complex and nuanced material about the women's knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam, generational differences and the local context's influence on these processes.

In 2012 and 2014, I interviewed key persons in the form of leaders, imams or teachers from the three local Sunni Islamic institutions, MST, Mevlana and DIC, about their institutions' educational activities and Islamic methodologies. These persons were all involved in religious educational activities within their respective mosques. In 2012, I conducted two regular semi-structured interviews with two key persons in Mevlana[21]. From DIC, I interviewed the same key person three times, once in 2012[22] and twice in 2014[23]. In addition, we had several less-formal conversations about the mosque's methodologies and methods. From MST, I had the pleasure of having no less than eight semi-structured interviews/formal conversations with the same key person about Islamic methodologies in general and MST's methodology and methods in particular. Four of the interviews took place in 2012[24], and the rest were conducted in 2014[25]. I refer to the methods used during these meetings as semi-structured interviews/formal conversations because they were based on my interview guide; however, I let the interviewee talk about and discuss the themes and questions in the guide in a self-chosen pace and order. In this way, the key person could add extra information about Islamic methodologies in general and elaborate on the mosque's official methods and hermeneutics where it was felt needed. I did not conduct any interviews in 2013 since I was on maternity leave from December 2012

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[21] The interviews with key persons from Mevlana took place March 12 and April 12, 2012.
[22] The interview took place November 10, 2012.
[23] The interviews took place August 29 and September 18, 2014.
[24] The interviews took place November 2, 9 and 17 and December 1, 2012.
[25] The interviews took place on August 23, 26 and 28 and September 8, 2014.

until November 2013. The key persons interviews provided me with material about the local Islamic institutions' relationship to Islamic denominations, law schools and movements as well as the key persons' reflections upon similarities and differences in relation to the local Islamic institutions. Furthermore, they provided material about the local Islamic institutions' Islamic methodologies and how they produce, maintain and transmit knowledge about Islam to their members, specifically female members. This material informed my presentations of the local Islamic fields and their methodologies in Chapter 4.

The Shiite Islamic institution AOB did not and does not have a permanent imam in their congregation, nor did they offer religious educational activities for their adult members during my time in the field. Because of this, it was difficult to identify key persons in relation to the institution's sources and methods to Islam or its educational activities. Thus, my material on AOB's methodology is the product of meetings and conversations with persons in leading positions, meetings and conversations with ordinary male and female members in addition to interviews with the study informants affiliated with the mosque.

To prepare for the interviews, I developed interview guides with the main themes and questions in addition to follow-up questions that I wanted to include in the interviews (Bremborg 2011: 314-316). The interview guides were handed out, or emailed to the interviewees beforehand, to inform them about the interviews' contents and to give them a chance to prepare. The interviewees were also given a short description of how I planned to use the guides as templates and not as strict questionnaires to be followed from A to Z. Before the first interview, the main women informants received identical interview guides (see Appendix 3). The second interview guides sprung from the same template (see Appendix 4) but were informed by the first interviews and developed and tailored to each woman and the interview situation, including the mother-daughter interviews. Still, they oriented around the same themes and questions. The interview guides to the key-person interviews oriented around the same themes and questions (see Appendix 5) but were developed to fit the interviewee's respective local Islamic institution and his/her position in it.

To record the interviews, I obtained the interviewees' consent to use a digital voice recorder (see Appendix 6). As soon as possible after the interviews, I transcribed or wrote synopses of them. The full transcriptions are as close to the spoken language(s) in the interviews as possible. The synopses, on the other hand, contain a rich description of the interviews' structure and content. Here I chronologically summarize the themes, topics and questions introduced and talked about during an interview and the interviewee's and my responses and answers to these. Included in some synopses are full transcriptions of parts of the interview that

deal directly with my research questions and that I wanted to highlight and report as accurately as possible for my analyses (Harvey 2011: 238; Bremborg 2011: 316-317; Flick 2002: 171-172).

3.8.6 Literature studies and the historical perspective as a method

To gain knowledge about the Islamic law schools and Islamic movements and their methodologies, I used literature studies and read about Islamic hermeneutics and methods and their formation and development. From this material, I have been able to provide a historical survey of how Islamic methodologies relate to traditional Islamic institutions, schools of law and modern Islamic movements, which I use to describe how traditional and modern Islamic methodologies relate to the local Islamic fields in Trondheim (see Chapter 4). This means that I have used literature studies to gain historical and emic perspectives on Islamic knowledge, knowledge acquisition and methodologies in relation to which I will see the women's sources and methods to Islam and discuss the theories of individualization. In this way, I use the historical perspective as a method to assess continuity and change of Islamic methodologies.

There are many details in the history of the development of Islamic methodologies that I will not enter. Instead, I have tried to narrow it down by focusing on the basic classical and modern Islamic methodologies that pertain to the local Islamic fields in which the women engage (see section 4.3).

3.8.7 Methodological and ethical considerations

The interviews with the main informants and the key persons were held in Norwegian, English or a mix of both according to the interviewees' preferences. The mother-daughter interviews were held in Norwegian and the mothers' first languages with the daughters as translators. I chose the daughters as translators over professional interpreters to avoid the influence a new and unfamiliar person would have had on the interview situation. The outcome of an interview is dependent upon its participants and their roles, the scenes and the topic raised – in other words, the interview situation (Holme and Solvang 1996: 100-101). The information the interviewees allow the researcher to gain access to are always situational and may vary a great deal depending upon who is present during the interview situation (Berremann 1962). Over time, I managed to establish trustful relationships with the main informants, some of whom introduced me to their mothers and agreed to participate in a mother-daughter interview (see section 5.3). This allowed me to carry out the semi-structured interviews in relaxed settings even though the purpose of them was formal. During the mother-daughter interviews, I wanted

to create a setting that invited the participants to share their answers and experiences and to compare and reflect around individual and generational similarities and differences in regard to Islamic sources and methods (see section 3.8.5). If I had brought a professional interpreter to these interviews, I am afraid that this would have had a negative influence on the social dynamics between the interviewees and the interviewees and me and thus the outcome.

For the same reasons, I did not use a professional interpreter during any of the observations. In most of the situations I observed, I could communicate and interact with the other participants in Norwegian or English. During Mevlana's Friday activities for women, I could speak Norwegian with several of the participants, however I could not independently follow the group discussions and lectures since these were held in Turkish and/or Kurdish. Even though I had the group's permission and consent to observe their activities, I was still a guest and an outsider who influenced the situations just by my presence. To limit my influence on these activities, I chose to use some of the participants as translators instead of involving an external professional interpreter. All participants within a social situation influence it and its social definition. If I had brought a professional interpreter to these activities, I would probably have drawn more attention to my role as a researcher (Denzin and Lincoln 2003: 48-49). I assessed the situation as implying that two "outsiders" would have influenced and disturbed these activities more than my sole presence would. Thus, I choose to use some of the participants as translators and to interview both participants and key persons to gain knowledge about the activities' content.

The interviews were transcribed in the language in which they were held, Norwegian, English or a mix of both (see section 3.8.5). However, all the quotations used in this thesis are reported in English. This means that some of the quotations given in Norwegian have been translated into English by me. Translations involve interpretations and are not unproblematic (Williams 2011: 421-423). If I was going to make a linguistic or conversational analysis of the interviews, I could not have translated them. However, since my analyses have been content- and theme-based, I believe that it has been possible to reproduce the meaning of the quotations even though I have translated some of them to English. My choice to report all quotations in English was made to increase the thesis's readability. To facilitate the reading further, I have removed fillers such as "hm" and "eh" and repetitions of words that do not change the meaning from the quotations (Bremborg 2011: 318-319). A problem in relation to quotations is that the spoken language is quite different from the written language. Several of the interviewees have also been interviewed in their second language. Even though many of them are fully fluent in their second language, not all of them are. This of course influences the quotations since I have

aimed to transcribe the interviews as close to the spoken language as possible. To limit the risk of mistranslations or misunderstanding, all interviewees were given the possibility to read through the thesis's chapters and to check quotations I use from them.

In addition to language, gender has been a methodological consideration during the observations and interviews. The local Islamic fields in Trondheim practice various forms of gender segregation. This means that some of their social and/or religious activities are exclusively for women or men or that women and men do not sit together during these activities but on different sides of the room, or in different rooms. Several researchers have pointed out that the interviewer's or the observer's sex play a significant role in empirical research, particularly in gender-segregated communities. Sex may influence the researcher's access to a field and its participants, her/his relationship with the latter, the information the participants choose to share and thus the outcome of the interview or the observation (Fontana and Frey 2003: 82-84; Angrosino and Mays de Pérez 2003: 118-124). As a woman, it has been unproblematic to get in contact with and gain access to Muslim women and women's activities within the different Islamic fields. Being a woman mingling with other women, it has been easy to blend in. I have had access to formal and informal meetings with the women, such as educational activities, weddings, parties, home visits and to meeting/talking with the women in private. Even though I believe that a male researcher could gain access to formal meetings and educational activities for women, it would probably have been harder for a man to access informal gatherings of women or to meet some of the women in private since this would deviate from established practices within some of the local Islamic fields. That said, I will emphasize that I have not experienced any problems with getting access to male key persons or members within the local Islamic institutions and Muslim organizations. My first contact with some of the local institutions and organizations, and the formal contact with some of them, has been through men. Several men have shared their time and knowledge about their respective institution/organization, volunteered to be interviewed and put me in contact with women within their Islamic field and thus contributed much to the study. The relationships I developed with these men, key persons and regular members, are naturally more professional and formal than the relationships I developed with several of the main female informants, whom I spent more time with and met in more varied settings. The women in this study and I share several of the same qualities: we are women, we live in Trondheim and some of us are in the same age range and life and family situation. This proved to be useful and valuable when I first met with and later developed relational bonds with the women since it gave us some common points of reference and a range of topics to talk about.

During the observations and interviews, and particularly the latter, I asked the women direct questions about Islamic source materials and their use and evaluation of these and their relationships to the Islamic law schools and local and global Islamic authorities. My focus on Islamic methodologies probably influenced the women's relationship to Islamic knowledge and its source materials. A methodological question that rises in relation to this is thus how and to what degree my presence and questions influenced the study's findings. My presence and questions probably made the women more aware of their sources and methods to Islam and made them reflect more over these than they would normally do. One the other hand, my findings show that the women had been occupied with Islamic source materials and had reflected upon and had opinions about these before my entrance into their Islamic fields and lives. As young practicing Muslim women in Trondheim, these women were already involved in various quests for Islamic knowledge – individually, collectively or both – regularly or sporadically. Thus, my research focus and questions did not introduce the women to something completely new or unfamiliar. Still, our conversations and my questions probably made the women reflect more about Islamic sources and particularly their individual relationship to these.

To limit my influence on the women's quests for Islamic knowledge, I used the first interviews to get an overview of their individual sources and methods to Islam through open-ended questions. Then I let the women's answers to these questions inform my development of the second interview guides so that I could adjust and tailor these to each woman. In this way, I could prepare more detailed questions in regard to each woman's sources and methods, and we could continue our conversations about these where they had ended the first time. To avoid missing out on some of their sources and methods, I questioned the women about their relationships to Islamic denominations, law schools, religious authorities and local Islamic institutions and organizations. Some of the questions were informed by material from the first interviews, while others introduced "new" topics. In this way, I encouraged the women to reflect more upon their already-mentioned sources and authorities to Islam at the same time as I asked about their relationship to local and global Islamic sources and authorities. I asked follow-up questions regarding the sources and authorities the women knew and had knowledge of, while I moved on to the next topic if the women were unfamiliar with the source or authority I introduced.

To define consent to participate in a research project as valid, it must be voluntary and informed (NSD 2015b; Bird and Scholes 2011: 87-88; see section 3.8.1). In writing or verbally, institutions, organization, groups and individuals gave their consent to participate in this study. To make sure their consent was informed, I provided them with written and verbal presentations

of the study's objectives, purposes and methods (see section 3.8.1). In situations of observation, I presented the project several times to make sure that everyone was informed about it and my presence. When necessary, such as within Mevlana's Friday activities for women, I got other participants to verbally translate the project description into other languages, such as Turkish, to make sure that the information was accessible to everyone. To avoid breaking the ethical principle of informed and voluntary consent, I let the material produced through the descriptive and going-along phases of the observations inform this thesis more indirectly than the materials produced from the focused observations. This is because the materials from the first observations could involve persons who had not given their consent to participate in this study, while the focused observations were on groups that had given me their consent to observe their activities (see section 3.8.4). All interviewees received the study's information letter as well as a verbal presentation of it. They consented to the interviews and the use of recorder. To keep them informed, I have given them the possibility to read through transcriptions and/or synopses of the interviews, chapter drafts and quotations and have kept them updated about the thesis's progress.

Transparency about transcriptions, synopses, chapter drafts and quotations has been important to keep the participants fully informed about this study and its product. As far as possible, I have given the interviewees access to read through drafts of all the chapters. It has been important for me that the participants could recognize themselves in my accounts of the situations and activities they engaged in and in the quotations I use from them as well as to inform them about how, and in which contexts, these accounts and citations will be used. I did not necessarily expect the interviewees to recognize or agree with my analyses or interpretations (Bird and Scholes 2011: 88-90). Thus, the chapter drafts were followed by instructions of what parts of the thesis I wanted them to comment on and thus allowed them to influence – my descriptions of the situations they participated in and how I quote them. Even though I allowed the participants to comment on my account of situations, activities and how I quote them, I did not allow them to influence or define my research design (Lincoln 1999: 398; see section 3.1.3). My intentions behind sending them the chapter drafts were to keep them informed about the project and to offer them the possibility to speak out about possible misunderstandings or misrepresentations. Informing the participants about how they, or the information they have provided, are presented and used in this thesis does not imply that I favor the "insider perspective" over the "outsider perspective" (see section 3.1.3). It only means that I want to communicate honestly with the participants about the study they have agreed to participate in and in this way make sure that their consent to participate is fully informed (Bird and Scholes

2011: 84-90). For the same reasons, and because I knew that not all participants were fluent in English, I offered to meet them individually to verbally inform them about the parts of the thesis that involved them.

The participants had few comments on the chapter drafts. Those who responded approved my account of situations/activities they had been involved in and how I quoted them. One woman had comments as to the way she had expressed herself in one of the quotations, not my account of it. In the quotation, she originally recited a passage from the Qur'an. She did not think her recitation was precise enough and wanted me to remove it from the sentence. Her input did not change the meaning of the sentence, just the wording. I agreed to delete it to comply with her wish because it was important for her to provide precise answers when she referred to the Qur'an.

Through semi-structured interviews and "going-along" observations, the women informants have shared much information with me – information about my research topics but also personal information. Protecting the participants' privacy and anonymity has been an important ethical priority in this study (Bird and Scholes 2011: 86-87; Bremborg 2011: 320) and has determined my presentation of the women and the information I report about them.

I do not report private information about the women or personal information they have shared with me in confidence (Birds and Scholes 2011: 86), nor do I report personal or public information about the main informants that alone or together with other types of information can be used to identify them. Furthermore, I have avoided reporting too much information about each woman, such as name, exact age, number of children, siblings, occupation, study program and nationality, in situations where these pieces of information could be used as identifiable markers. For instance, some of the women's nationalities are more obvious than others since nationality functions as an organizational principle within some of the local Islamic fields in which they engage: Mevlana (Turks/Kurds), AOB (Iraqis/Afghans) and the Indonesian Muslim Society (Indonesian) (see section 4.1.4). Other women's nationalities are not that self-evident since they engage in Islamic fields that do not organize around nationality, such as the multinational MST and the Sister Group. When the women's nationalities are exposed through their affiliation with one or more Islamic fields, I have chosen to report about it since it has been a relevant factor in my analysis of the women's sources and methods to Islam. However, when the women's nationalities are not obvious but can still be used as a piece of identifiable information, I do not report on it. Thus, some of the women are identified by their nationalities, while others are not.

To further limit the pieces of information I give about each woman, I have chosen an *institutional* over an individual presentation of the main informants (see section 3.8.3). In this way, I can give some descriptions of what characterizes the interviewees from the three local Islamic institutions without attaching too much information to each of them. For the same reason, I sometimes avoid identifying which women I use as examples, such as referring to or quoting by the name I have given them in this thesis. Instead, I refer to them through their institutional field affiliation. Because of this, there are inconsistencies between how I present the female interviewees from MST when it comes to their nationalities. Five of the interviewees from MST are engaged in the Indonesian Muslim Society. Thus, their nationality is reported, while the rest of the MST interviewees' nationalities are not. Two of the Indonesian interviewees are also engaged in the Sister Group. However, to avoid reporting too much information about each woman, I do not connect any of the Indonesian women to the Sister Group by name; instead, in the Sister Group's context I refer to them as Indonesian interviewee X and Y.

Information about nationality may be relevant in a study about Muslim women's sources and methods to Islam in Trondheim since it may influence the women's relationship to Islamic dominations and law schools. Because of this, some may regard it as a flaw that not all women are identified with their nationalities. My main reason for not reporting all women's nationalities has been to protect their anonymity. Thus, I only report on the nationalities that become obvious through field affiliations.

The main informants have been given fictitious names. I have chosen to use names over letters or numbers since I believe that names provide a better tool to maintain the women's subjectivity and to emphasize the women as research *subjects*. All women have been given common but random Norwegian girls' names from A to P. In the context of this thesis, I use Norwegian girls' names as a "neutral" category of names for the women since all of them lived in Trondheim when I produced my materials. I could have given the women names that would have reflected their religious identity or their geographical/cultural backgrounds and still protected their anonymity. However, this would have entailed other challenges: should they be Arabic Muslim girls' names or names popular among Muslim girls in non-Arabic countries such as Turkey or Indonesia? The main informants have diverse backgrounds, and their real names represent various naming customs. Thus, to avoid choosing one custom over another, I chose Norwegian names. This does not mean that I favor Scandinavian names (or cultures) over others, nor that I wish to promote Scandinavian ideas about equality and similarity by giving them Norwegian names and thus overlook religious and cultural differences. Rather, my sole

purpose has been to protect the participants' anonymity. I have informed and presented the women with their fictitious names, and none of them raised objections against my choice of giving them Norwegian names.

Some of the groups and activities I observed and selected interviewees from are rather small and transparent. Because of that, I cannot guarantee all participants full anonymity from each other (Bremborg 2011: 320). For instance, two women were interviewed together, and one woman wanted to have another participant present during our first interview (see section 3.8.5). When I refer to or cite from these interviews, it will be possible for those who were present to identify each other's identities. Moreover, even though I have tried to protect all the interviewees' anonymity, I know that some of them have been open about their participation in interviews with other participants. To protect these women's anonymity, I have been restrictive and selective about what and how much information I give about each informant. Still, the members of the Sister Group know each other's identities, and some have on their own initiative told other members about their involvement in interviews. Thus, even though I have tried to avoid it, I cannot guarantee that it is impossible for members in this group to identify certain interviewees' identities. Despite the risk, I have chosen to refer to specific situations and statements and to use citations that involve members of the Sister Group because these have proven important for my analysis. I believe it is defensible to do this since the Sister Group as a whole, and individuals within the group, have consented to participate in this study as subjects of observations and/or interviewees. As well as because the interviewees have been given possibilities to read through chapter drafts that show how they or the information they have provided are presented and used in this thesis.

Since I have openly localized this study to the Norwegian city of Trondheim (see section 1.1.3), I have chosen to present the local Islamic fields – mosques and Muslim organizations, associations and groups – by their real names. In my analysis it has been relevant and necessary to report information about the local Islamic fields' organizational structures, profiles, members, activities and Islamic methodologies. It would therefore have been impossible to anonymize the local Islamic institutions when I identify Trondheim as the context of this study. In Norway, information about religious and life-stance communities' names and numbers of members is public and easily accessible (Regjeringen.no 2018b; Regjeringen.no 2019; Statistics Norway 2019). Thus, the local Islamic institutions' identities would have been easily revealed after some quick searches on the Internet. I have gained consent from mosque representatives and key persons within the mosques to identify the respective local Islamic institutions by name. And I have gained consent to identify the other Islamic fields some of the

women engage in, including the Sister Group, Islam Net and the Indonesian Muslim Society in Trondheim, by the female participants and interviewees from these groups.

Some of the key persons within the local Islamic institutions were willing to be identified with their real names and positions. Still, I have chosen to anonymize them to minimize any potential consequences and risks their participation in this project might entail. In this study, I shed light upon the local Islamic institutions' sources and methods to Islam and how these can relate to the Islamic traditions of knowledge and Islamic methodologies. I do not expose any confidential information about the institutions but display and categorize sources and methods widespread and well known within them. Even though I do believe that the key persons would have faced minimal consequences and risks of being identified with their institution's sources and methods to Islam, I cannot control how such information can be used or misused by other agents, today or in the future. Because of this, I will not identify key persons by their real names or exact positions but instead refer to them as key persons or representatives from the different mosques.

Chapter 4. The Islamic fields as methodologies

4.1 An emic perspective: Islamic methodologies

The term "Islamic fields" refers to social fields the women engage in due to their Muslim identities and where they meet and interact with other Muslims around religious activities (see section 3.6). In this chapter, I will give a presentation of the women's Islamic fields in Trondheim and these fields' different *methodologies* for gaining knowledge about Islam. In other words, this chapter contains presentations of the local Islamic institutions, Muslim organizations and groups in which the informants engage and *how* knowledge about Islam is acquired within these. Islamic methodologies for gaining knowledge about what Islamic faith is and what it requires in terms of rituals, practices, personal ethics, morality and social interactions are thus the focus of this chapter. What sources and methods the women use to gain knowledge about Islam will influence what other elements they choose to activate from the Islamic basket. Thus, by focusing on Islamic source materials and methodologies, this chapter contains a description of fundamental elements in the Islamic basket (see section 3.6).

The women are engaged in the following local Islamic fields in their quest for knowledge:
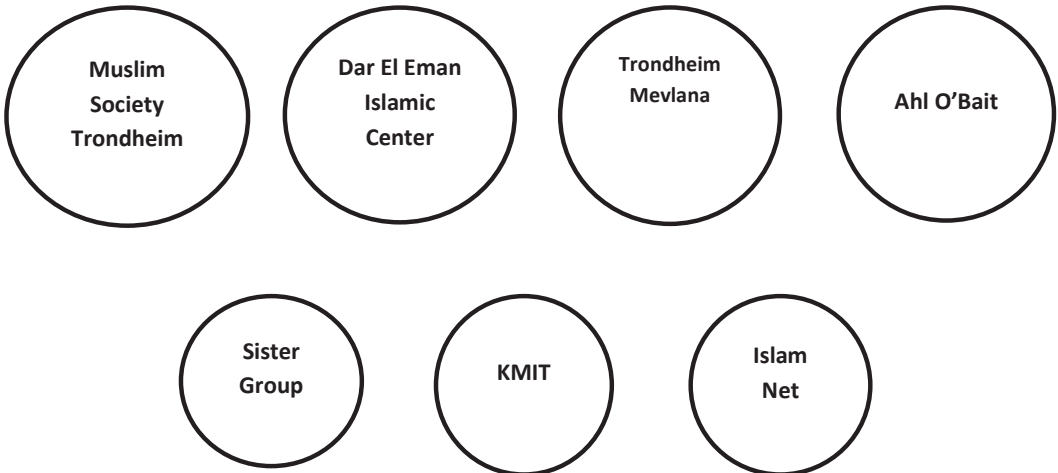
Det Muslimske Samfunnet i Trondheim/Muslim Society Trondheim (MST), Trondheim Mevlana Kultur Forening/Trondheim Mevlana Cultural Organization (Mevlana), Dar El Eman Islamic Center (DIC) and Ahl O'Bait (AOB) make up the women's local Islamic *institutional fields* (see section 3.6). These fields and their sources and methods to Islam will

be presented in sections three and four of this chapter. Søstergruppen/the Sister Group (SG), Indonesisk Muslimsk Samfunn i Trondheim/the Indonesian Muslim Society in Trondheim (KMIT) and Islam Net (IN) make up the women's other Islamic fields. The women's sources and methods to Islam within these fields will be presented in section five of this chapter.

4.1.1 Knowledge and practice

The informants' knowledge and practice of Islam is closely interwoven in that they need knowledge about Islam to practice Islam. This means that what they choose to activate from the "Islamic basket" is dependent upon their knowledge about its "content" and the sources and methods they use to gain this knowledge in addition to individual, contextual, historical and situational factors. The women's lived Islam in Trondheim is made up by faith and everyday practices such as rituals, ethics and social interactions. To gain knowledge about what Islamic faith is and what it requires in terms of rituals, personal ethics, morality and social interactions, the women need knowledge about what they believe is the will of God. According to the Islamic faith, the will of God is expressed through Islamic law, called *sharia*.

Literally, *sharia* can be translated as "the way to the watering place" and refers to the path Muslims should follow to follow God's guidance (Roald 2001: 102). Like there are many "ways to the watering place," there are also many paths that can be said to be in accordance with the will of God. According to Islamic faith, all humans are responsible for their own actions and will be judged upon these by God. On the Day of Judgment, everyone must face the divine will in relation to which they will receive reward or punishment. However, Muslims should not only take responsibility for themselves. The Qur'an encourages everyone to "promote the good and prohibit the evil," which has been interpreted to mean that everyone should engage in establishing a proper public order. As law, *sharia* is therefore important for the Muslim individual and the Muslim community as guidance on how to create a good life and how to reach salvation (Roald 2004: 67, 111; Waines 2003: 63-64).

Sharia embraces two categories of regulations, which are often referred to as *sharia*'s two dimensions: the vertical and the horizontal. The vertical dimension covers the spiritual relationship between humans and God, where humans are servants who should obey their Master. Regulations in this dimension are referred to as the individual's ritual obligations, *ibadat* ("service to God"), and include among other things the Five Pillars of Islam and the ritual purity. The Five Pillars of Islam are made up by the Islamic creed, *shahada*; prayer, *salat*; fasting, *sawm*; alms, *zakat;* and the pilgrimage, *hajj*. The horizontal dimension covers

the relationship between humans. Regulations in the social sphere are referred to as inter-human relationships, *mu'amalat*, and embrace all aspects related to political, economic and social life, such as regulations for behavior, food, dress[26], marriage, divorce, inheritance, etc. (Hjärpe 1992: 8-10; Roald 2001: 105; Vogt 2005: 80-84; Wains 2003: 65).

The informants' lived Islam is made up by elements from the ritual obligations, *ibadat*, and from the inter-human relations, *mu'amalat*. Thus, to be able to live as Muslim and practice Islam in Trondheim, the women need knowledge about regulations from both categories. Several studies about Islam and Muslims in Europe tend to focus on Muslims' relationship to the ritual obligations, *ibadat*, only. For instance, *The Anthropology of Islam Reader* (Kreinath 2012) approaches Muslims' religious practices in the form of the four last pillars – prayer, fasting, alms and pilgrimage – from different perspectives. In this way, it contributes to a wider understanding of Muslims' relation to the ritual obligations and how and why these are practiced. Some of the authors in the *Reader* offer prominent descriptions of how the ritual prayer, *salat*, can function at different levels. The ritual prayer can be a mean to discipline one's pious self and strengthen a person's faith, *iman* (Mahmood 2012), and it can generate a form of solidarity among practicing Muslims and be a mark of commitment to the Islamic dogmas (Henkel 2012). Nevertheless, since the authors mainly deal with the last four pillars, and religious festivals, the *Reader* can only provide more knowledge about *parts* of Muslims' lived Islam.

According to Islamic beliefs, *sharia* manifests the will of God, as it is expressed through the Qur'an and the *sunna* of the Prophet Muhammad, as recorded in the *hadith* literature. Within the Islamic tradition of knowledge, there have been, and still are, numbers of opinions and views and comprehensive discussions about *sharia*'s "nature" or "status," its contents, its sources and what can be defined as valid and appropriate methods for deducing "God's guidance" from these sources. Various Islamic scholars have different opinions on what *sharia* is and how it developed. Some sees it as the product of centuries of legal interpretations, *fiqh*, and thus as a flexible law (Engineer 1992: 1-3, 6-17; An-Na'im 2008: 2-

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[26] According to classical Islamic jurisprudence, *fiqh*, some regulations concerning "dress" are categorized as *ibadat*, while others are categorized as *mu'amalat*. Dress regulations that come under *ibadat* refer to rules for covering the body during prayer and address both men and women. Regulations concerning dress that come under *mu'amalat* refer to "rulings that govern a man's 'gaze' at a woman prior to marriage" (Mir-Hosseini 2007: 2). When I refer to regulations concerning dress as *mu'amalat* in this thesis, I refer to dress regulations in the social sphere and not during prayer. This may be a simplification due to previous and ongoing discussions about the status of regulations that pertain to how women should dress in public. For instance, in Iran, Muslim jurists, scholars and clerics have positioned differently in discussions on whether it is a ritual obligation for women to "wear" the *hijab*, meaning covering all parts of her body except her hands and face, or not, and have used various arguments explaining and legitimizing their positions (Mir-Hosseini 2007). Still, I will not enter these discussions but stick to the categorization where "dress" comes under *mu'amalat*.

3, 9-20; Roald 2001: 101-103). Others see it as more static law, and "as the solid foundation from which *fiqh* arose and as consisting of the revealed laws found in the Koran and *Sunna*" (Roald 2001: 103). *Sharia*'s contents have also been, and still are, a matter of discussion for Islamic scholars. Some, such as sheikh Yusuf al-Qaradawi, an earlier member of the Muslim Brotherhood(MB), believe that *sharia* is made up by both specific and general rules and regulations. By specific rules, he means those rules and regulations that are mentioned in the Qur'an and *sunna*, while general rules and regulations refer to those matters that are not dealt with in these scriptures and that are dependent on and influenced by factors such as time, place and stage of development as well as social, political and other circumstances (al-Qaradawi 1995: 104-105; Roald 2001: 98-99). Other scholars emphasize the ethical dimension of the Qur'an and argue that Islamic rules should be seen as moral rules, not legal ones (Roald 2001: 100).

Throughout the history of Islam there have been various opinions, views and discussions about what the Islamic faith requires in the form of practices and ethics and how Muslims, particularly Islamic scholars, can deduce God's guidance from the Islamic sources. Consequently, numbers of various methodologies of how to deal with these issues evolved. Many of these methodologies became institutionalized through the Islamic law schools, *madhahib*. In the early history of Islam, there were many different law schools, which represented different views and opinions on *sharia* and how *sharia* could be deduced from the Islamic source materials. Over time, some theories and methods, in other words, methodologies, won more acceptance and support than others did, and the numbers of law schools decreased. Today, there are four accepted and approved Sunni Islamic law schools: the Hanafi, the Maliki, the Shafii and the Hanbali schools. The different law schools have different approaches and use different methods to deduce *sharia* from its sources, thus they represent different scholarly methodologies. *Sharia*'s main sources are the Qur'an, *sunna*, analogy, *qiyas* and consensus, *ijma.* These sources are referred to as the roots of jurisprudence*, usul al-fiqh*. Within the branch of Shia Islam, there are other law schools. The Twelver Shia's (*ithna ashariyya'*s*)* Jafari law school is the largest. Shia Islamic law schools represent other methodologies to deduce the will of God from the Islamic sources (Roald 2001: 104-107; Vishanoff 2011; Hallaq 2009a).

For a considerable period, the norm was to belong to, or follow, one specific law school and its legal interpretations, *fiqh*. This changed with modernity. Modern Islamic movements such as the Muslim Brotherhood and Salafism do relate to *usul al-fiqh* like the scholarly methodologies but in their own ways and by using their own methods. This means

that they use other approaches and methods to deduce *sharia* from its sources. In this way, modern Islamic movements represent Islamic methodologies other than the traditional ones (Roald 2001: 106-107).

4.1.2 Globalization

The Sunni and Shia Islamic law schools and the modern Islamic movements are global Islamic institutional fields and methodologies. Some of these fields and their methodologies are in different ways represented in Trondheim through the local Islamic fields in which the women in this study engage. This is not unique to Trondheim. In her book *Medina in Birmingham, Najaf in Brent*, Innes Bowen (2014) shows how British Islamic organizations and groups are influenced by, or affiliated with, global Islamic law schools and modern Islamic movements. Because of this, she argues that to gain a deeper understanding of British Muslims and Islam, it is necessary to explore what influences their thoughts and practices both locally and globally. Bowen shows how the British mosques, or at least the individuals who control the different mosques, represent global Islamic trends and ideologies in Britain. She approaches and describes the ideologies and trends that are most popular and widespread among the British Muslims and looks into their contents. By doing this, she displays the complexity and diversity hidden behind the label "British Islam" (Bowen 2014).

Various theories of globalization show that there are dialogical and mutual relations between the global and the local; the global is reflected in the local, but the local is at the same time always specific. This means that "the global" should not be seen as "disembedded" from the local or vice versa. Rather, globalization includes universalization and particularization simultaneously – globalization of the local and a localization of the global. Migration is one of the ways that the local can be global(ized) and the global local(ized). Tourism, air travel and new forms of communication technologies, such as the Internet and satellite phones and televisions, are some of the others (Beyer 2006: 23-29, 57-60).

The local Islamic fields in Trondheim are neither isolated from the rest of the world nor from global Islamic institutional fields. Instead, they are related to these in various ways, such as through their methodologies. The local Islamic institutional fields represent different methodologies and methods – or strategies, in de Certeau's use of the term – for deducing knowledge about Islam, hereunder *sharia*, from the Islamic sources (de Certeau 1984; see section 3.5.2). These methodologies and methods are neither new nor can they be said to represent a "Norwegian Islam." Rather, from a global perspective they are not unique but embedded in the Islamic traditions of knowledge. This means that even though I treat the

Islamic fields in Trondheim as independent fields at a local level, I will not treat them as independent fields at a global level. I will rather see them and their Islamic methodologies as local representations of global Islam. This means that I treat them as "glocal" methodologies and methods. By "glocal," I mean local expressions of the global[27].

It is important to remark that *not* all the participants in the different local Islamic fields are *individually* following the same Islamic methodologies and methods as the field they engage in, nor does everyone see themselves and their methods for gaining knowledge about Islam in relation to global Islamic institutional fields and methodologies. Some of the members in the different mosques may not be aware of their mosques', or the persons who control the mosques', sources of inspiration, methodologies or methods for gaining knowledge about Islam, nor do they necessarily share or follow these on their own. The same can be said about the participants in the other Islamic fields the women engage in. Some of the women just engage in the various Islamic fields to increase their knowledge about Islam and do not reflect much, or at all, about the different fields' methodologies and how these correlate, or not, to the larger picture of global Islamic methodologies. This will be developed further in Chapter 6, where I analyze how the local Islamic fields function as the Muslim women's sources and methods to Islam and thus how the women orient themselves to the glocal Islamic methodologies, or strategies, that surround them.

4.1.3 Sources and methods

This chapter builds on both historical and contemporary sources. The historical sources are made up by literature concerning Islamic hermeneutics and methods and their formation and development. To gain knowledge about the Islamic law schools and Islamic movements and their methodologies, I have used literature studies (see section 3.8.6). The contemporary source materials on the local Islamic institutions' methodologies and methods consist of interviews, conversations and observations. I have interviewed key persons from the three local Sunni Islamic institutions MST, Mevlana and DIC about their institutions' Islamic methodologies. While meetings and conversations with key persons, both men and women members, and interviews with women informants from the Shiite institution AOB have provided me with material about this institution's sources and methods to Islam (see sections 3.8.4-3.8.6). My sources in regard to the women's methods for gaining Islamic knowledge

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[27] See Peter Beyer (2006, 2007) for further description of the relationship between the global and the local and thus the glocal. The sociologist Roland Robertson is regarded as the originator of the term "glocal" (Beyer 2007: 98).

within the other Islamic fields consist of interviews and observations. I have interviewed the women participants about their Islamic field(s), their capital, and collective sources and methods to Islam. Furthermore, I have observed some of the Islamic educational activities that gather women within these fields, namely SG's meetings and Mevlana's Friday activities for women (see sections 3.8.4-3.8.6).

This means that the subsequent presentations of the Islamic law schools and modern Islamic movements and their methodologies and methods are mainly built on historical literature about these topics. In contrast, the presentations of the local Islamic institutions' methodologies and methods, and the women's methods within the other Islamic fields, are based on contemporary empirical materials produced by me through interviews, conversations and observations.

4.1.4 Chapter outline

In what follows, I will give a brief presentation of the Islamic fields the women in this study are engaged in and the Islamic methodologies which can be said to be represented by these fields. I will start with the institutional Islamic fields the women are engaged in before I give a brief presentation of the women's other Islamic fields in Trondheim.

Established in 1987 and with 2071[28] members (2018), Muslim Society Trondheim is the oldest and largest Islamic institution in Trondheim. It was established by students at what is today the Norwegian University of Science and Technology with the aim to provide all Muslims in Trondheim with a place to gather for the Friday congregational prayer. Since its founding days, MST has been Trondheim's "congregational mosque," *masjid jami*, which gathers Muslims to daily prayer, Friday congregational prayer and religious holidays. The institution is driven by volunteers.

MST is a Sunni Muslim multinational mosque with members from more than 30 different countries. The largest groups are the Somalis, Arabs, Pakistanis, Chechens, Indonesians and Farsi/Persians followed by people from various African and European countries. It is open to all Muslims regardless of nationality, religious affiliation and orientation; however, most of its members are Sunni Muslims. MST has experienced

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[28] The membership records used in this study are collected from Regjeringen.no (2018b). Membership records are published annually and refer to registered members in faith and life-stance communities in Norway. The public funding system in Norway grants all publicly registered faith and life-stance communities annual financial support per registered members. In 2019, the government grant per member was 589 Norwegian kroner (Regjeringen.no 2019).

demographic and generational changes among its members since it was established. Due to some of its changes, MST went through a sequence of internal challenges in 2008-2010 that escalated into conflict. MST succeeded in putting an end to the conflict[29].

Until recently, MST was the only Islamic institution in Trondheim that was a member of the Islamic Council of Norway (IRN)[30]. IRN is the largest Islamic "umbrella organization" in Norway. It represents 33 Islamic organizations in the country and has approximately 65 000 members (Islamsk Råd Norge 2019a). IRN represent Muslims at a national level in an interfaith dialogue, called "The Dialogue Group," between Islam and the Church of Norway, established in 1993. Like IRN, MST wants to be in dialogue with its surrounding community. Because of this, the mosque has been and is involved in various interfaith and intercultural dialogues with the Church of Norway, the Trondheim municipality, the childcare authorities, the integration authorities (IMDi) and the police, from which it generates both cultural and social capital. None of the other local Islamic institutions is involved in similar interfaith and intercultural dialogues at an institutional level. Yet, some of the individual members in the other local institutions are (Bourdieu 2006: 5-17; Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992: 98, 118-120; see sections 3.4.2-3.4.4; Leirvik 2014; Mårtensson and Eriksen 2014).

MST does not follow, or promote, any *one* of the traditional law schools' methodologies of acquiring knowledge about Islam but rather accepts all of them and the fact that their members belong to different law schools. As an institution, MST does not affiliate with or follow any specific modern Islamic movements. It is an independent local Islamic institution, with no affiliates other than IRN. However, as a multinational and "pan-Islamic" mosque, with more than 30 nationalities represented among its members, MST's organizational structure and methods for acquiring knowledge about Islam are comparable with those of the pan-Islamic Muslim Brotherhood(MB). The MB's methodology is, or has been, a source of inspiration for several of the members in MST, who have had, or have, central positions in the mosque. This *does not* make MST as an institution a Brotherhood mosque because it is *neither* affiliated with the MB *nor* a member of this movement. It is *only* MST's organizational structure and its sources and methods for gaining knowledge about Islam that are inspired by the MB's methodology. How, and in what ways, will be elaborated and discussed in section 4.4 of this chapter.

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[29] For more information about MST history and internal challenges, see Mårtensson and Eriksen (2014).
[30] According to IRN's membership records for 2019, two Islamic institutions in Trondheim are members of the council, MST and DIC (Islamsk Råd Norge 2019b).

Trondheim Mevlana Cultural Organization is the third largest Islamic institution in Trondheim with 1509 members (2018). It was founded in 1999 by Kurdish and Turkish members of MST who wanted to establish an Islamic institution of their own. In 2009, it went through several changes, where it, among other things, changed its name[31] and organizational structure. In relation to its organizational changes, Mevlana established a close relation to Turkey and the Turkish Directorate of Religious Affairs, the Diyanet. This means that Mevlana is cooperating with the Diyanet and that the Diyanet is providing them with and financing their imam(s). The Diyanet is following the Hanafi law school's methodology and methods regarding acquiring knowledge about Islam. The Hanafi school is the dominant Islamic law school in Turkey (Dorroll 2014)[32].

Mevlana is organized around nationality, ethnicity, religious affiliation and language – most of its members have Turkish and/or Kurdish backgrounds, they follow the Hanafi law school and the official languages in the mosque are Turkish and Kurdish. Apart from the imam, who is educated and paid by the Turkish Diyanet, Mevlana is driven by volunteers. Many of Mevlana's members are from the Turkish city Konya, which is famous for housing the tomb of Jalal ad-Din Muhammad Rumi[33], also known as Mevlana or just Rumi, who lived parts of his life and passed away here (Vogt 2003: xvi-xxv). Trondheim Mevlana has named itself after Rumi because he is regarded as an important, strong and unifying symbol among its members. Even though Mevlana admires Rumi, the institution does not belong to the Mevlevi Sufi order, *tariqa*, or any other Sufi order. Its members are free to follow different Sufi orders if they want, but the institution does not. It is mainly Mevlana's remembrance, *dikhr*, rituals that can be said to be Sufi inspired. Thus, Mevlana is a Sunni Islamic institution in Trondheim and follows the Hanafi school's methodology and methods, as will be elaborated in section 4.3.2 of this chapter.

Dar El Eman[34] Islamic Center is the second largest Islamic institution in Trondheim, with 2070 members (2018). It was established in 2010 by a former imam and former members of MST. DIC is mainly a result of internal challenges and conflict MST faced in 2008-2010, but it can also be seen as a response to cope with the increased number of Muslims in Trondheim and their needs. The majority of DIC's members are of Somali background, but it is not a Somali mosque per se. Among its members we also find people with backgrounds

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[31] From 1999-2009, this Islamic institution was called Darusselam Cultural Organization.
[32] For more information about the Hanafi school's position and dominance in Turkey, see Doroll (2014).
[33] Jalal ad-Din Muhammad Rumi (d. 1273) was a famous poet, Islamic jurist, theologian and Sufi mystic (Vogt 2003: ix-xiii, xvi-xxv; Chittick 2000: 76).
[34] The name Dar El Eman refers to the house of faith.

from, for instance, Arab and Asian countries. The official languages in the mosque are Arabic and Somali, and the institution is fully run by volunteers.

DIC is a Sunni Islamic institution in Trondheim. The imams, most of its members and its users[35] have backgrounds from countries where the Shafii law school dominates, such as Somalia and Indonesia. Because of this, DIC's methodology and methods for acquiring knowledge about Islam are similar to those of the Shafii school but not limited to this school. DIC does not promote itself as a Shafii mosque, nor does it oblige its members to follow this law school. It is open to all Sunni Muslims in Trondheim, regardless of their affiliations. Similarities and differences between Shafii's and DIC's methodology and methods will be further discussed in section 4.3.3 of this chapter.

Ahl O'Bait Center is the only Shiite Islamic institution in Trondheim. It was founded in 1999 but not formally registered as an Islamic institution until 2002. AOB has 357 members (2018). Most of its members are first-generation immigrants from Iraq and Afghanistan. Before they established an Islamic institution of their own, the Shiite Muslims were members of MST and used their mosque. AOB is driven by volunteers. From 2010 to 2014, they did not have any imam, or someone who functioned as such, within the institution.

Literally translated, Ahl O'Bait means "people of the house," but as the name of this particular Islamic institution, it refers to "Muhammad's family." By Muhammad's family, AOB refers to Muhammad's daughter Fatima and her husband Ali and their descendants. AOB recognizes 12 "children" or generations of Muslim leaders in Muhammad's family, starting with Ali[36]. These are referred to as Imams and recognized as rightful successors after Muhammad. In this way, AOB has chosen a name for their institution that refers to and reflects that their members are Shiites' belonging to the Twelver school of jurisprudence, called the Jafari school. This means that AOB follows the Twelver school's methodology and methods to gain knowledge about Islam. How and in which ways AOB does this will be the topic of section 4.3.4 of this chapter.

The women's other Islamic fields are the Sister Group(SG), Islam Net(IN) and the Indonesian Muslim Society(KMIT). These fields are in various ways related to the women's

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[35] Not all those who use DIC's imams and mosque's facilities or who participate in its activities are members of the mosque. This will be further explained in Chapter 6.

[36] Shiite Muslims recognize Ali ibn Abu Talib as the first Imam and the rightful successor after Muhammad. Sunni Muslims, on the other hand, recognize him as the fourth caliph after Muhammad. The schism between Sunni and Shia Islam was originally rooted in a political disagreement over who should be recognized as the rightful successor of Prophet Muhammad and thus the leader of the Muslims. Later the disagreement evolved and came to include philosophical, theological and political differences between these two branches of Islam as well (Roald 2004: 52-54).

local Islamic institutional fields. SG is a study group that gathers in MST's mosque weekly to gain more knowledge about Islam. It was established and is run by the women's initiative only, and MST's board and imam committee are not involved in the group's activities but let them hold their meetings in the mosque. SG is a multinational, multicultural and diverse group, with participants who find themselves of different ages and in different life situations. The average number of participants in SG's meetings is eight, but it varies from week to week.

SG is an independent women's group that operates within the frames of MST. Even though most of its participants are members of MST, not all of them are. SG is open to all "sisters" in Islam, regardless if they are members of MST or not. For instance, during my time in the field, some of the members in the group changed their institutional affiliation from MST to DIC, for different reasons, but continued their engagement in SG. Because of this, SG can be seen as an independent Islamic field within the Islamic institutional fields of MST and DIC and is also treated as such in this thesis. The main reason for this is that SG's methodology and method(s) for gaining knowledge about Islam diverge from the local Islamic institutions' methodology and methods. SG represents approach and relationship to *usul al-fiqh* different from that of MST and DIC since its methods are in some ways similar to the methods of IN, which represents the global Salafism movement and thus the Hanbali school of law in Norway (Mårtensson 2014; Haykel 2009).

The Salafi organization Islam Net, established in Norway in 2008, is another Islamic field some of the women in this study engage in every now and then. IN has around 2000 registered members. Its headquarters are localized to Akershus, and it is represented by student associations in Oslo, Tromsø and Bodø. Moreover, it has some local Facebook groups, one localized to Trondheim. It is a small but active Islamic organization that gets public attention. Its main event is an annual three-day-long Peace Conference open to members and the public, but it also arranges smaller events such as individual lectures, seminars and *da'wa* (meetings with the public and other Muslims to convert them to Islam or purify their Muslim faith and practices). Islamic Salafi preachers are invited to Norway to lecture at these events, some of which are open to the public while others are members-only. Like the MB, Salafism can be said to represent a distinct methodology and methods for gaining knowledge about Islam (Haykel 2009; Islamnet.no 2015; Mårtensson 2014). In section 4.5.1 of this chapter, I will give a brief presentation of the Hanbali methodology before I discuss how this can be applied to Salafism, as here represented by IN. Furthermore, I will discuss how IN's sources and methods to Islam can apply to those of SG.

The Indonesian Muslim Society in Trondheim, which makes up the women's third and last Islamic non-institutional field, consists of Indonesian Muslims who live in Trondheim. Many of KMIT's members are members of MST, but KMIT is an independent Muslim national-religious association and not a part of MST. KMIT uses the imams of MST and DIC as religious authorities. During my time in the field, one of the members of KMIT functioned as an imam for KMIT but also for MST and DIC. Because of this, KMIT's methodology and methods for gaining knowledge about Islam correspond with those of MST and DIC. The women's methods for gaining knowledge about Islam within KMIT will be presented in section 4.5.2.

Before I move on to the presentations of global and local Islamic institutional methodologies and methods, I will take a brief look at how Islamic knowledge has traditionally been transmitted within traditional Islamic institutions of knowledge and modern movements. This will be followed by a discussion about the relationship between the local Islamic fields and the traditional institutions of knowledge.

4.2 Institutions of knowledge

> For one who travels a road in search of knowledge, Allah will have him travel one of the roads of Paradise. Angels will lower their wings, approving the seeker of knowledge, while those in the heavens and the earth, and the fish in the depths of the sea, will seek pardon for the man of learning. The excellence of the learned over the devotee is like that of the full moon over the other stars. The learned (*'ulama'*) are the heirs of the prophets. The prophets bequeathed neither dinar nor dirham but rather knowledge; so he who receives it, obtains an abundant portion (Waines 2003: 39, hadith no. 3641, *Sunan Abi Da'ud* edition).

The *individual* search for knowledge is not a new phenomenon or trend within Islam but was encouraged and emphasized by prominent scholars such as al-Ṭabarī and al-Ghazzālī (Mårtensson 2009: 17-18, 2010: 41; Jackson 2002: 59-65; see section 1.1.1). Among the first two generations of Muslims, many engaged in the work of "building" the Islamic religion and the Islamic civilization, in which knowledge and religious learning played important parts (al-Qadi 1995: 101; Waines 2003: 36). This work was referred to as "the quest for knowledge" and the people involved as the "people of knowledge" (*ahl al-'ilm/ulama*) (Waines 2003: 36). In this way, Islam both symbolized a rupture with the "ignorance" described to be prevalent in

pre-Islamic time and the evolvement of civilization and knowledge (al-Qadi 1995; Waines 2003: 36-38).

The Islamic civilization defined itself mainly in religious terms – it was a religious civilization. Knowledge about the will of God and transmission of this knowledge was therefore highly appreciated and recognized as crucial for the evolvement of Islam and the Islamic civilization (al-Qadi 1995: 100-102; Waines 2003: 36-40). The Prophet Muhammad functioned as the main symbol for the Islamic civilization. After he passed away, the civilization was represented by his Companions, followed by religious scholars in various religious learning centers, which produced and maintained and transmitted knowledge about the religion. In this way, Islam did not evolve from just one singular and situated source of authority; rather, authority within Islam has always been decentralized and pluralized (al-Qadi 1995; Mandaville 2007: 101-115; Waines 2003: 38-40).

The transmitters of Islam – the Prophet Muhammad, his Companions and the various religious scholars – were regarded as contributors and models for the Islamic society and civilization. Therefore, it was important to document their lives in addition to their teachings. The lives of the Prophet and his Companions are recorded and collected in the *hadith* literature. While the lives, careers, behavior, attitudes, etc. of the various religious scholars are documented in numerous detailed biographical dictionaries produced from the 4th/10th century[37] and onwards. These biographies show that it was not only the religious knowledge these scholars were in possession of and transmitted that was considered to be important, but it was also important to have knowledge about their personal lives and personalities to be able to evaluate whether they could be seen as good representatives and models for the Islamic society (al-Qadi 1995).

The Prophet Muhammad's wives were the narrators behind many of the *hadith*s. Thus, women played an important function as transmitters of *hadith* in the early period of Islam. Because of this, women from the first generation of Muslims are visible and included in the *hadith*'s narrator chains, *isnad*, as "first observers," while later generations of Muslim women are seldom mentioned in the later and subsequent narrator chains (Roald 2004: 70). Some women are also found and mentioned in the biographical dictionaries, but they are few compared to the men. Moreover, the presentation of these women is not nearly as comprehensive as the presentation of the men; they are often just referred to as *hadith*

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[37] The first century listed refers the year/era in the Islamic *Hijri* calender. The *Hijri* calender's starting point is the Prophet Muhammad's migration from Mecca to Medina in year 622 CE, known as the *Hijra*. The second century listed refers to the year/era in the Common Era, CE.

specialists, Qur'an experts, literates or poets (al-Qadi 1995: 98-101; Khalafallah 2014; Vogt 2005: 104-106). Only a few women were considered to be specialists in Islamic jurisprudence, *fiqh* and Islamic law. The main reason for this is that throughout the history of Islam, women have been excluded from the traditional Islamic institutions of knowledge, where the Islamic legal education took place. This means that women did not have access to the educational institutions where knowledge about the Islamic law, *sharia*, was produced, maintained and transmitted through lectures about the roots of jurisprudence, *usul al-fiqh*, and the branches of jurisprudence, *furu'al-fiqh,* among other themes (Vogt 2005: 101-106). Consequently, women did not have access to the legal education that could have granted them with official positions as religious scholars, legal experts or authorities. In the biographical dictionaries, the women are often not treated as religious scholars even though they can be referred to as *hadith* or Qur'an specialists. Instead, women are often presented in separate parts of the dictionaries, and they are considered to fulfil other roles than that of religious scholars, being the transmitters of religion (al-Qadi 1995: 98-101; Vogt 2005: 105). This shows that within the early Islamic society, women were not considered to play an important role within the system of religious education. However, women referred to in *hadith*'s first chains of narrators and references to women specialists within the biographical dictionaries reflect the fact that women have had an important function as transmitters of Islamic knowledge and functioned as Islamic scholars since the beginning of Islam (al-Qadi 1995; Khalafallah 2014; Roald 2004: 70; Vogt 2005: 101-105).

4.2.1 Traditional institutions

Muslims' quest for knowledge about Islam has very much been a search for knowledge about the will of God as it is believed to be expressed through the Islamic law, *sharia*. Religious scholars *and* legal specialists have therefore played an important role in transmitting Islamic knowledge since the end of the first century of Islam (beginning of 7th century CE) (Hallaq 2009a: 125-135). The traditional Islamic institutions that have transmitted knowledge about Islam, and in particular the Islamic law, are the *halaqa* and the *madrasa* institutions. *Halaqa*, which literally means "circles," is the name of the study circles that developed in the first century of Islam (Hallaq 2009a: 125-126, 135-136).

The *halaqa* was an independent and informal education made up by a gathering between a professor and his students. The study circles were hierarchically organized and consisted of a teacher or professor at the top of the hierarchy followed by advanced, less advanced and beginner students. The professor shared his knowledge with his students, who,

after gaining more knowledge, worked their way up in the hierarchy. The *halaqa* gatherings took place within the professor's home, a mosque or a grand mosque. Grand mosques usually hosted several different *halaqa* groups. The professor played several roles within these study circles until the 9th/15th century. In addition to being an educator, he was also a colleague and a moral mentor for his students, particularly the advanced ones. There were often close ties between a professor and his best students, and it was quite common for marriages between the latter and the teacher's daughters to result. In this way, Islamic scholars, *ulama*, in various districts became tied together (Hallaq 2009a: 136-139).

The *halaqa* circles did not have a fixed curriculum. The teachers were free to teach the topics they wanted the way they wanted and used different pedagogical methods. Their unrestricted freedom was slightly reduced after the different law schools started to produce authoritative texts to which the professors had to relate. Knowledge about the Islamic law was transmitted within the *halaqa* groups. The students could learn about the roots of jurisprudence, *usul al-fiqh*, and gain knowledge about the different sources of the law, different methodologies for deducing the law from its sources and various methods for reaching the sources' essential meaning. There were also *halaqa*s that focused on the content of the law, such as the ritual obligations, *ibadat*, and inter-human relationships, *mu'amalat*. However, not all *halaqa* groups were dedicated to the study of the Islamic law. Within the *halaqa* institution, knowledge about Arabic grammar, literature, Qur'an recitation, *hadith*, logic, medicine, mathematics, astronomy, etc. was also transmitted. It was also a place where expert legal opinions, *fatwas*, were issued and a place where law discussions among scholars and jurists, *fuqaha*, took place (Hallaq 2009a: 111, 128, 137-140; Wains 2003: 63-65).

Even though the *halaqa* circle as a pedagogical model, and study model, became institutionalized quite early, the *halaqa* institution remained an informal and independent entity. It did not have any kind of administration attached to it, nor were there any formal admission requirements for the students. The students only needed the professor's oral consent to attend the circle. The *halaqa* was an open forum that attracted regular students and welcomed more sporadic students, or "passers-by," who wanted to learn more about a specific subject. Most legal *halaqa* groups were quite small, with about 30 students, but there were not any formal restrictions concerning the number of students. Some of the most well-known professors or jurists could attract hundreds of students. *Halaqa* circles that dealt with *hadith* attracted more students than legal *halaqa*s that treated juridical questions and topics since the first topic was considered to be less advanced than law (Hallaq 2009a: 137-138).

The knowledge was mainly transmitted orally. Within the legal *halaqa*s, the professor usually recited various treaties, upon which he commented, and the students listened and memorized. In the final part of the legal education, the students had to write a commentary or take a kind of exam where they showed that they had mastered a certain field of law. Many of the students in the different *halaqa*s, legal or not, aimed at receiving a license called *ijaza*, from their professors. The license documented that the professor approved of the student, his knowledge and qualifications within one subject and that he allowed his student to teach others about the subject (Hallaq 2009a: 139-140).

In the 4th/10th century, the *madrasa* institution was established. In contrast to the independent *halaqa* institution, the *madrasa* was a political and financial educational system. The *madrasa*s were established and controlled by individuals from the ruling elites who had personal interests in how the *madrasa*s were managed and who taught there. This means that the legal education within the *madrasa* was controlled by the leaders in the society, who benefited from having the law and the jurists on their side. The *madrasa* institution was financed by a form of charity trust called *waqf*. The students enrolled in the *madrasa* were given lectures five days a week, several hours a day. All the students and the teachers were provided with food, clothes and a place to sleep and also had access to a library. A *madrasa* was affiliated with a mosque and had a place of its own, either within the mosque or in a building next to it. Thus, it had a more formal organizational structure than the *halaqa* institution. By the 8th/14th century, the *madrasa* institution was widespread in the Muslim world, where it existed side by side with the *halaqa* institution (Hallaq 2009a: 125-126, 142-146).

Pedagogically, the *madrasa* did not distinguish itself much from the *halaqa*. In fact, its pedagogical foundation was *halaqa* circles, where knowledge about Islam was transmitted from a teacher to a group of students. The subjects taught within the madrasa were also quite similar to those taught within the *halaqa* institution: law studies, Qur'an exegeses, *hadith*, Arabic, logic, mathematics, medicine, etc. Until the 10th/16th century, the period of study was four years. After this, the study period increased to five years. The formal organization of the *madrasa* made the legal education more professionally oriented. This was reflected in the teacher-student relationship, which was more distanced than that within the *halaqa* institution. As graduates from a *madrasa*, the students had the opportunity to make juridical careers (Hallaq 2009a: 142-157).

The individuals referred to as religious scholars within the traditional Islamic institutions of knowledge could have diverse backgrounds. However, since much of the

knowledge they transmitted was about the Islamic law, many of them had backgrounds as jurists, or *fuqaha*. Here I will not give a presentation of all the possible backgrounds religious scholars could have nor their titles or positions. However, in a thesis about the acquisition of Islamic knowledge, it is important and relevant to give a brief presentation of some the institutionalized highest-ranked religious authorities.

A central thought in the building of *sharia* is the idea about the human capability to mediate between the will of God and the human reality. This ability is referred to as *ijtihad* and is an individual and juridical ability. In situations where one is faced with a case that has not been the subject of earlier discussion, one uses this ability to come up with an opinion. The opinion does not claim monopoly on what is right and wrong and is not followed by any sanctions. The jurist who is in possession of the ability to use *ijtihad* is called a *mujtahid*. A *mujtahid* is a person who does his best to use his intellectual capability to reach a solution in the form of an opinion, which is thought to be intended by God, in a specific case. Not everyone can become a *mujtahid*. To receive this title, a person must have a number of qualifications; he must have expertise in the verses of the Qur'an that deal with legal subject matters, he must be familiar with all legal *hadith*s and have knowledge about *hadith* criticism, he must be fluent in Arabic, he must be familiar with the theory of abrogation and which texts can abolish each other, he must be trained in legal reasoning and he must know all cases that have been solved by consensus since he is not allowed to reopen these cases. A jurist who receives the rank as a *mujtahid* can no longer follow the opinions of others. Instead, he is required to use his own reasoning and judgment (Hallaq 2009a: 110-111).

Another of the highest-ranked religious authorities is the *mufti*. The *mufti* is a jurisconsult, an expert in law, who issues expert legal opinions, known as *fatwas*. A *mufti* must have all the same academic qualifications as the *mujtahid*. In addition, he must be of a specific character: he must "be pious and of just character and must take religion and law seriously" (Hallaq 2009a: 111). The *mufti* is obligated to transmit his knowledge about the Islamic law to others who want to learn about it and to issue a legal opinion when asked for it (Hallaq 2009a: 111-112).

Anyone who is not in possession of the capability of individual reasoning and judgment like the *mujtahid* or the *mufti* is not allowed to interpret the revealed texts on their own in order to come up with an opinion on what is right and wrong in a case. Their only access to the Islamic law is therefore through references to *mujtahid*s or *mufti*s and their opinions. Since laypersons must follow one of these religious authorities, it is highly important for them to know that the scholar is trustworthy (Hallaq 2009a: 111). Since

everyone according to Islamic faith must answer for their own life and actions on the Day of Judgment, everyone is also responsible for their own choices and actions, including which religious scholars to follow in legal questions. In other words, on the Day of Judgment, you cannot blame the religious scholar for your own mistakes and wrong decisions; you must answer for them yourself. It is therefore important for laypersons to do a kind of "background check" on the *mujtahid* jurist or the *mufti* and their reputation before asking about their advice and opinion (Hallaq 2009a: 111; Roald 2004: 111; Waines 2003: 63). It was (amongst other things) due to the need of background information that the numerous biographical dictionaries were written (al-Qadi 1995).

The Islamic ideal of knowledge is that knowledge about Islam should be accessible to everyone. Historically, the term "everyone" has in practice referred to men and boys. The *madrasa* institution made it possible for boys from poor families to make a career and increase their social position through education since the *madrasa*s provided them with all they needed (Vogt 2005: 99-100). The *halaqa* institution was also open to everyone who wanted to join in, but it did not provide the students with food, clothes and shelter as the *madrasa*s did (Hallaq 2009a: 125-126, 138). As mentioned earlier, women have been excluded from the Islamic institutions of knowledge. However, this does not mean that they did not have access to Islamic knowledge. The daughters of religious scholars, *ulama*, were often trained in Islamic jurisprudence, *fiqh*, in their homes by their fathers. Some of these women became very knowledgeable and acquired their own students, who were mostly female students, but some of the most learned and skilled women could also attract male students. Historically speaking, women have on rare occasions functioned as juridical advisers and *muftis*. The norm has, however, been that women, even those with specialization in Islamic jurisprudence, have been excluded from official positions (Khalafallah 2014; Vogt 2005: 104-106).

After the 1850s, modern educational systems, such as universities, were established and replaced many of the traditional Islamic institutions of knowledge. The modern educational institutions attracted many of the best students and created another form of religious elite. Consequently, the religious scholars, *ulama*, lost most of their control over the Islamic legal education and system. Today, most of the religious educational institutions within the Sunni Islamic world are under government control. However, this does not mean that the old institutions of knowledge have vanished. The religious education, and particularly the legal education within Sunni and Shia Islamic institutions, is still driven by their models and educates *muftis*, preachers and religious teachers. In recent times, after 1970, women have

also gained accessed to the traditional Islamic institutions of knowledge, such as the prestigious al-Azhar University in Cairo (Vogt 2005: 98-106).

4.2.2 Modern movements

The modern Islamic movement, the Muslim Brotherhood, has a thoroughly organized and hierarchal educational program for its members wherein knowledge about Islam, and the movement, is transmitted. It is not an individual decision to become a member of the Brotherhood because members must be chosen and approved. To become a member, candidates to membership must go through a probation period of at least six months, often as long as one to three years, before they are invited to become members[38]. The individuals on probation are asked to participate in different activities arranged by the MB, such as praying in one of its mosques and participate in Qur'an reading groups. After a while, they are told that they are considered as potential members in the movement. Those who accept their candidacy are enrolled into a three-month introduction program where they are given a short introduction to Islam and Islamism, which are followed by qualifying tests. Those who successfully pass the introduction program are asked to swear an oath of allegiance to the highest authority within the Brotherhood, the General Guide. Through this ritualistic oath, the candidate becomes a member in the movement (Kandil 2015: 5-6).

Becoming a member is just the beginning. The Brotherhood operates with different ranks of members, and to become a full member one must go through a long and complicated educational program, which is regarded as a cultivation process and called *tarbiya*. The main objective of this educational program is to produce a "Muslim Brother" who will eventually bring the Brothers as a collective to power. The cultivation process is made up by different group meetings[39], where a more experienced brother – a prefect, or *naqib* – guides the attendees through the Brotherhood's cultivation curriculum. The group meetings are divided into weekly "family," *usra*, meetings; monthly "battalion training," *katiba*; quarterly camps, *mu'askar*; and biannual field trips, *rihla* (Kandil 2015: 6-8).

The "family," *usra*, consists of 5-10 brothers who gather weekly. The family and the family meetings are regarded as MB's "cultivation uterus" and thought of as a method created

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[38] According to Kandil, it is not uncommon that the candidates for membership are unaware of the situation they are in: that the Brotherhood is evaluating them as potential members in their movement and thus has them on "probation" (Kandil 2015: 5).
[39] In the founding days of the Brotherhood, the brothers were enrolled in a school of cultivation, opened in 1928. Due to the growing number of members, the founder of the MB, Hasan al-Banna, divided the Brothers into smaller study groups through which he expected them to meet regularly (Kandil 2015: 7).

by the movement's founder, Hasan al-Banna, under divine guidance (Kandil 2015: 7). The weekly family meetings are led by the prefect, *naqib*, who functions as a moderator. During the meetings, the brothers take part in various activities – they recite and comment on selected texts from the Qur'an and the *hadith*, discuss texts written by the founders of the movements, share personal and professional concerns, worship and eat together. The Brotherhood wants close ties between its members, but to prevent the ties from becoming too close, the members of the family group are rearranged annually (Kandil 2015: 7-8). A group of families make up a branch, *shu'ba*, which meets once a month for "battalion training," *katiba*. Here the brothers fast for a day, break the fast and dine together, listen to lectures about the movement's doctrines and pray. A weeklong camp, where several branches come together, makes up the quarterly camps, *mu'askar*. During these camps, the members attend lectures, pray and participate in athletic training and martial arts. The aim of the biannual field trip, *rihla*, is recreation. To these field trips the brothers are asked to bring their families and to socialize to create a sense of community (Kandil 2015: 8).

Women members of the MB are enrolled in a similar structure called the Muslim Sisterhood. Like the men, the women have weekly family meetings, and they participate in the biannual field trips. However, women do not swear an oath of allegiance, nor do they participate in "battalion trainings" or quarterly camps. Instead they spend a lot of time on raising children, charity work and recruiting other women through invitation, *da'wa,* activities (Kandil 2015: 8; Roald 2001: 41-43).

The Cultivation Committee within the MB is responsible for the movement's educational program. It has designed a cultivation curriculum that is made up by several volumes and that contains detailed lectures specifically designed for the weekly family meetings. The educational program within the Brotherhood is hierarchic and controlled from the top. Because of this, Brotherhood members all over the world are involved in similar types of group meetings (Kandil 2015: 7-9).

The MB's pedagogy is described by Kandil as "The Pedagogy of praxis" (Kandil 2015: 10). By being good role models, the Brothers and Sisters shall recruit members to the movement and spread information about Islam. Because of this, the members are encouraged to spend their time on practical matters and tasks instead of getting involved in religious studies. The founder of the movement, Hasan al-Banna, once wrote: "Our primary concern is to arouse the spirit, the life of the heart, to awaken the imagination and sentiments. We place less emphasis on concrete ideas…than on touching the souls of those we encounter" (al-Banna quoted in Kandil 2015: 10). In what is called al-Banna's maxim, the focus on

practicality is highlighted: "Be practical, not argumentative" (al-Banna quoted in Kandil 2015: 19). Thus, actions are evaluated as more important than knowledge within the movement. Its emphasis on practice is legitimized with references to the notion that Islam is a practical religion (Kandil 2015: 17-19).

The Salafi movement distinguishes itself from the MB when it comes to organizational structure and the transmission of religious knowledge. Where the MB has a strong hierarchical organizational structure, the Salafi movement has not. Many Salafis consider it to be un-Islamic to be loyal to a leader (Roald 2001: 51). According to them, swearing allegiance to a religious leader is a form of religious innovation, *bid'a*, and therefore forbidden. Because of this, the movement has a loose organizational structure and lacks an authorized leader. This is reflected in the movement's educational activities. It does not have a religious educational program like the MB; rather, most of its educational activities are made up by mosque lessons or lessons in private homes. Because of this, the religious knowledge transmitted within this movement is not as controlled or coordinated as within the MB (Roald 2001: 51-52, 54).

This does not mean that the movement is in lack of religious authorities – rather the opposite – as Haykel (2009) argues in his article. According to Haykel, it is rather easy to be recognized as a religious authority within the Salafi movement compared to the MB or the traditional Islamic institutions of knowledge. This is all due to their methodologies and methods (to be elaborated in section 4.5.1), which emphasize a direct interpretation of the text of revelation. Since the Salafis do not adhere to a developed and hierarchical scholastic tradition of interpretation, they do not have any leaders or leadership that controls the opinions or the qualifications of the religious authorities within the movement. Instead, individuals choose their favorite religious authorities in the form of Salafi sheikhs to follow in terms of religious questions because they find their argumentation and opinions convincing and not because the movement obliges them to follow one (Haykel 2009: 33-45).

4.2.3 "Glocal" institutions

None of the women's local Islamic fields correspond with the traditional Islamic institutions of knowledge – the classical *halaqa,* which can provide its students with a license, *ijaza*, or the *madrasa*. They do not offer their members a religious education that can provide them with various career opportunities, nor do they reward their students with a license that allows them to teach others about the subject they have studied. However, all the local Islamic institutional fields offer some educational activities to their members. Consequently, they

organize or host various forms of study groups, which may bear a resemblance to the *halaqa* as an open educational forum and study model (Hallaq 2009a: 138). Children are the main target group for these activities; however, some offer Islamic educational activities to their adult members as well.

All the local Islamic institutional fields offer religious courses to children, and some of them offer language courses and courses in cultural subjects as well. AOB offers lectures in Arabic and Islam for children with an Iraqi background, while the children with an Afghan background are offered lessons in the Qur'an and Qur'an recitation. MST offers lessons in Arabic, the Qur'an and Islam held in Somali, English and Arabic to children. Included in the Islam courses AOB and MST offer the children are knowledge about the Islamic faith, the Prophets of Islam, the Five Pillars of Islam and inter-human relations, *mu'amalat* – that is, how to behave as a good Muslim. DIC has educational activities for adult members and children. Adults are offered lessons about the *hadith* literature. Men are the main target group for these lessons, which are held in the mosque's main prayer hall. Women have the possibility to follow these lessons as well but from a separate room in the women's section. This means that they can follow the lectures streamed on a screen and/or through loudspeakers. Children are offered lectures in the Somali language and culture in addition to lessons in how to read and recite from the Qur'an, the Arabic language and personal prayer, *du'a*. In the *du'a* lessons, the children learn how to behave as pious Muslims. This means that they learn about the ritual obligations, *ibadat*, and inter-human relations, *mu'amalat.*

Even though these three local Islamic institutions aim at giving children an introduction to Islam, the activities they offer are too few and too random to be compared with a *madrasa*. The children's introductory courses to Islam do not have form as a study circle but are mainly teacher-led activities where the teacher is the transmitter of the basic knowledge, and the children are its receivers. In this way, this study model has some resemblance to the hierarchical *halaqa* model. The educational activity most similar to the *halaqa* study model within these institutions is, however, DIC's *hadith* lessons. During these lessons, an imam shares his knowledge about *hadith* with the attendees based upon a self-chosen curriculum and reading list. Since the attendees are expected to contribute to these lessons through questions, discussions and assignments, it functions as a study circle.

The local Islamic institutional field that has the most similarities with the traditional institutions of knowledge is Mevlana. Mevlana offers religious educational activities to all its members. The activities are organized around age and gender and are directed toward various target groups of girls, boys, women and men. Women and girls are offered lectures in the

Qur'an, which are mainly oriented around reading and pronouncing the Qur'an in Arabic. They are also offered level-based lectures about Islam. At the introduction level, women and girls are taught about the Five Pillars of Islam and how to live as good Muslims. At the secondary and more advanced level, they can learn about other aspects of Islam, such as the *hadith* literature. Men and boys are offered similar level-based lectures in the Qur'an and Islam. Since Mevlana teaches its members about Islam, and in particular about the ritual obligations and regulations within inter-human relationships, these lessons can be seen as a type of *madrasa*. However, the differences between Mevlana and the *madrasa* institution outweigh the similarities since Mevlana is a local mosque and not a traditional Islamic institution of knowledge.

SG refers to itself as a *halaqa* group, and some of the educational activities which take place within KMIT are also referred to as *halaqa* groups. Most of the women within these two Islamic fields are familiar with the traditional *halaqa* circles. They regard this pedagogical forum as the oldest and most authentic way to study Islam.

The participants in SG want to improve their theoretical and practical knowledge about Islam and gather to learn off and from each other. Those who have knowledge about a relevant topic teach the other members of the group about this topic through "lessons" or "guidance" or both. Through conversations and discussion, the women come up with several questions and topics they want more knowledge about. In turn, the participants volunteer to gather information about a topic and share their findings at the next meeting. Meetings in SG are usually made up by different sessions where the women study different aspects of Islam together. Some of these sessions include Qur'an recitation; commentaries and explanations of the Qur'an, *tafsir*; presentations of prominent figures in Islam and Islamic theology; and religious practices in the form of ritual obligations, *ibadat*, and inter-human relationships, *mu'amalat*. During their meetings, the participants sit together in a circle and talk. In this way, they imitate the form of the *halaqa* circles.

Some of the women in KMIT have an online *halaqa* group. Every week a group of women meet on Skype to study Islam and read the Qur'an together. In contrast to the traditional *halaqa* circles, SG's *halaqa* and the online *halaqa* are not led by a religious scholar or professor. These are study groups where women study Islam together and where they build their Islamic knowledge on different Islamic sources and religious authorities. These studies do not grant them with a form of certification, either. Still, it is important to note that the women refer to their study groups as *halaqa* groups. Since the women recognize the *halaqa* forum as the traditional and authentic way to study Islam, it is important for them to relate

their activities to this Islamic institution of knowledge. In this way, they establish a relation between their educational activities and the *halaqa* institution and regard their activities as being in continuation with this institution of knowledge.

4.3 *Usul al-fiqh*

This section intends to describe the basic classical methodologies that pertain to the local Islamic institutions in Trondheim. Consequently, there are many details in the development history of these methodologies that I will not cover. Instead, I follow David Vishanoff's exposition of the legal hermeneutics and schools of law as they developed from the 800s onwards. As Vishanoff's study shows, the main differences between the various methodologies and schools are the different emphases and balances they give to the various kinds of texts and the jurists' scope of reasoning.

Usul al-fiqh refers to the roots of jurisprudence and is a theoretical discipline made up by elements from linguistics, theology and law that deal with the Islamic law. The discipline treats questions such as the following: How does one understand the law? What is its nature and what are its sources? How can one deduce the law from its sources? and Which methods and tools can one use to do so? In other words, *usul al-fiqh* deals with questions related to the methodology and methods for acquiring knowledge about Islam (Vishanoff 2011).

Since the beginning of Islam, there have been discussions about the Islamic law, *sharia*, and its nature. According to Muslim beliefs, the Islamic law was revealed in words through the Prophet Muhammad. However, this assertion has not always been evident. In the beginning, the assertion was highly contested among Islamic scholars, and it had to be explained, elaborated and justified. As a response to this, Islamic hermeneutics emerged. Islamic hermeneutics deals with the relationship between revelation and law and can be described as ways "of imagining texts and their relationship to the law they were supposed to reveal" (Vishanoff 2011: 1, xvii).

There are disagreements among researchers of Islam about when legal theory emerged as an Islamic discipline as well as its function. For instance, Wael B. Hallaq argues that it emerged in the last part of the 4th/10th century, while David R. Vishanoff claims that it emerged and evolved from the time of al-Shafi'i (d. 204/820), the eponym of the Shafii law school. Hallaq regards Islamic legal theory as a method of constructing law, while Vishanoff disagrees with that. Vishanoff argues that the main aim of legal theory has been to justify an inherited and slowly developing legal discourse. In this way, legal theory shapes the law

without determining its specific contents, according to him (Hallaq 2009a: 113; Vishanoff 2011: 8-12, 261-272).

Considering their differences, Hallaq and Vishanoff do agree that Muhammad ibn Idris al-Shafi'i was the first to systematize the idea about an Islamic canon of revelation consisting of the Qur'an and the reports from the Prophet Muhammad. Moreover, that al-Shafi'i was the first to argue that every detail of Islamic law should and must be made to correlate with this canon. Al-Shafi'i brought together ideas from several Islamic disciplines and created a hermeneutic especially designed for jurists (in particular Arabic-speaking jurists), which made this possible. Even though al-Shafi'i was the first to systematize the idea that the Islamic law can and should derive from the language of revelation, he did not invent from scratch the hermeneutic concepts or the technical terms he used. These were already established and in use in the second century after the Prophet's death. At this time the principal topics of the Islamic law as well as several specific rules were also established within the Islamic communities (Hallaq 2009a: 49-51; Vishanoff 2011: 1-2, 34, 62).

Al-Shafi'i emphasized the Arabic language's ambiguity and the language of revelation's abridged form in his hermeneutic. He claimed that in situations where the texts of revelation – the Qur'an and *hadith* – can seem to be in conflict with each other, or with the opinions of the legal jurists, it is possible for an interpreter to draw out the hidden implications of the texts or to modify them so that they can fit into the legal discourse of the jurists. According to al-Shafi'i, the revelation, the speech of God, that is, the Qur'an, is always clear (*mubin*), but it communicates law in different levels of clarity and ambiguity. However, for a jurist who is well-versed in the Arabic language, the language of revelation, it is possible to interpret the texts' hidden implications and to modify the texts in such a way that the revealed texts and the law correspond through the method of "clarifying" meaning (*bayan*) (Vishanoff 2011: 34-62).

The hermeneutical proposal of al-Shafi'i explained how to correlate specific revealed texts with specific rules, or how to harmonize a revealed canon with law. In this way, he treated the revelation as a puzzle. He believed that the imagined interpreter had an idea of what the law should look like and that he "just" had to put the "pieces of revelation" together in the right way in order to reach it. The hermeneutic key, which made this possible, was the Arabic language's semantic polyvalence, according to al-Shafi'i. In this way, he did not give much control to the language of revelation above the process of interpretation; rather, he placed the interpreter in control of this process (Vishanoff 2011: 34-62, 254-278).

Al-Shafi'i's claim that Islamic legal regulations and thus the Islamic law can and should correspond with the Islamic canon gained a lot of support. However, his hermeneutic about ambiguity was contested and debated for a very long time before it was embraced by most of the law schools. During this period of "contestation," dating from the $3^{rd}/9^{th}$ to the $5^{th}/11^{th}$ centuries, the Sunni legal theoreticians were divided between four competing hermeneutic systems that all had different views about the nature of the law, the nature of God's speech and the epistemological relationship between them (Vishanoff 2011: 37-38).

Al-Shafi'i's hermeneutic met most resistance from theoreticians who adhered to a scripturalist hermeneutic system. The scripturalists were represented by the Mu'tazila Baghdad and the Zahiri movements, which emphasized a hermeneutic giving the language of revelation much control over the Islamic law. They embraced al-Shafi'i's idea that all law should be grounded in the Qur'an[40] but rejected his idea about the language of revelation's ambiguity. In contrast to al-Shafi'i, their theory of interpretation was rather inflexible and would not allow the revealed text to reconcile with the jurists' legal discourses. Some of the representatives of the scripturalist Mu'tazila Baghdad, such as al-Nazzam, emphasized that if Islamic law was to be considered a revealed law, it had to follow the Qur'an to the letter. He rejected the idea that humans through interpretation and elaboration could extend the Islamic law to include what was not mentioned in the revelation. He further believed that in all cases not mentioned in the Qur'an, humans were capable of telling what was right and wrong by using reason. The Zahiri literalists, on the other hand, emphasized a literal interpretation of the Qur'an. They argued that Islamic law can only regulate what is explicitly mentioned in the Qur'an and interpreted the words in the Qur'an literally. All other aspects of life, and actions, that the Qur'an does not address could not be regulated by the law, according to their beliefs. This because there is no underlying moral rationality behind God's stated laws from which humans can deduce new ones. In these ways, the scripturalists denied al-Shafi'i's claim that revelation can be extended to address unanswered questions through reasoning by analogy. Thus, scripturalists' general attitude was that law and doctrine must be based on the Qur'an and not on traditions or reasoning by analogy (Vishanoff 2011: 2, 37, 66-69, 71-78, 106-107).

According to Vishanoff, it was the Zahiri and the Mu'tazila Baghdad movements' resistance against humanly constructed regulations based on reasoning and revelation that led to their demises, mainly because it obstructed them from developing legal views of their own. With them, Sunni scripturalism deceased (Vishanoff 2011: 106-107).

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[40] In the beginning, they did not accept al-Shafi'i's claim that the authority of the Qur'an could be extended to include the traditions of the Prophet Muhammad, but after some time they did (Vishanoff 2011: 66).

Another hermeneutic system competing with that of al-Shafi'i's was represented by the Basra Mu'tazila movement. It adopted al-Shafi'i's project of harmonizing text with law but was more oriented toward theology than law. The Basra Mu'tazila focused more on how to explain and justify al-Shafi'i's claim about a revealed canon as a source for law than the law itself. It rejected al-Shafi'i's hermeneutic about ambiguity and defended its position on a theological foundation about the notion that "God's speech can never be ambiguous." The Mu'tazila believed that God's speech, the Qur'an, is created by God. In this way, they rejected the idea about the uncreated Qur'an as one of God's coeternal attributes, which some of its opponents, the Ash'arii theologians, proposed. One of the Basra Mu'tazila theologians, Abd al-Jabbar (d. 415/1025), believed that if God's speech, meaning revelation, was to be regarded as a source of law, it had to be perfectly clear. He developed the principle that God's speech must always function as a clear indicator of God's guidance. In relation to this, Abd al-Jabbar imagined revelation as signs, bits of evidence or indicators of God's will placed in the world by God with the intention that humans, through reasoning from it, might gain knowledge about His guidance and thus the legal value and the consequences of their actions. This reflects the Mu'tazila view and doctrine of the created Qur'an. In contrast to the scripturalists, the Mu'tazila did not interpret the words in the Qur'an literally; instead, they believed that general utterances in the Qur'an could refer to the whole spectrum of its detonations if there was no clear evidence that contradicted this. However, since they, like the scripturalists, rejected the idea of ambiguity in the language of revelation, their hermeneutic system lacked the flexibility that al-Shafi'i's project needed to negotiate between text and law (Vishanoff 2011: 109-110, 122-143).

The Ash'ari theologians represented the third hermeneutical system that in some ways diverged from al-Shafi'i's hermeneutic. They embraced al-Shafi'i's visions that law must be founded on revelation and his hermeneutic about ambiguity in the Arabic language. In contrast to the Mu'tazila theologians, who imagined God's speech, the Qur'an, to be created by God, the Ash'aris believed in the uncreated Qur'an. According to their beliefs, the Qur'an was one of God's real and eternal attributes. In relation to this, they viewed God's law as a divine command. One of the Ash'ari theologians, Abu Bakr al-Baqillani (d. 403/1013), imagined God's speech as a single, undivided non-verbal unit, which eternally consists of a number of expressions where the most important ones are the commands and the prohibitions. These expressions are the starting point for the legal sciences, from where jurists, through reasoning, can gain knowledge about God's speech, which is the law. From this view, God's speech is the goal of the legal regulations, not its departure. The Ash'ari theologians believed

that the language of revelation, Arabic, was ambiguous. Because of this, they allowed revealed texts to modify each other. This hermeneutic gave the imagined interpreters flexibility to define clear intertextual relationships, which was the key to al-Shafi'i's project (Vishanoff 2011: 152-153, 161-179).

However, al-Baqillani and other Ash'ari theologians were more concerned about establishing the ambiguity of the language of revelation and the flexibility of the interpretation than maximizing the amount of legal information an interpreter could derivate from the revelation. For instance, al-Baqillani did not determine the meaning of several verbal forms in the revelation because he believed that it was necessary to rely on additional evidence in order to interpret them. Instead of ascribing a maximum of legal significance to the language of revelation, he relied on human reasoning in order to expand the revelation to include issues it did not address. The law-oriented theorists, who made up the fourth competing hermeneutical system, did not just want flexibility to interpret the reveled texts; they also wanted interpretative power. This means that the law-oriented theorists wanted the possibility to ascribe a maximum of legal significance to the langue of revelation, something the Ash'ari theologians' hermeneutic would not provide them with. Due to its lack of offering the law-oriented theorists the interpretative power they needed, al-Baqillani's legal hermeneutic, and Ash'ari legal hermeneutics in general, did not survive after the 5th/11th century. From that time, it was the legal hermeneutic of the law-oriented theorists that dominated the scene of Sunni legal theory. However, this does not mean that Ash'ari thoughts completely vanished – Ash'ari theology about the uncreated Qur'an was to become Sunni orthodoxy, and many Ash'ari theologians later sought the law-oriented hermeneutical system and an institutionalized home within the Shafii school of law (Vishanoff 2011: 152-153, 158, 161, 178).

The legal theorists within the law-oriented theorist hermeneutical system were soon to internalize the idea about a textual canon of revelation and its status as the foundation of law. Their focus was law and how to maintain the legal discourse they believed was founded in the revealed canon. To maintain and develop the legal discourse, they needed flexibility to reconcile conflicting texts and evidence and power to deduce a maximum of legal meaning from the language of revelation. Their legal hermeneutical system was therefore designed to maximize both interpretational power and flexibility: it gave them power to deduce as much legal meaning as possible from the language of revelation and flexibility to modify that meaning, if necessary, in order to make it correspond with a coherent system of law (Vishanoff 2011: 179, 190).

The legal hermeneutic of the law-oriented theorists consisted of a paradox; they claimed that the language of revelation conveyed a clear and definitive meaning and that it was possible to interpret it to be the opposite of that meaning. This paradox was reflected in al-Shafi'i's project, where he tried to show how the whole legal system was to be found in the Qur'an, at least implicitly (Vishanoff 2011: 191). In line with this, the legal theorists believed that the language of revelation contained a great deal of implicit meaning, a view opposed by the theologically oriented theorists from the Mu'tazila and Ash'ari movements (Vishanoff 2011: 177-178).

To maximize the legal meaning of the language of revelation, the law-oriented theorists did several things. They determined the legal significance of different verb forms and described in detail what the different verb forms entail of other practices. For instance, the majority of the legal theorists agreed that imperatives entail obligatory practices, but they did not always agree on the consequences. Some of them believed that imperatives required immediate obedience. Others believed that imperatives referred not only to one act of obedience but several, while others believed that an imperative that obligates an act of obedience also includes the prohibition of performing the opposite act. In this way, the legal theorists tried to pack as much legal meaning as possible into the imperatives and other verb forms. To maximize the flexibility of interpretations, the law-oriented theorists continued, elaborated and expanded al-Shafi'i's project about reconciling revealed texts with law. For instance, they developed interpretative rules that allowed general texts in the Qur'an to be modified (particularized) by different forms of evidence, such as reports from the Prophet, rational evidence and reasoning by analogy. In the case of two conflicting texts, some also allowed the more particularized text to modify the more general text, regardless if it supposedly had been revealed before or after the general one. In this way, they maximized particularization as a hermeneutic tool (Vishanoff 2011: 191-193).

The law-oriented hermeneutic system was made up by theorists with diverse backgrounds and opinions. Some of them had conflicting views regarding how to reconcile text with law, and they tended to use different rules and prefer different methods to deduce the law from its sources. However, despite their differences, the theorists within this hermeneutic system shared the characteristics of maximizing both the interpretative power and the flexibility to reconcile revealed text with law. The four major Sunni Islamic schools of law, as we know them today, developed comprehensive hermeneutic systems that at different times gravitated toward the law-oriented hermeneutic system. Yet, among the different eponyms of

the law schools, only al-Shafi'i formulated an explicit hermeneutic of how to interpret the revealed language (Vishanoff 2011: 193-196).

Since the 5th/11th century, law-oriented theorists have dominated legal theory within Islam and thus the four major Sunni Islamic law schools. This means that it is their hermeneutic, which emphasizes interpretative power and flexibility, that has characterized and characterizes Islamic legal theory as we know it today (Vishanoff 2011:190, 251-253, 261).

4.3.1 Usul al-fiqh: Glocal institutionalized methodology

The Muslim legal theorist believes that the Islamic law is made up by statements of the legal values of different categories of human actions. Every human action, performed by a particular person at a particular time and under particular circumstances, can be identified to have one out of five legal values: obligatory (*wajib*), recommended (*mandub*), neutral (*mubah*), disapproved (*makruh*) or unlawful (*haram*). The legal values are often defined in relation to the future rewards or punishments they entail. For instance, if one performs an obligatory action, one will be rewarded, and if one fails or omits to perform it, one will be punished. Recommended acts entail rewards, but their omission will not be punished. Neutral acts entail neither reward or punishment. Disapproved acts do not entail punishment but reward if avoided. If one performs a forbidden act, one will be punished, and, likewise, one will be rewarded for avoiding it. The daily prayer, *salat*, is by the legal theorists categorized as an obligatory act, while helping the poor, eating permitted food, divorce and theft are examples of respectively recommended, neutral, restricted and forbidden actions. Even though the five categories of action and their ascribed legal values seem to be fixed and clear, the legal theorists believe that categories can be subdivided and that different legal values can be ascribed to one single action depending upon who performs it, at what time and under what circumstances. In this way, it is possible to imagine Islamic law as a mathematical formula/equation where an action's legal value is dependent upon the combination of act-person-time and circumstance. Only God is thought to know the full legal value of any action. However, Muslim legal theorists claim that humans can gain more or less accurate knowledge about it by interpreting the sources of the law through which God is believed to reveal his will (Hallaq 2009a: 84-87; Hallaq 2009b: 20-21; Vishanoff 2011: 3-4).

As the sources of the law, the legal theorists define the Qur'an, *sunna*, consensus, *ijma*, and reasoning by analogy, *qiyas*. These sources are also known as the roots of jurisprudence, *usul al-fiqh*. In accordance with al-Shafi'i's hermeneutic, the legal theorists

recognize the Qur'an and *sunna* as the revealed canon and the foundation of the law. Regarded as the word of God, the Qur'an is *sharia*'s first and most sacred source. It is believed to contain knowledge about God, human beliefs and how a Muslim should live her or his life in accordance with the will of God (Vishanoff 2011: 4; Hallaq 2009b: 16-19).

The second source of the law is *sunna*, which refers to an established religious norm that is mainly founded on the example of the Prophet Muhammad but can also refer to consensus among his Companions and the practices of the first generations of Muslims in Medina as well[41]. The Prophet Muhammad's *sunna*, however, is made up by "his words, silences, actions and inactions" (Vishanoff 2011: 4). According to Islamic faith, God has made his will known through the Qur'an and the life of the Prophet. Muhammad is regarded as God's chosen messenger. He is believed to have knowledge about God's intentions and to have lived his life in accordance with them. Because of this, Muhammad's life and behavior are a model for Muslims to follow and consequently an important source of law (Hallaq 2009b: 16). The majority of the *sunna* reports are to be found within the *hadith* literature. One *hadith* consists of two parts: content, *matn*, and a chain of narrators, *isnad*. The *hadith*s are divided into different categories based on the numbers of their narrator chains as well as the chains' trustworthiness. For instance, *hadith*s classified as "multiple" have more than three narrator chains, while "isolated" *hadith*s have fewer than four. If a *hadith* is classified as "multiple," it means that the one and the same *hadith* is to be found with four or more different chains of narrators. If it is classified as "isolated," is it to be found with three or fewer than three different narrator chains. The trustworthiness of its narrator chain determines whether the *hadith* is classified as authentic, good, weak or refused. The different law schools and the modern Islamic movements define *sunna* in various ways and use the different categories of *hadith* as a source to Islam and *sharia* variously. However, what they have in common is that they view the *hadith* literature as explanations of the Qur'an – the Qur'an provides you with information about what you should do, while *hadith* tells you how, when, where and how often you should do it (Hallaq 2009b: 16-19; Roald 2001: 110-111; Roald 2004: 70-72).

Consensus, *ijma*, is the third source of the law. Even though it refers to the agreement of the (Muslim) community, it has in practice been used to refer to the agreement of the first generations of Muslims – the Prophet's Companions and their subsequent followers, *sahaba* –

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[41] Of the four Sunni Islamic law schools, it is only the Maliki school that accepts the practices of the first generations of Muslims in Medina as *sunna* (Roald 2001: 109-110). Since the Maliki school's methodology is not locally represented in Trondheim through the women's Islamic fields, it is not dealt with in this thesis.

or the agreement of the most highly learned jurists/scholars, *mujtahid/ulama,* from one particular time or generation. Consensus is used in retrospect. This means that in cases where the legal theorists cannot find the answers they are looking for in the Qur'an or the *sunna*, they turn to consensus among the scholars of the past in order to see what they had approved or disapproved of. Consensus among *sahaba,* or the scholars of the past, is recognized as the right solution and a guarantee against mistakes and delusions. The infallibility of the consensus is legitimized through several *hadith*s that emphasize the idea that through divine grace the Muslim society as a whole is protected against mistakes (Hallaq 2009b: 21-22; Vogt 2005: 90-91).

The fourth major source of the Islamic law is called *qiyas* and refers to a form of analogical legal reasoning. *Qiyas* offers the legal theorists/jurists a set of methods they can use in order to reach a legal norm. Among these methods, reasoning by analogy is the most known and used. As a method, reasoning by analogy makes it possible for the interpreter to draw a logical conclusion from one specific case mentioned in the canon of revelation to a new and different case that is not mentioned in the texts if the two cases have one or more attributes in common. The Qur'an, the *sunna*, consensus and *qiyas* are the legal theorists' primary sources for *sharia*. However, other legal principles can also be used as secondary sources for the law. For instance, two other forms of legal reasoning, called "public interest" (*istislah/maslaha*) and "juristic preference" (*istihsan*) in addition to "customs" (*urf),* (which do not contradict the principles of the law) and "the continuity of performance" (*istihab*) (Hallaq 2009a: 100-110; Hallaq 2009b: 22-27; Roald 2001: 104-107; Vogt 2005: 92-93).

The presentation above shows that Muslim scholars have relied, and do rely, on different methodologies to deduce the law from its sources. To read and interpret what is recognized as the material sources of the law, the revealed canon, they use hermeneutical methods taken from disciplines such as philology, linguistics and exegesis. Alternatively, to gain knowledge of what is recognized as the will of God in cases and situations that are not mentioned in the revealed canon, or to choose the best solutions in cases where the Qur'an and the *sunna* offer a multitude of solutions, they rely on human reasoning. This means that the Islamic law, as we know it, is a combination of "revelation" and reasoning, and has always been. Even though *sharia* according to Muslim beliefs is founded on a revealed canon, the canon does not provide us with a written, fixed and complete law. Rather, the law must be deduced from its sources in various ways and by using various methods. The law is therefore to a large degree the product of *ijtihad*, the qualified Muslim scholars' ability to mediate

between the will of God and the human reality through the various methods of reasoning (Hallaq 2009b: 27).

The four Sunni Islamic law schools represent the Sunni branch's understanding of *sharia*. All of them accept and relate themselves to the roots of jurisprudence, yet they have developed different views and understandings of how to deduce and elaborate *sharia* from its sources as well as how to adapt the law to various contexts. The will of God is by the law schools defined as eternal and unchangeable. However, they do not always agree on which methods to use to acquire knowledge about God's guidance in different situations, contexts and cases. For instance, some put more emphasis on revealed texts than human reasoning in their quest for knowledge, while others do the opposite. The various methods they have developed in relation to this can therefore be seen as various methodologies or strategies of acquiring knowledge about Islam.

The same can be said about Shiite law schools and global Islamic movements such as the Muslim Brotherhood and Salafism – they, too, represent different methodologies and methods for gaining knowledge about Islam and *sharia*. And in this thesis, I will treat them as such – different methodologies, or "strategies" in de Certeau's meaning of the word, and methods of acquiring knowledge about Islam. In the following, I will give a very brief presentation of the global methodologies and methods of acquiring knowledge about Islam that are represented in Trondheim through the different Islamic fields the women engage in. Then I will explain how the local Islamic institutionalized fields' methods of gaining knowledge about Islam can be seen as local expressions of these, that is, as glocal methodologies and methods.

4.3.2 Hanafi

Abu Hanifa (d. 150/767), is the eponym of the Hanafi law school. He embraced al-Shafi'i's project quite early on and especially the idea about a revealed canon. What characterized Abu Hanifa, and characterizes the Hanafi school, is that, more than the other Sunni Islamic law schools, they distinguish between what they recognize as Islam and *sharia*'s "eternal and unchangeable" and "changeable" aspects. Islam's eternal and unchangeable aspect is the notion of the unity of God, *tawhid*. The Islamic doctrine about God's unity can never be subject to historical changes or adapted to various social circumstances. It is regarded by the Hanafi school as absolute and Islam's eternal "essence." *Sharia*'s main goal is to lead people to *tawhid*, according to this school. The law is therefore believed to consist of the totality of Islamic beliefs and practices designed to lead people to *tawhid* and to follow its implications.

However, the Islamic law, and its contents, is believed to differ from time to time because it changes in accordance with shifting social and cultural circumstances. Consequently, it is necessary for *sharia* to adapt and change to meet the needs of people who live at different times and under different social and cultural circumstances. This means that the Hanafi school views the law as consisting of both eternal and unchangeable as well as changeable elements, where the latter needs to be subject for interpretation. Because of this, the Hanafi school holds that Islamic beliefs and practices can and should change in accordance with shifting times and social and cultural contexts. Thus, they view *sharia* as a flexible law that can change in accordance with its time and surroundings (Dorroll 2014: 18-25; Vishanoff 2011: 27, 224).

The sources and methods the Hanafi school uses to deduce and elaborate a flexible *sharia,* and to adapt it to shifting contexts, are many. Generally, the Hanafi school's interpretation of the law relies more on reasoning than texts than the other Sunni law schools. This means that they prefer to build the law on the opinions of the religious scholars rather than the traditions of the Prophet in cases and situations that are not mentioned in the Qur'an. This means that their approach to the interpretation of Islam is more pragmatic and practical than the other law schools, something that is reflected in their sources and methods (Dorroll 2014: 19-22; Roald 2004: 68-69, 72-77).

The Hanafi school recognizes and uses all the roots of jurisprudence – the Qur'an, *sunna*, consensus, *ijma*, and analogy, *qiyas*. The revealed canon is their primary source to Islam. They use authentic and well-known *hadith*s in their interpretation. The consensus of the Prophet's Companions, *sahaba*, and the consensus among religious scholars, *ulama,* are also used as sources. However, after the Qur'an and the *sunna*, their main source and method for gaining knowledge about Islam and *sharia* is reasoning. They use reasoning by analogy, *qiyas*, but also other forms of legal reasoning, such as "juristic preference," *istihsan,* as a secondary source to the law. "Juristic preference" refers to a method where a jurist or a religious scholar chooses among several possible regulations within one case. By using the legal principle and method of "juristic preference," the Hanafi scholars or jurists can choose the legal evidence that is most suitable for the situation, and they can choose to use one *hadith* over another if that is more suitable for the situation. As another secondary source to the law, the Hanafi school uses customs, *urf*. This means that local customs that do not contradict the essence of Islam, *tawhid*, can be legitimized as being in accordance with Islam even though they lack references in the Qur'an and the *sunna*. The Hanafi school's use of "juristic preference" and "customs" as secondary sources to the law clearly indicates that they have a pragmatic and practical approach to religious questions and thus Islamic knowledge

acquisition. It also reflects their view of *sharia* as a flexible law (Dorroll 2014: 19-22; Roald 2001: 105; Roald 2004: 72-77).

The Hanafi school became the official law school in the Ottoman Empire and is today the dominant law school in Turkey. "The Turkish understanding" of Islam and *sharia* are therefore highly influenced by the Hanafi school of law and can be seen as a representation of it. It is the Presidency of Religious Affairs, the Diyanet, which has the main responsibility to produce, maintain and transmit knowledge about Islam to the Turkish people (Dorroll 2014: 3-8, 19). The Diyanet's understanding of Islam is realist and pragmatic in the way that it uses Sunni Islamic sources, mainly from the Hanafi tradition, to negotiate boundaries between the religious and secular. This means that its representatives, through different forms of reasoning, are redrawing the limits between the religious and the secular as the limits between the unchangeable and the changeable and the eternal and the historically determined. In this way, they redefine parts of Islam that were earlier regarded as unnegotiable and untouchable to become changeable and thus subject to social reform. In this way, they use "old" sources to support their new (re)interpretations (Dorroll 2014: 14-30). For instance, in 2006, the Diyanet took the initiative to revise the *hadith* collections in order to make them more up-to-date and more in accordance with current times and situations. As a result, they published an edited *hadith* collection in 2013, where they, among other things, had removed *hadith*s that discriminated against women. They defended the removal of specific *hadith*s by claiming that those *hadith*s had been misunderstood or that they reflected historical cultural practices and ideas that were no longer valid today and thus changeable elements (Akyol 2006; Heneghan 2013; Schleifer 2008). Since the Diyanet uses the Hanafi school's methodology and methods, they can claim that their understanding of Islam is in continuation with the Islamic tradition of knowledge and thus "true" Islam (Dorroll 2014: 25-26).

Mevlana aims to help its members practice Islam in the same ways as they used to practice it in Turkey. Since Islam is a minority religion in Trondheim, their members do not have many different Islamic courses, ritual activities, prayer and worship facilities to choose from. The institution's main concern is therefore to provide its members with such and make it easy for them to live as Muslims in Trondheim. Mevlana has no ambitions of promoting a "new" or a "Norwegian-Turkish" understanding of Islam. Instead, it embraces a Turkish-Kurdish mosque in Trondheim and identifies its members as Hanafi Muslims. In this way, Mevlana is a local Islamic institutional field with close transnational bonds to Turkey and the Hanafi school of law.

Mevlana gets its imams from Turkey. The imam who worked in the mosque from 2010 to 2013 was trained, approved and financed by the Diyanet. His wife, who volunteered as an imam for the women in the mosque, was also trained by the Diyanet. She was not educated as an imam, but she had taken some religious courses arranged by the Diyanet, which had given her authorization to teach others about the Qur'an. This means that the religious authorities in Mevlana, those who have the primary responsibility for the mosque's Islamic educational activities, represent the Diyanet, who promotes the Hanafi school's understanding of Islam. It is important to note that it is not only imams who function as teachers within the institution. Mevlana has several members who volunteer as teachers and who are not trained by the Diyanet. Still, they, too, identify as Hanafi.

The Qur'an and *hadith* are Mevlana's main sources to Islam. In addition, Mevlana uses commentaries to the Qur'an, *tafsir*, different *hadith* collections and various Islamic books and booklets. These books are often thematically organized and supported by verses from the Qur'an and *hadith* and include commentaries from Islamic scholars. Mevlana uses Arabic versions of the Qur'an but also bilingual versions with Turkish translations. Some versions have phonetic transcriptions of the Arabic language as well. Its other sources to Islam are written in Turkish since the majority of Mevlana's members cannot speak Arabic. Most of Mevlana's written sources are translated, approved and published by the Diyanet.

The sources published by the Diyanet are, among others, translated versions of Arabic *hadith* collections and commentaries to the Qur'an, *tafsir*. However, many of the Diyanet's publications are more than just translations into Turkish. Many of the texts are supplemented with commentaries and interpretations from Turkish Hanafi scholars. Others are revised versions of classical Islamic texts, such as the edited *hadith* collection mentioned above. This is not the first *hadith* collection published by the Diyanet – it has collected, translated and published both extensive and smaller *hadith* collections before this one. Many of these are supplemented with commentaries about how to read and understand the different *hadith*s and commentaries about the *hadith* soundness, including information about the chain of narrators as to whether they are authentic, good, weak, etc. For instance, Mevlana uses a *hadith* collection called "Women," which deals with "everything" one needs to know about women and their role in Islam, that is, ritual obligations, religious practices, gender roles, etc. This collection not only consists of *hadith*s that implicitly or explicitly deal with women but also includes explanations and commentaries from Islamic scholars, Qur'an verses and *tafsir* explanations to illuminate the different topics. The source material published by the Diyanet is often organized in a way that makes it easy to practice Islam. For instance, every Friday

evening, a group of women gather in Mevlana's mosque to recite selected chapters from the Qur'an together. The women do not use the whole Qur'an or an original version of the Qur'an during the recitation but instead use a Qur'an booklet specifically designed for Friday recitation and worship. The booklet, published by the Diyanet, consists of selected chapters[42], *sura*s, from the Qur'an, which the Prophet Muhammad, according to tradition, used to recite on Fridays.

Mevlana's use of the Turkish language in rituals and educational settings is in line with the Hanafi methodology. The legal opinions of Abu Hanifa allowed people to use non-Arabic languages in ritual settings. For instance, he accepted that the Qur'an was recited in Farsi (Persian) and that the ritual call to prayer, *adhan*, and the common phrase "God is greater," the *takbir*, was articulated in a non-Arabic language. The reason Abu Hanifa accepted the use of non-Arabic languages in such settings is that he distinguished between the meaning of a word and the word itself. His legal opinions concerning this were founded on an idea that favored the meaning of a word over the word itself. A word's meaning is more important than its specific expression, according to this view. So, if one understands the meaning of the phrase "God is greater" or the Islamic call to prayer, the purpose of the words has been fulfilled. In this way, Abu Hanifa distinguished between the meaning of the Qur'anic text and its external expression (Dorroll 2014: 20-21).

To adapt the Islamic knowledge to the current situation, Mevlana also uses reasoning as a source to Islam. By reasoning, I do not mean legal reasoning with the intent of deducing the law from its sources but individual reasoning in order to translate the Islamic message to the new context. The woman imam, for instance, builds her lectures about various Islamic topics on the Qur'an and the *hadith*. However, to support the topics she is raising and to adjust them to the context of Trondheim and Mevlana's congregation, she uses her own experiences and personal opinions to explain and contextualize them. Her use of "individual reasoning" to adapt the Islamic message to the new situation corresponds with the Hanafi school's pragmatic and practical approach to religious questions.

Mevlana uses the Hanafi school's jurisprudence, *fiqh*, to gain knowledge about Islam. This means that they follow Hanafi *fiqh* as a norm and that they search Hanafi answers and solutions to their religious questions. Mevlana acknowledges and accepts the other Sunni Islamic law schools and regards them as different "paths" or "methods," which all lead to the

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[42] Some of these selected chapters, *sura*, are sura 2 (*Al-Baqarah*/The Cow), sura 7 (*Al-A'râf*/The Heights), sura 18 (*Al-Kahf*/The Cave), sura 36 (*Yâ Sîn*/Ya Sin), sura 46 (*Al-Ahqaf*/The Wind-curved Sandhills) and sura 55 (*Ar-Rahmân*/The Beneficent).

same "goal." However, its members are encouraged to practice Islam the Hanafi way. Thus, it disapproves of mixing and implementing elements from other law schools into religious practices. For this reason, the imams and teachers in the mosque actively correct people's practices if they believe that someone is conducting Islamic rituals the wrong way or if they are not following the Hanafi way. By intervening in people's practices this way, Mevlana is trying to establish continuity and conformity in its members' practices by using Hanafi jurisprudence as a norm.

Due to its sources and methods for gaining knowledge about Islam, its identification with the Hanafi school of law and its close bond to Turkey and the Diyanet, Mevlana can be seen as a local expression of the Hanafi school's methodology and methods. What characterizes Mevlana's glocal methodology and methods is that it follows and is determined by the Hanafi school and that it at the same time is localized and adapted to its surroundings in Trondheim.

4.3.3 Shafii

The Shafii school's methodology and methods for gaining knowledge about Islam and *sharia* evolved from al-Shafiʻi's hermeneutic about the revealed canon and the ambiguity in the language of revelation.

Al-Shafiʻi was very Qur'an-oriented. He claimed that the Qur'an reveals the Islamic law in different ways but that all law originates from this source. He also recognized *Sunna*, in the form of the *sunna* of the Prophet, as an important and determining source to *sharia*. Yet, *sunna* is given a secondary role to the Qur'an, and its main function is either to confirm or elaborate the Qur'an. It is therefore no surprise that the Qur'an and the *sunna* together are the Shafii school of law's primary and second sources to Islam (Vishanoff 2011: 34-40).

In contrast to the Hanafi and the Maliki schools, the Shafii school accepts only the Prophet Muhammad's *sunna* as a source of law. This means that it rejects the use of the Companions' *sunna* and the practices of the first generations of Muslims in Medina as sources to *sharia*. The Shafii school is also restrictive in its use of *hadith*. They only accept *hadith*s with narrator chains, *isnad*, consisting of known and trustworthy narrators and where the chain can be traced back to the Prophet Muhammad himself as the first narrator (Roald 2001: 104-106; Roald 2004: 79-81; Wains 2003: 68).

As a third source to the law, the Shafii school uses *qiyas* in the form of analogical reasoning. They are restrictive in their use of *qiyas* and only accept analogical reasoning that is solidly founded in the Qur'an and the *sunna* of the Prophet. This can be seen as a way to

restrict the jurists' use of other forms of legal reasoning, such as "juristic preference," *istihsan*, which is much used as a secondary source among Hanafi scholars. The Shafii school's fourth source to the law is consensus, *ijma*. Here they only accept the consensus of Sunni scholars, *mujtahid*, and not the consensus of community (Roald 2001: 105-106; Roald 2004: 79-81; Wains 2003: 68-70).

The methodology and methods of the local Islamic institution, Dar El Eman Islamic Center (DIC), correspond with the Shafii school in many ways but diverge from it in others. Like the Shafii school, DIC uses the Qur'an and *hadith* in the form of the reports about the Prophet Muhammad as its primary sources to Islam. Included in its primary sources are also commentaries to the Qur'an, *tafsir*. The Qur'an is regarded as the word of God. *Hadith* is recognized and used as a supplement to the Qur'an because it is believed to contain details about the Islamic faith and practices. *Tafsir* is recognized as commentaries and elaborations of the Qur'an and used as such. According to DIC, these three sources, the Qur'an, *hadith* and *tafsir*, must be read and used as a whole since they complement and explain each other. So, to extract the right knowledge from these sources, it is not possible to use just one of them or to use the sources independently. That the Qur'an and *hadith* are used as DIC's primary sources to Islam is reflected in the institution's work. For instance, in 2011 one of DIC's imams published a book[43] in which he argued that female genital mutilation (FGM) contradicts *sharia* and thus Islam because it lacks support in the Qur'an and sound Prophetic *hadith*s (Mohamud 2011).

The Arabic language is regarded as a key to acquire a proper understanding of the Islamic sources. DIC emphasizes that in order to gain knowledge about the will of God from these sources, they must be read and interpreted by a person who is learned in the Arabic language. If they are read by a person who has not mastered Arabic, they can easily be misread, and it is possible to deduce false or wrong information from them. This is explained with references to the Arabic language's ambiguity. Since a word can have several possible meanings in Arabic, you can deduce the wrong meaning from a Qur'anic verse if you misinterpret just one word. By stressing the Arabic language's ambiguity, and by using the Qur'an and *hadith* as primary sources to Islam, DIC's methods for gaining knowledge about Islam correspond with those of the Shafii school.

As secondary sources to Islam and *sharia*, DIC uses the ideas and opinions of various Islamic scholars, *ulama*, and regulations and solutions from the four Sunni Islamic law

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[43] The title of the book is *Nei! Islam avviser omskjæring av kvinner* (in English, *No! Islam Rejects the Circumcision of Women*).

schools. According to DIC, it is not necessary to rely upon the law schools if you find the knowledge and the answers you are looking for in the Qur'an, *hadith* and *tafsir*. However, when you are faced with situations and cases that are not mentioned or dealt with in these sources, you must use secondary sources. Many of DIC's members and its imams have backgrounds from countries where the Shafii school dominates. Consequently, many of its members' everyday religious practices are influenced by this law school's regulations. For this reason, the institution follows the Shafii school as a general norm in relation to ritual and religious practices. For instance, the Friday sermon in DIC builds after the Shafii school's model and regulations of how to structure and what to include in a sermon. This means that their sermons are made up by three "sessions." The first session is devoted to God and includes showing grace and thanking Him. The second is devoted to the Prophet and thanking him. In the third session, the imams are free to choose the topic they want to talk about. The topic should, however, be of interest to and importance for Muslims and their everyday lives, and it must be illustrated and explained in light of relevant verses, *aya*s, from the Qur'an and *hadith*s. DIC also uses books written by Shafii scholars as sources to Islam. For instance, it uses the *hadith* collection *Bulugh al-maram min adillat al-ahkam*, also referred to as *Ahadith Ahkam*, written by the Shafii scholar Ibn Hajar (d. 852/1449) and much used within Shafii jurisprudence, *fiqh* (Jaques 2009: 1-2, 129).

Even though DIC uses sources from the Shafii school to increase its knowledge about Islam and follows the school's regulations as a norm in its daily practices, it does not direct its members to follow it. This means that DIC does not interfere with how members perform Islamic rituals and practices if their acts do not contradict Islam or if its members do not seek guidance about it. In contrast to Mevlana, which actively corrects people's practices if they diverge from the Hanafi norm, DIC accepts differences in its members' religious practices.

DIC's methodology and methods diverge from those of Mevlana and the Shafii school in other ways as well. Where Mevlana follows the Hanafi school in every situation, DIC sometimes chooses to use knowledge and regulations from all the law schools and not just Shafii. DIC believes that some situations and cases demand that you use all the schools of law as sources to Islam. Moreover, it holds that it is possible to gain knowledge from all the Sunni Islamic law schools and not just one if one is in possession of higher Islamic learning. DIC acknowledges and accepts all the law schools and regards them as more or less the same. As the key person from DIC articulated it: "To me, they are all the same. Imam Malik, Shafi'i, they are all Muslims, they are all Sunni, they are all good, but only different." The difference is explained with references to the law schools' different approaches, opinions and solutions

to different issues. Thus, in some situations, DIC uses all the law schools as sources to approach a problem from different angles. The institution maintains that there are always several solutions to a problem and uses the law schools as different perspectives and solutions to a problem.

The eponyms of the Sunni Islamic law schools are all regarded by DIC as great imams with a high level of Islamic knowledge. Since all the imams were in possession of important Islamic knowledge, they should not be ignored. According to DIC, if you only follow the knowledge of one law school, you will turn your back on a lot of important Islamic knowledge and lose more than you gain. To meet the needs of its members, DIC does not just follow the Shafii school but regards it as more practical and pragmatic to follow all law schools in some situations. For instance, marriage and divorce are two of the situations where DIC chooses to follow the regulations from all the law schools. According to DIC, the Shafii school has very strict rules for contracting and ending marriages. Thus, to help members who wish to get married to conduct a marriage and to avoid too many divorces and broken homes, DIC uses knowledge and regulations from all the law schools to adjust to these situations. As sources in regard to the regulations of the different Sunni Islamic law schools, DIC uses, among others, Ibn Rushd's *The Distinguished Jurist's Primers*. The imams at DIC can also read books from the respective law schools and compare their different thoughts and opinions themselves.

DIC legitimates its situational use of all the law schools with reference to changing times and circumstances. DIC thinks that it is impossible for a mosque in Trondheim today to meet the needs of its members if it strictly follows just one school of law. Muslims in Trondheim have various backgrounds and needs, and they practice a minority religion. So, to adapt to the new and local conditions, it uses all the law schools as sources. DIC mentions neither "analogy," *qiyas,* nor consensus, *ijma,* as its institutional sources to Islam. However, since it uses the Shafii school's regulations as a norm in everyday religious practices, and regulations from all the other law schools in specific situations, DIC uses these methods implicitly as sources to Islam and *sharia*. This is because the respective schools of law relate to them in different ways in their jurisprudence, *fiqh*. However, in contrast to Mevlana, DIC does not put much emphasis on reasoning to adapt the Islamic knowledge to the context of Trondheim and local situations. Instead, it uses knowledge and regulations from all the Sunni Islamic law schools, not only Shafii, for such purposes.

Since DIC uses the Qur'an and *hadith* as its primary sources to Islam and stresses the importance of the Arabic language and emphasizes its ambiguity, it can be seen as a local

representative of the Shafii school's methodology and methods in Trondheim. Still, since it uses all the law schools as sources in some situations, DIC also represents a rupture with the Shafii school and the tradition of following just one school of law. Yet, this does not mean that DIC's methodology and methods diverge from those of the Shafii school. It only means that DIC does not think that the Shafii school can provide all the knowledge it needs as an institution to cope with its members' needs. Because of this, DIC finds it necessary to include knowledge from other law schools as well. What characterizes DIC's glocal methodology and methods is that it follows the Shafii school as a norm but that it diverges from this norm in some situations to make it easier for its members to live in accordance with Islam in Trondheim.

4.3.4 Twelver Shia

Jafari jurisprudence – that is, Twelver Shia's jurisprudence – is in many ways different from the Sunni Islamic jurisprudence. In what follows I will give a brief presentation of the main points in the Twelver Shia's methodology and methods for gaining knowledge about Islam and *sharia*. However, to understand this methodology, it is first necessary to introduce some of the main ideas within Twelver Shia's theology.

The Twelver Shia's theology focuses on the following three main beliefs: faith in the divine Imamate, faith in the Imams' infallibility and faith in the hidden Imam. The first builds on an idea that there are qualitative differences between divine and human qualifications. God's intellect is perfect, while the human intellect is imperfect. God knows everything, while humans do not. It is therefore impossible for humans to have knowledge about the will of God, or His law, if God does not make it known. This means that if God wants humans to follow His will, He must reveal it. Shia Muslims believe that God communicates His will through some chosen persons. God has chosen several persons with special and superior qualifications and made them prophets and imams. The prophets' functions are to reveal God's law and guide humans toward God. The Imams shall guide human toward God as well, however not through revelation. Their task is to preserve and explain God's law to humans. The Imams are regarded as the substitutes of the Prophet Muhammad in his absence (Hallaq 2009a: 113-115; Momen 1985: 147-150; Roald 2004: 83).

The faith in the Imam's infallibility builds on the idea that the Imam is free from sin, infallible and perfect. The Imam is believed to be in possession of special knowledge about the will of God, and by being chosen by God, he is superior to other humans in his time. He is regarded as equal to the Prophet, but unlike the Prophet, he is immune from making mistakes.

As an infallible man, the Imam can transmit sound knowledge about God's law to humans. According to Shia beliefs, the Imam designates his successor through divine guidance (Hallaq 2009a: 115; Momen 1985: 147, 153-157; Roald 2004: 83).

Included in the faith in the hidden Imam is the idea that the hidden Imam continues to influence the religious scholars' legal interpretations. The hidden Imam refers to the twelfth Imam, who disappeared around 260/874 and who, since that time, is believed to be in hiding. According to Shia beliefs, the twelfth Imam did not designate his successor on purpose. Instead, he will one day return as the "Rightly guided," *al-mahdi,* with the Islamic law and implement it in the world. Until that day, he will stay hidden and continue to influence the scholars' legal interpretations in various indirect ways (Hallaq 2009a: 115-116; Momen 1985: 161, 165-166; Roald 2004: 103-105).

The Twelver Shia's methodology relates directly to their theology. This is reflected in their roots of jurisprudence, *usul al-fiqh*. The Twelver Shia's first source to the law is the Qur'an. As a second source, they use *sunna*. As *sunna*, they identify the *sunna* of the Prophet Muhammad but also the *sunna* of the Imams. Shia Muslims have their own *hadith* collection. It consists of *hadith*s narrated by the Imams and their companions, which are recorded in the Four Books. Sunni *hadith* collections are not regarded as trustworthy by the Shias, who do not accept them. According to Shia beliefs, the Sunni *hadith*s have been corrupted due to political, theological and legal interests within the Sunni community and are therefore founded on a lie (Hallaq 2009a: 116-117; Momen 1985: 172-174; Roald 2004: 83).

The Twelver Shia's third source to the law is consensus, *ijma*. They accept consensus among the jurists as long as it includes the opinion of one of the eleven first Imams or the hidden Imam. As a fourth main source, they use reason(ing), *aql*. According to their beliefs, human reason can distinguish between what is good and evil and what is beneficial and harmful. Because of this, it is possible for the jurist to deduce the revealed indicants and legal norm from the Qur'an through reasoning. Juridical reasoning, *ijtihad*, is therefore regarded as an important method to deduce the law from its sources within Twelver Shia methodology (Hallaq 2009a: 118-121; Momen 1985: 185-186; Roald 2004: 83, 103-105).

The Islamic scholars within Shia Islam have titles and functions different from those of the Sunni Islamic scholars. Religious teachers are referred to as *mulla*s. A *mujtahid*, the jurist who can use *ijtihad*, is referred to as an *ayatollah*. The most learned scholars are referred to as grand *ayatollah*s, *marja al-taqlid*, which means the one to follow in religious questions. All Shia Muslims *must* choose one *marja al-taqlid* to follow and follow the legal opinions of this scholar. To follow the legal opinion of a religious scholar is therefore an

important method of gaining knowledge about Islam and *sharia* within Shia Islam (Momen 1985: 175-176, 204-206; Roald 2004: 105).

The local Islamic institutional field, Ahl O'Bait (AOB), follows the Twelver Shia's methodology and methods. During my time in the field, there were no formal religious authorities or teachers within the institution. In meetings, conversations and interviews with members of the institution, no one proclaimed that AOB uses "these sources" or "these methods." Instead, they referred to Twelver Shia's sources in general.

AOB defines the Qur'an as its primary source to Islam and *sharia*. As a second source, AOB uses the Shia *hadith* collections. All the members of AOB follow a grand *ayatollah*. The grand *ayatollah*s are recognized as sources to Islam and *sharia*, and it is regarded as a good method to follow one. That the members in AOB use grand *ayatollah*s as a source and method to increase their Islamic knowledge means that they read books written by them and that they search for answers to religious questions from the different grand *ayatollah*s' websites.

AOB, as an institution, does not follow *one* specific grand *ayatollah*. Its members are free to follow whomever they want. Among the Iraqis, Grand *Ayatollah* Al-Sayyid[44] Ali al-Sistani is the most popular religious authority, and many follow him. Grand *Ayatollah* Sayyid Sadiq Husayni Shirazi is the one who has the most followers among the Afghan members. One of the reasons for his popularity is that he has given Muslims in Norway (and Trondheim) permission to follow other countries prayer times during the brightest summer months[45].

To gain knowledge about Islam, the members of AOB use the Qur'an and Shia *hadith* collections, or they use the works or legal opinions of grand *ayatollah*s. Because of this, they can be seen as a glocal representation of the Twelver Shia methodology and methods in Trondheim.

4.4 The Muslim Brotherhood (MB)

4.4.1 Background and global organization
The MB regards Islam as a unique religion since it encompasses all aspects of the human life and because its foundations are both practical and spiritual. The movement views Islam as the solution for individuals and the society. It wants to lead Muslim individuals and societies back

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[44] *Al-Sayyid*, or just *sayyid*, is an honorific title that refers to descendants of the Prophet Muhammad (Corboz 2016: x).
[45] See Grand Ayatollah Sayyid Sadiq Husayni Shirazi's *Islamic Law. Books One and Two. Handbook of Islamic Rulings on Muslim's Duties and Practices* (Shirazi 2013: 701).

to Islam because it believes that Islam can provide salvation in the hereafter and happiness and success in this life. But in order to change a society, one must first change the individuals in it. Thus, the movement works primarily toward a spiritual awakening among individuals (Mitchell 1969: 232-235).

The MB is a global Islamic reform movement, which has become an important and influential socio-political actor in many Arabic and Muslim countries. It was established in Egypt in 1928 as a response to major social, political, cultural and economic changes that took place within the Egyptian society from the late 19th century and in a context influenced by Arab nationalism and Western colonialization of Muslim countries. The organization aims at representing the ideal Islamic society and a strategy for change (Ortega 2014: 7-8; Roald 2001: 37, 50).

Hasan al-Banna (1906-1949) is the founder of the movement. He was inspired by Sufism in general and particularly the *Hasafiyya* Brothers Sufi order, which impressed and attracted him. In addition, he was inspired by the thoughts of the two reformers behind the *Salafiyya* movement, al-Afghani (1838-1897) and Muhammad 'Abduh (1849-1906). Here, it is important to note that the *Salafiyya* movement is a modernist reform movement and not the same as the conservative Salafi movement rooted in the Hanbali law school. Educated as a primary school teacher, al-Banna emphasized knowledge and education*, tarbiya,* for the masses (Roald 2001: 38, 50; Mitchell 1969: 1-11; Ortega 2014: 7). He had a very practical view of knowledge and education and believed that learning should be restricted to what people needed to know "to fulfil the religious duties and earn a livelihood" (al-Banna quoted in Mitchell 1969: 3).

Al-Banna had several aims for the MB. He wanted to create an organization that could function as an adviser to governmental authorities on how to rule in an Islamic way, and he wanted to make it possible and easy for individuals and societies to live in accordance with the message of Islam. The latter could be achieved by educating the masses, according to al-Banna. For this reason, the organization has established several mosques and schools to make education and knowledge more available to the masses as a part of their extensive *da'wa* (invitation to Islam) work (Ortega 2014: 7-8).

The MB did, and does, not only influence Egyptian society. The writings of the Brotherhood and some of its leading scholars – Hasan al-Banna, Sayyid Qutb (executed in 1966) and Yusuf al-Qaradawi[46] (1926-) – have influenced Islamic movements all over the

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[46] Yusuf al-Qaradawi has presided the European Council of Fatwa and Research (ECFR) since it was established in 1997 (MEMRI TV 2019; Shavit and Spengler 2017: 363). ECFR's secretary-general since 2000 has been

world. During al-Banna's reign, the organization spread to other Muslim countries due to his charismatic leadership. Today, it is a global Islamic movement. In 1982, the International Organization of the Muslim Brotherhood (IOMB) was established as a result of the movement's general growth inside and outside Egypt. In its founding days, the IOMB tried to establish unity between all the different Brotherhood branches throughout the world. Today, it aims to be an international group that unites its member in their common goal of creating an Islamic state (Caeiro and Gräf 2014: 119-121; Ortega 2014: 8; Roald 2001: 38; Tamam 2014: 89-93).

A strong hieratical structure characterizes the MB's organization. The head of the organization is the General Guide, which since 2009 has been Muhammad Badie'.[47] The General Guide leads the organization together with the two general bodies of the organizations, namely the General Guidance Board and the General Council. Within these bodies there are clearly defined hierarchal positions. The organization is further divided into several departments, sections, committees and administrational offices, each with defined positions and tasks, which are subject to the two general bodies (Kandil 2015: 34, 136-137; Mitchell 1969: 164-184; Roald 2001: 38).

The MB defines itself as an Islamic and global movement. It views Islam as a comprehensive system that influences and affects all aspects of life. The movement's Islamic character is expressed through its doctrine, articulated at the movement's fifth congress in 1939 (Ortega 2014: 8).

> We believe that the rules and teachings of Islam are comprehensive in organizing people's affairs in this life and the next, and that those who believe that these teachings only cover worship and spiritual matters are mistaken. Islam is belief and worship; homeland and citizenship; religion and state; spirituality and practice; revelation and sword (al-Banna quoted in Kandil 2015: 85-86).

The movement's global character is reflected in its self-definition, which contains Islamic, global, political, spiritual and social aspects. This means that the Brotherhood regards itself as

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Hussain Halawa (Caeiro 2011b: 83, note 5). al-Qaradawi officially left the Muslim Brotherhood in 1956 because he wanted to be independent. Still, he continues to be influenced by the movement and shares many of their ideas and he is regarded as an important religious authority within it (Caeiro and Gräf 2014: 120-121; Vogt 2005: 106-108).

[47] Even though Muhammad Badie' has been the elected General Guide since 2009, Mahoud Ezzat has functioned as the acting General Guide since 2013 (Kandil 2015: 11, 34).

a community consisting of and dealing with all these aspects. The MB is, according to al-Banna[48],

> Salafi predication (Qur'an and *Sunna*), Sunni (purified Sunna), Sufi (purification of the soul), sports group (the strong believer is better than the weak one), scientific and cultural circle (the search for knowledge is a duty for every Muslim), economic enterprise (finance and good managing) and social ideology (healing the evils of society) (Ortega 2014: 8-9).

The Brotherhood emphasizes a contemporary and contextualized approach to Islam, where Islam must be interpreted according to time and place and within an Islamic framework. It wants an Islam that works for present-day Muslims and is, because of this, oriented around practices and practicalities. The emphasis on contextualizing Islam influences its relationship to traditional Islamic institutions, such as the Islamic law schools. The MB does not think that the law schools' legal regulations, *fiqh*, are adapted to current times and situations, and that, thus, they cannot meet the needs of contemporary Muslims and societies. For this reason, the Brotherhood does not follow one specific law school, nor does it think that present-day Muslims, including its members, should feel bound or restricted by the law schools' jurisprudence. This does not mean that the MB totally rejects the traditional law schools and their legal regulations, only that the movement has its own way of relating to them (Mitchell 1969: 237-238; Roald 2001: 40, 107).

4.4.2 Methodology

Today's Islamic *scholars* can, according the MB, deduce the law, *sharia*, from its sources and accommodate it to the present time and situations. This means they believe that contemporary Islamic scholars are free to do as the traditional legal jurists within the traditional Islamic law school did "for our times and our situations" (Mitchell 1969: 237). Since the exegetic (legal) inheritance from the traditional Islamic law schools is not contextualized in the form of being adapted to present times, places and situations, the MB regards much of it as irrelevant and meaningless for present-day Muslims. The numerous exegeses are not totally rejected by the organization, though. It views them as important historical guides for the present as well as informative and useful dictionaries of the Arabic language and tends to choose freely from

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[48] For a more elaborate description of al-Banna's definition of the MB, see Roald (2001: 39).

among their legal regulations to reach its own legal conclusions. However, the MB rejects the notion that these traditional institutions shall determine how Muslims today live their lives in accordance with Islam and the idea that a Muslim should be bound to one specific law school and follow it in all aspects of life (Mitchell 1969: 237-238; Roald 2001: 40, 107).

The MB views *sharia* as a progressive law. They believe that if *sharia* is deduced from the right and "pure" sources in the right ways, it expresses God's will and can function as a divine guidance for Muslim individuals and societies in all times, places and situations. Thus, *sharia* is, for the Brotherhood, a flexible, developing, general and universal law that can lead both individuals and societies to salvation and success in this life and in the hereafter. According the MB, it is a religious duty, and a key to success in this life, for Muslims to follow *sharia*. Any kind of problems in society, be they social, political, economic or cultural, are explained with references to the idea that individuals and societies have turned away from *sharia* and Islam. This means that the MB sees *sharia*, and Islam, as the solution to all problems and challenges and as essential for humans and societies. Their mission is therefore to return themselves and their followers back to the principles of Islam and the "right" path (Mitchell 1969: 235-239; Kandil 2015: 115-118).

The Qur'an and the *sunna* of the Prophet are by the MB defined as *sharia*'s main sources and the "pure" sources of Islam. The Qur'an is regarded as God's final revelation and believed to contain the "Truth" about how individuals and societies can live their lives in accordance with God's guidance. The *sunna* is regarded as a supplement to the Qur'an and as a spiritual inspiration and guide for Muslim society. However, the movement holds that the traditions after the Prophet have suffered corruptions due to historical and internal conflicts within Muslim communities. So, if the Qur'an and the *sunna* are going to have more relevance in the life of Muslims today, the following two things must be done by Muslim scholars: the Qur'an must be given a new and clearer interpretation, and the *sunna* must be re-examined in order to distinguish what is true from what is false (Mitchell 1969: 232-239).

To gain more knowledge about Islam and *sharia* and to make Islam relevant for Muslims today, the MB believes that Muslim *scholars* must return to the "pure" sources of Islam and interpret these in light of contemporary situations. This is the core of the MB's methodology. If the "answers" are not to be found in the written sources, the scholars must use their ability to mediate between the will of God and the human reality, that is, use *ijtihad*, to meet the needs of contemporary Muslim individuals and societies. This is necessary in order to maintain *sharia* as a flexible, general, developing and universal law. Muslims who lack a religious education should not interpret the sources on their own but follow the Muslim

scholars' interpretations and recommendations. The organization also accepts the use of analogical reasoning, *qiyas*, and consensus, *ijma*, in order to keep Islam and *sharia* up-to-date (Mitchell 1969: 236-241).

The MB stresses that its "call" for returning to the "pure" sources should not be confused with returning to the 7th century. Today's Muslims shall not live as Muslims did in the 7th century according the movement, which argues that Muslims who "say this are confusing the historical beginning of Islam with the system of Islam itself" (Mitchell 1969: 234). This means that the MB's method of returning to the "pure" sources does not include a literal interpretation of them. Instead, it means a re-examination of the *sunna* and a new reading and interpretation of the Qur'an and the *sunna* in light of current situations. This distinguishes it from the Salafist's method, which is also a return to the sources but one that does not take the context into consideration and rather emphasizes a literal interpretation of them (Mitchell 1969: 232-239; Haykel 2009: 35-36, 39).

The return to the "pure" sources does not include a total rejection of the traditional Islamic law schools and their regulations[49]. Even though the MB wants to free today's Muslims from the schools of thoughts and laws that it regards as obstacles to reform and change, it does relate to them and use their legal regulations, but in its own way. The MB thinks that one can choose freely from the legal regulations of the four Sunni Islamic law schools if one needs or wants to do it. In this way, it is possible for the Brotherhood to choose the regulation or the solution that fits the current context or situations best without being bound to any of the traditional institutions (Roald 2001: 106-107).

The MB's eclectic approach to the Islamic law schools' regulations can be seen as an attempt to contextualize what it regards as not contextualized. Since the Brotherhood's main criticism against the law schools' regulations is that they lack contextualization and adaption to current situations, I think its "picking and choosing" among the regulations can be seen as a method to contextualize the regulations. Not in the form of deducing the law or the regulation in light of current situations but by choosing the already-existing regulation or solution that is most in accordance with or adapted to the current situation.

The MB's emphasis on the "pure" sources of Islam and to interpret these in accordance with time, place and situation illustrates that the movement has a practical and pragmatic view of *sharia* – they want a flexible *sharia* that fits the current situation. Thus, the

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[49]The MB regards the example of the three first generations of Muslims, *al-aslāf*, as normative when it comes to *aqida*, creed. However, they are more tolerant of different views on *fiqh*, jurisprudence, and thus do not regard them as normative in relation to this (Roald 2001: 52).

MB's method is grounded in a hermeneutical principle where the texts are to be interpreted by Islamic scholars *in light of the social context* (Mitchell 1969: 232-239).

As mentioned above, Muslim Society Trondheim (MST) is not an MB mosque, nor is it a member of the movement or affiliated with it. However, as a multinational and pan-Islamic mosque, MST, or some of its members who hold, or have held, central positions within the institution have used the MB in Europe's methodology as a source of inspiration (see section 4.1.4). This is reflected in MST's organizational structure, methodology and methods for gaining knowledge about Islam.

MST is organized around a general assembly, where it elects and divides the organization of the mosque between two committees and one office. These are the Steering Committee, the *Shura* Committee and the imam office. The *Shura* Committee consists of the highest representatives of the general assembly meeting and manages its power between its sessions. The Steering Committee is the executive body of MST's administration and is responsible for managing the mosque's day-to-day activities. The imam office serves as experts on Islam and is responsible for the Friday sermons and for providing the members of the mosque with the correct teaching of Islam. Within the two committees, there are hierarchically organized positions that the members are elected into. In this way, MST's organizational structure has a resemblance to that of the MB even though the latter is even more hierarchical and made up by even more bodies, departments, sections and committees due to its size.

Like the MB, MST views Islam as a dynamic and practical religion that encompasses all aspects of human life. It regards Islam as a rich religion that can provide all the answers and solutions one needs. The answers are already there; all one needs to do is to adapt them to the current situation. MST holds that Islam contains both unchangeable and changeable elements. Among the unchangeable elements, we find the Islamic doctrines, such as the doctrine about God's oneness. In contrast, other parts of Islam, such as the various forms of religious practices and legal regulations, are believed to be influenced by the contexts they have been, and are, practiced within and are thus changeable. Because of this, MST places a great deal of emphasis on contextualization, as I will show below, and maintains that the Islamic sources must be interpreted in light of current times and situations. Thus, MST promotes and uses the same method of interpretation as the MB.

MST's sources and other methods for gaining knowledge about Islam correspond more or less with those of the MB. The Qur'an and the *sunna* of the Prophet are regarded as MST's first and second sources to Islam. The Qur'an is believed to reveal the will of God and

is defined as the primary source to all Islamic knowledge. As explanations and elaborations to the Qur'an, it uses *tafsir*, the commentaries to the Qur'an. The *sunna* is recognized as a supplement to the Qur'an and is the source MST turns to if the Qur'an cannot provide them with the knowledge they need. If the *sunna* cannot provide them with it either, MST uses consensus, *ijma*, and analogical reasoning, *qiyas*, as its third and fourth source, respectively. It regards both consensus among the Prophet's Companions, *sahaba*, and consensus among the Islamic scholars, *ulama* as approved sources to Islam.

As secondary sources to Islam and *sharia,* MST uses local customs, *urf,* and independent reasoning, *ijtihad*. Islam accepts customs, according to MST, if they do not contradict Islamic beliefs, humans' health or interests or the interests of society. Local customs are therefore accepted as a source to the law. Independent reasoning, *ijtihad*, is also recognized as an important source and method for gaining Islamic knowledge. This means that MST uses the answers or regulations Islamic scholars have deduced from the Qur'an and *hadith* through independent reasoning as sources to Islam. MST promotes *ijtihad* as a method and regards it as a necessity for Muslims who want to live their lives in accordance with Islam. There are so many aspects concerning human life and society, particularly modern lives and societies, which are not mentioned in any of the written Islamic sources. So, to gain Islamic knowledge about these aspects, Muslims must use individual reasoning, among other methods, according MST.

In addition, MST uses two legal principles and the Sunni Islamic law schools as both sources and methods to Islam. The first legal principle is that in situations of need, the forbidden becomes permissible if necessary. This principle is also referred to as "the *darura* principle" and is an established legal principle within legal theory (Vogt 2005: 94). The second legal principle MST relies on is that everything God has created is permissible except what the Qur'an mentions by name as forbidden as well as things that may contradict human health and interests. Books about and from the Sunni Islamic law schools, and their jurisprudence, are also used as secondary sources. According to MST, Muslims can choose freely from among the knowledge, solutions and regulations the different law schools offer to find the answer or the solution that is most suitable for the current situation. To find the best solution, MST uses books that deal with comparative jurisprudence, *fiqh al-muqarin*, such as Ibn Rushd's *The Distinguished Jurist's Primer*, as sources. Other times, MST's imams read legal books from the different law schools and do the comparison themselves.

As we can see, MST's hermeneutics and methods for gaining knowledge about Islam correspond with the MB's methodology. The emphasis MST put on local custom, *urf*, and the

two legal principles of "*darura*" and the "permissibility of God's creation" does not necessarily mark a rupture with the Brotherhood's methodology and methods. It can rather be seen as MST's attempt to unite its members around Islamic principles rather than details – the unchangeable aspects of Islam versus the changeable – and as its way of contextualizing the Islamic message.

Even though MST regards Islam as one religion, it acknowledges that there exist numerous understandings of Islam. At an institutional level, MST is not affiliated with any of the Islamic law schools, nor does it promote the idea that its members should follow one. Rather, it accepts that its members belong to different branches of Islam and that they understand and practice Islam in different ways. This means that MST, like DIC, does not interfere with how their members perform religious rituals and practices, as Mevlana does. Instead of pursuing conformity in its members' religious practices, MST accepts that they practice Islam differently. This has practical consequences for the mosque: During the Friday sermon, the imams seldom, if ever, raise topics from the Islamic jurisprudence, *fiqh,* which among other things deals with the details of the ritual obligations, *ibadat*, and the inter-human relationship, *mu'amlat*. Instead the imams preach about what they recognize as the unchangeable aspects of Islam, such as Islamic doctrines, main ideas, general Islamic rules and ethics, and avoid getting into details.

That MST emphasizes that the Islamic sources must be interpreted according to time, place and circumstances is reflected in the idea behind its imam office. Since the members of MST have very diverse backgrounds, it is not possible for a single imam to meet their needs, according to the mosque. It therefore established an imam office, which consists of two or more imams with varied backgrounds[50]. The members in the office need to have the following qualifications in order to be invited in: some level of higher education, some general knowledge about Islam and knowledge about the community and society they live in, and they should live as they preach – in other words, function as good role models. MST does not maintain that all the imams in the office need to have higher knowledge about Islam. Rather, it prefers a good role model to a very learned person. The imam office's responsibilities are to deliver the Friday sermon and to teach and guide MST's members about Islam and how to live as Muslims in Trondheim. In relation to the sermon, they are expected to adjust their Islamic message to the community and society they live in. For instance, if they are to speak of the role of women in Islam during a sermon, they must be familiar with the position

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[50] The numbers of members in the imam office vary from year to year, and in 2014 it had four members.

women hold in Norwegian society. This is to avoid discriminating or being accused of discriminating against women by listeners adapted to the Norwegian society. In relation to guidance, the imams must gain a proper understanding of the situation and use the Islamic sources to find the best solution for each person and situation. By including imams with varied cultural backgrounds, and with knowledge about the local community and Norwegian society, MST uses the imam office as a method to contextualize the Islamic message.

MST shares the MB's view of *sharia* as a flexible law and the movement's pragmatic approach to the content of the law. That MST prefers imams who are good role models over those with the highest Islamic knowledge reflects that it also shares the MB's practical approach to Islam, where religious practices are favored over religious knowledge. Since MST uses the same hermeneutics and methods to gain knowledge about Islam as the MB, it can be regarded as a glocal representation of the MB's *methodology* even though it is not formally affiliated with the *movement*.

4.5 The women's other Islamic fields

The women's other Islamic fields are made up by the Sister Group (SG), the Indonesian Muslim Society Trondheim (KMIT) and Islam Net (IN). What these fields have in common is that their religious educational activities attract participants from the various local Islamic institutional fields presented above. SG's and IN's methodology and methods for gaining knowledge about Islam have similarities. To show how and in what ways, I will give a brief presentation of the Hanbali law school's methodology and methods before I discuss how this can be applied to the Salafi method, here represented by IN's and SG's methods. In this way, I will show how the women's sources and methods to Islam within these two fields diverge from the local Islamic institutional fields' methodologies and methods. Then follows a presentation of the women's sources and methods within KMIT and an explanation of how these can be seen as being in continuation with those of MST and DIC and why these do not represent a methodology of their own.

4.5.1 Hanbali

The Hanbali school of law's eponym is Ahmad Ibn Hanbal (d. 241/855). He was learned in *hadith* and law. Ibn Hanbal belonged to the group of scholars who preferred to build the law on the traditions after the Prophet rather than reasoning in cases not mentioned in the Qur'an. His main method when interpreting the law was to use the *sunna* of the Prophet as an explanation and elaboration of the Qur'an. He is known to have compiled a *hadith* collection

consisting of more than 30 000 *hadith*s and to have been a staunch follower of the Prophet's *sunna*. Ibn Hanbal did not embrace al-Shafi'i's project about harmonizing a revealed canon of texts with law, nor did he try to develop a canon of law. When faced with legal questions, he used his canon of revelations, which, in addition to the Qur'an, included many *hadith*s from the Prophet, the Prophet's Companions and later figures, to come up with a legal meaning to solve them (Roald 2001: 105-106; Roald 2004: 81-82; Vishanoff 2011: 232-235; Wains 2003: 70-77). Ibn Hanbal's view of these sources and their status is reflected in a quotation that is attributed to him:

> It has been transmitted from more than one of our ancestors (*salafina*) that they said 'the Quran is the speech of God and is uncreated', and this is what I endorse. I do not engage in speculative theology and I hold that there is nothing to be said other than what is God's Book (Qur'an), the traditions of His messenger or those of his companions and their followers – may God have mercy on them. It is not praiseworthy to engage in theological discussions on matters not contained therein (Haykel 2009: 38, note 9).

There are few patterns to be drawn from how Ibn Hanbal used the canon of revelation to deduce law and to support legal opinions, according to Vishanoff. The only pattern that he points out is that Ibn Hanbal avoided establishing strict rules or determining in detail clear specific legal significances to specific verb forms (default meanings): "At times he seemed to find the maximum possible meaning in the revealed language; at other times he treated its meaning as much less determinate" (Vishanoff 2011: 232).

Since Ibn Hanbal was not occupied with formulating explicit hermeneutical principles, his followers had to turn to his specific legal interpretations to support their own hermeneutical choices. Because of this, a canon of Hanbali legal doctrine based on Ibn Hanbal's opinions was first developed by his second generation of followers, Abū Bakr al-Khallāl (d. 311/923) and Abū al-Qāsim al-Khiraqī (d. 334/945), who, like Ibn Hanbal, did not join al-Shafi'i's project either. A student of al-Khallāl called Ghulām al-Khallāl (d. 363/974) was one of the first to lead the process of making the Hanbali school adopt to al-Shafi'i's project and developed a Hanbali hermeneutic to support it. However, it was the work of the later Hanbali legal theorist Abū Ya'lā Ibn al-Farrā (d. 458/1065) who followed the line of Ghulām al-Khallāl and his treatise on legal theory, called *al-'Udda fī ūsūl al-fiqh,* which was to become the main starting point for later developments of Hanbali legal theory. For this

reason, the Hanbali school was the last of the Sunni law schools to adopt al-Shafi'i's project and to develop a formal legal hermeneutic within the law-oriented hermeneutical system (Vishanoff 2011: 232-235; see section 4.3).

The Qur'an is the Hanbali school's primary source to the law. They believe that the Qur'an should be interpreted literally and reject allegorical interpretations of the text. After the Qur'an, the Hanbali school puts a great deal of emphasis on the *sunna* of the Prophet as a source to *sharia*. All sound *hadith*s about the Prophet are recognized as valid sources. The school tends to prefer *hadith*s with a weak chain of narrators rather than use individual reasoning as sources to law. Some researchers claim that as a source of law, *hadith* is implicitly regarded as important as the Qur'an within this law school (Roald 2004: 81-82; Wains 2003: 70-73).

As a third source to the law, the Hanbali school uses the "legal opinions" of the Prophet's Companions. The Companions' "legal opinions" are regarded as valid sources because they are viewed as the most capable of understanding and practicing the *sunna* of the Prophet. The Hanbali school can use consensus, *ijma*, as a fourth source to the law. However, consensus is restricted to mean consensus among the Prophet's Companions and their immediate successors. This means that the school does not accept the consensus of religious scholars, *ulama* or *mujtahid*, as sources of law (Roald 2001: 105-106; Wains 2003: 70-77).

Ibn Hanbal was critical of the ways the Hanafi and the Shafii scholars used human reasoning in deducing the law from its sources. He held that they emphasized individual reasoning too much, a method he regarded as less accurate than grounding the law in the Qur'an or the *sunna* of the Prophet. Ibn Hanbal accepted the method of reasoning in a very restricted sense – it could be used to solve differences or opposing views between *hadith*s or to draw deductions from *hadith*s (Wains 2003: 71). His successors dealt with the method of reasoning differently. Abū Ya'lā, for instance, did not completely dismiss but minimized and marginalized its meaning by ascribing the language of revelation with a maximum of legal meaning. To pack as much legal meaning as possible into the language of revelation, he recognized several forms of implied meaning, which means that he ascribed the words of revelation with more meaning than what it exactly stated. For instance, if the words of revelation tell one not to insult someone, this implies that one cannot beat them either. Or, if the revelation tells one to pay taxes for cattle that is free-grazing, this implies that one must not pay taxes for animals one feeds. By doing this, Abū Ya'lā marginalized the use of the category on metaphorical meaning in the revelation and thus the need for legal reasoning (Vishanoff 2011: 7, 236-253). A later and more famous Hanbali scholar, Ibn Taymiyya (d.

728/1328), followed the line of Abū Yaʿlā and eliminated the category on metaphorical meaning in revelation. Ibn Taymiyya claimed that the meaning of God's speech can be understood immediately and rejected the need for a rational process of interpretation through reasoning (Vishanoff 2011: 253). However, later, the Hanbali school started to accept the use of analogical reasoning in legal questions (Wains 2003: 70-71,76).

Representatives of Salafism claim to represent the earliest and most authentic version of Islam, that is, "true" Islam. By this they mean Islam as it was understood and practiced by the first three generations of Muslims, also referred to as the "pious ancestors[51]." However, to define, or just describe, Salafism and what the concept might imply and contain, is difficult since there is a great deal of confusion related to the concept and its history (Haykel 2009; Lauzière 2010). According to Lauziére, when approaching Salafism, we must carefully distinguish between the *history of the ideas* that characterize Salafism today, and the *conceptual history* of the trademark of Salafism. By the latter, he means the emergence, construction and evolution of the concept of Salafism as a typological category (Lauziére 2010: 369-373). Lauziére and Haykel do not agree about the history of the term Salafi as a noun and adjective; still, they agree about the history of ideas (Lauziére 2010: 371-373; Haykel 2009: 38). The Salafi idea of representing the most "true" and authentic form of Islam is not new, according to Haykel, who traces its roots back to Ibn Hanbal and famous Hanbali theologians such as Ibn Taymiyya (d. 1328), Ibn al-Qayyim al Jawziza (d. 1350) and Abd al-Wahhab (d. 1792) (Haykel 2009: 33-34, 38-45). Lauziére sides with Haykel on this and traces the ideas that characterize Salafism today, which include methodology, beliefs, practices, an antirationalistic theology and heavy emphasis on *hadith* literature, back to Ahmad Ibn Hanbal (Lauziére 2010: 371-373). The concept of Salafism has since the late 19th and early 20th centuries been associated with Islamic modernism and the work of reformists such as Jamal al-Din Afghani (d. 1897), Muhammad ʿAbduh (d. 1905) and Rashid Rida (d. 1935). However, these men and their modernistic understandings of Salafism diverge a great deal from standard definitions of contemporary Salafism, according to Haykel and Lauziére (Haykel 2009: 34, 45-46; Lauziére 2010: 370, 384-385).

So, what characterizes contemporary Salafism and Salafis? Theology, law and criteria of political action, Haykel argues (2009: 38-50). Theology is one of the factors that unites

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[51] The "first three generations" of Muslims refers to the time period from 610 (the year the Prophet Muhammad according to Islamic beliefs received his first revelation) to 855 (Haykel 2009: 38-39).

Salafis, while various approaches to law and views on political actions divide them[52]. Salafis unite around the idea of and wish for returning to the "authentic" Islamic beliefs and practices of the "pious ancestors" and a creed, *'aqida*, about God's absolute oneness, *tawhid*. Their notion of *tawhid* includes faith in the uncreated nature of God's eternal attributes, where, among others, the Qur'an is seen as God's eternal speech and as uncreated (Haykel 2009: 38-42; Mårtensson 2014: 194). Common among Salafis is also the wish to oppose all forms of unbelief where other beings or things are juxtaposed with God, *shirk*, and the wish to free Muslims from harmful innovations, *bida'*, in belief and practice. This means that Salafis want to reform Muslims' beliefs and practices by returning to the Qur'an, the *sunna* of the Prophet Muhammad and the consensus of the Prophet's Companions, which they define as the only pure and valid authoritative sources to Islam (Haykel 2009: 39).

According to Salafis, the evidence of God's guidance in the revealed texts is easy to find and understand. Because of this, it is not necessary to have an interpretive mediator between the revelation and the believer (Haykel 2009: 39, note 15). It is in light of this that Salafism's approach to the law and its relationship to the Sunni Islamic law schools can be understood. Even though Salafis unite around a creed, they have different approaches to the law and the law schools. Some follow the teaching of one law school, some dismiss all of them and others consult all the law schools in legal questions. This means that Salafis view the importance of independent reasoning, *ijtihad*, in legal questions differently (Haykel 2009: 42; Mårtensson 2014: 194). As representatives of the first approach, we have Salafis belonging to the Wahhabi movement. These usually follow the Hanbali school in legal questions. Adherents of the second approach reject "imitation," *taqlid*, of any law schools, which means that they refuse to follow any of the schools' jurisprudence, *fiqh*. Instead they prefer to turn directly to the texts of revelation and use these to come up with a judgment or legal opinion (Haykel 2009: 42). A representative of the second approach was the Salafi scholar Sheikh Muhammad Nasir al-Din al-Albani (d. 1999), who was regarded as the greatest *hadith* scholar of his generation (Lacroix 2008: 6). He has often been regarded as an advocate of the Wahhabi movement, which, according to Lacroix, is true when it comes to creed, *aqida*, but not in relation to how he approached the law and the Sunni law schools. Al-Albani criticized the Wahhabi movement's approach to law by pointing out what he recognized as a fundamental contradiction within the movement. The proponents of Wahhabism promote an exclusive trust in the Qur'an, the *sunna* of the Prophet and the

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[52] For more information about how Salafis are divided in their view on political action, see Haykel (2009) and Mårtensson (2014).

consensus among the "pious ancestors" at the same time as they support their *fatwa*s on Hanbali jurisprudence, *fiqh*. Thus, they act as advocates of the Hanbali school of law's jurisprudence, al-Albani argued. Al-Albani claimed that a proper Salafi approach to the law and *fiqh* was to make *hadith even more* central in the juridical process. He believed that it was possible to find answers to issues not mentioned in the Qur'an in *hadith* alone, *without* using the law school's jurisprudence (Lacroix 2008: 6). For this reason, he developed a new "science of *hadith*," which he regarded as the base of all religious knowledge, with the aim to re-evaluate the authenticity to all known *hadith*s. In his new approach to *hadith*, he excluded independent reasoning from the process. It is only the part of *hadith* consisting of the chain of narrators, *isnad,* that can be critically scrutinized, al-Albani argued. The focus of the "science of *hadith*" should therefore be to critically evaluate the chain of narrators and the validity of the different narrators. A proper *hadith* scholar is thus a person who has memorized numbers of *hadith*s and the biographies of a great numbers of narrators, according to him (Lacroix 2008: 6-7).

Followers of the anti-law school position accuse the law schools of being the main reason why there exist different understandings of Islam and *sharia* among Muslims today. They believe that the law schools' legal opinions have lost most of their value because they have been uncritically accepted *without* references to the texts of revelation. From these Salafis' point of view, the law schools are unnecessary negotiators of God's guidance that prevent the believer of having free access to the true Islam. For this reason, they regard the law schools as innovations, *bida'*, which Muslims should be freed from (Haykel 2009: 42-45; Roald 2001: 51-54).

Representatives of the third approach consult all the law schools in legal questions. In contemporary Salafism, it is common to differentiate between how legal scholars and laypersons should approach and relate to law (Haykel 2009: 42-45). Many contemporary Salafis "affirm that competent legal scholars should practice *ijtihad* (independent interpretation by applying reason to the Qur'an and *hadith*) and in doing so consult all the law schools, rather than only one, and that non-jurists should follow (*ittaba'a*) the rulings of Salafi scholars" (Mårtensson 2014: 194).

According to Haykel, the criteria of political action characterize Salafism and divide Salafis internally. Haykel distinguishes between the following three groups that represent different positions Salafis can take in relation to this: *Jihadi* Salafis, *haraki*, or "movement," Salafis and "scholastic" Salafis. *Jihadi* Salafis accept and promote violent actions in order to establish an Islamic caliphate or to oppose an existing government. *Haraki*, or "movement,"

Salafis encourage non-violent political activism in Muslim and non-Muslim countries in order to change and Islamize society and government. "Scholastic" Salafis, on the other hand, reject all forms of political organization and actions since this might lead to conflict, *fitna*, among Muslims. However, "scholastic" Salafis are obligated to be obedient to Muslim rulers and can, because of this, engage in political action, even violent forms of it, if their rulers demand them to (Haykel 2009: 48-49; Mårtensson 2014: 194-195).

The Qur'an and the *sunna* of the Prophet Muhammad are the Salafis' main sources to Islam and *sharia*. They emphasize a literal interpretation of these sources and reject allegorical and metaphorical interpretations of them. Salafis use all sound *hadith*s about the Prophet as a source to Islam and regard its authority to be certain. As a third source, they use the Prophet's Companions' and their immediate successors' (the "first three generations" of Muslims) consensus and "legal opinions." This means that the Salafis' sources to Islam, and their methodology and methods for deducing knowledge about "true" Islam from these sources, correspond with Hanbali methodology and methods (Haykel 2009: 35-45; Roald 2001: 51-52).

Islam Net (IN) is a volunteer organization that aims to clarify misunderstandings about Islam and transmit knowledge about Islam to Muslims and non-Muslims in Norway. In accordance with Salafism, IN claims to represent the earliest and most authentic version of Islam, that is, "true" Islam. The organization is neither made up by nor driven by scholars, and most of its members are young Muslims in Norway with diverse backgrounds (Islamnet.no 2015; Mårtensson 2014: 203-205). IN uses the teaching and rulings of Saudi "scholastic" Salafis; however, they depart from this Salafi position when it comes to civic engagement. On recommendation by European *haraki* Salafi scholars, IN engages in civic activities and aims to build bridges between Muslims and non-Muslims by socializing with the latter. Since IN is a non-violent organization that encourages its members to participate in civic activities, Mårtensson categorizes them as representatives for *haraki* Salafism, though a form of *haraki* Salafism that is influenced by the Norwegian context and particularly the institutional order and the public sphere (Mårtensson 2014: 194-199, 203-204).

Like the Hanbali School, IN defines the Qur'an and sound *hadith*s as its primary sources to Islam. Like other Salafis, its members continually refer to verses in the revelation that support and thus legitimize their views and opinions. IN follows Salafism methodology and methods. This means that they, like the Hanbali school, put more emphasis on revealed text than human reasoning in their quest for knowledge (Haykel 2009: 35-45; Mårtensson 2014: 203-204; Roald 2001: 51-52). However, on its website, IN defines "scientific facts or

rational logic" as sources to Islam as well. According to Mårtensson, IN's categorization of "science and rationality" as authoritative sources to Islam after the Qur'an and *hadith* may be explained with reference to which religious authorities IN members support their views and opinions with. Since IN is an organization primarily made up by non-scholars, its secondary sources to Islam are mainly made up by various Salafi sheikhs and preachers whose argumentation its members find convincing. IN's main authority when it comes to clarifying misunderstandings about Islam is the Salafi preacher Dr. Zakir Naik, who among other things hosts a TV show called Peace TV and who views science and rationality in positive ways (Mårtensson 2014: 204-205). Still, it draws and supports its views on other Salafi sheikhs and preachers as well and invites some of these to preach and lecture at its different activities[53]. On its website, IN posts and shares information, lectures and videos of its favorite sheikhs and preachers (Islamnet.no 2015; Mårtensson 2014: 191).

That IN follows the Salafi method of returning to the "pure" sources of Islam is reflected in its claim of representing "true" Islam and in its members' constant use of references and citations from the Qur'an and *hadith* to legitimize their understanding of Islam. However, even though IN emphasizes a return to the true and authentic Islam, its members are not among the Salafis who completely reject the Sunni Islamic law schools. Instead, they identify with the teaching of the eponyms of all the law schools and Salafi scholars such as Ibn Baz and al-Albani (Mårtensson 2014: 191, note 1).

Among the women participants in this study, it is only women affiliated with MST and/or the Sister Group (SG) who involve themselves with IN. None of these women are members of the organization, yet it makes up a local Islamic field in which some of the women engage every now and then to increase their knowledge about Islam.

Several of the women in SG have attended some of IN's arrangements. In spring of 2011, four women from the group participated in its annual Peace Conference in Oslo. The following year, a couple of last year's attendees tried to recruit more women from the group to participate in the 2012 event. Around five women went, in addition to my supervisor and me. After the Peace Conference in 2012, SG took the initiative to arrange a similar but smaller event in Trondheim. As a result, IN in cooperation with the Muslim Student Association in Trondheim and SG arranged an afternoon lecture with the Australian-Palestinian Sheikh Shady Alsuleiman at the university campus in June 2012. SG was heavily

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[53] On IN's website, there is more information about the different Salafi authorities the organization follows. See, for instance, IN's postings under the headings "activities" and "videos" at www.islamnet.no.

involved in the preparations for this event with promotion and practical arrangements. The lecture was headlined as "Yo Muslims, Come Back to the Deen of Islam With Shaykh Shady Alsuleiman," and its topic was "how to practice Islam in a Western society under non-Muslim law" (Mårtensson 2014: 16).

SG's sources and methods to Islam are many. They do not have an official methodology for gaining knowledge about Islam, but the group's sources and methods reflect some of the individual members' sources and methods that they have agreed to use and follow. In accordance with the traditional law schools, modern Islamic movements and the local Islamic institutions, SG uses the Qur'an and *hadith* as its primary sources to Islam. The Qur'an is believed to be God's word, and *hadith* is regarded as an important supplement to the Qur'an, which both explains and elaborates it. *Hadith* is important for the women since it contains detailed knowledge about how to perform Islamic rituals and practices. During Qur'an recitations, the participants read the Qur'an in Arabic. Some also use Qur'ans with phonetic transcriptions to gain help with the pronunciation. Since only a few of the women understand Arabic, they use translated versions when they study the Qur'an's different chapters, *sura*, and verses, *aya*. The women do not use one specific *hadith* collection; they can use *hadith*s from various collections if these are known to be sound.

In the Qur'an sessions, SG uses commentaries on and explanations of to the Qur'an in the form of *tafsir* to gain knowledge about its content. One of the women in charge of these sessions owns an English translation of the *tafsir* of Ibn Kathir, which she relies on. Her sessions build more or less on direct translations of this *tafsir* from English to Norwegian. The *tafsir* of Ibn Kathir is popular among Salafis but also widespread among Muslims who do not identify with this movement since it is printed in numerous editions and heavily subsidized by Saudi Arabia (Hakyel 2009: 37, note 8). Another woman in charge of these sessions does not use *tafsir* as her primary source. Instead, she uses notes she has taken from a woman who used to teach her about Qur'an and Islam. Her previous teacher has a website where she publishes commentaries on and explanations of the Qur'an that are based on *tafsir* and other relevant sources. In addition to using her former teacher as a source to Islam, this woman also uses stories and experiences from her own life to make her presentations more up-to-date and relevant. In this way, she uses stories from her own life to illustrate or support the different passages in the Qur'an.

Different websites are used as secondary sources to Islam. In sessions where everyday topics are treated within a religious framework, SG relies on both religious and non-religious websites. The religious websites are made up by official Islamic websites from the women's

home countries, for instance Indonesia, or they are run by different Islamic organizations or authorities such as *The European Council of Research and Fatwa*. Some of the women also watch Peace TV and listen to lectures from various Salafi scholars who are broadcasted there, such as Zakir Naik. IN's collection of video lectures of Salafi preachers is also used as a source by some of the women. Included in the category of religious websites are more informal sources, such as Islamic lectures on YouTube, favorite scholars' or preachers' homepages, online imams or just sites that match the women's Google searches. The non-religious websites include all sites the women find relevant for the topic they are dealing with.

TV preachers and local imams are treated as religious authorities and secondary sources by SG's members, who can refer to them to support their views in discussions. The women use different TV preachers as sources due to their different languages and country backgrounds. Local imams affiliated with MST and DIC are also used as religious authorities by the women in situations where they cannot find the answers to their questions anywhere else.

SG seldom uses the Sunni Islamic law schools as a source to Islam even though the law schools' jurisprudence can provide them with much detail concerning religious practices. They seldom talk about the law schools during group meetings, and the group does not identify with a specific school. However, in situations when the women cannot find answers in any of their regular sources, they turn to the jurisprudence, *fiqh*, of all the law schools. For instance, SG usually holds its meetings in MST's mosque. But after one of the women through self-studies read about "women and menstruation," she became insecure about whether or not it is permissible for a woman to be in the mosque and the mosque's prayer hall during her period. None of the other women shared her insecurity. All of them asserted that a woman can be in the mosque as well as the prayer hall during her period. However, none of them could support their assertion with references to the Qur'an or the *hadith*, and, because of this, the "insecure" woman did not trust their answers. It did not help that the women could support their view with references to what was "common practice" in their various homelands nor that two of the local imams confirmed that a woman can be in the mosque during menstruation. From lack of references to the Qur'an and *hadith*, the "insecure" woman remained insecure about what is correct Islamic practice in this specific situation. To support the woman in her insecurity, the other members agreed to hold SG's meetings outside the mosque when she had her period. This, however, caused some practical problems. The women could never know for sure when to meet in the mosque and when they had to hold their meetings outside the mosque. Their lack of a permanent meeting place outside the

mosque also made it difficult to know where to meet and how to find the week's location. After some time, the group therefore decided to hold all its meetings in the mosque in the future but in a classroom and not the women's prayer hall as they used to. Parallel with this, the woman who had raised this topic had searched for answers to her questions within the different law schools' jurisprudence, *fiqh*. With reference to *fiqh*, she told the other members that a woman can be in the mosque during her period but that she is not allowed to stay in the prayer hall. The other women disagreed with her regarding the prayer hall, but the group agreed to disagree so that it could continue with its meetings. Still, SG's meetings' location inside the mosque changed from the women's prayer hall to a classroom because of this incident.

It is not SG's sources to Islam that make them differ from the local Islamic institutional fields but how they relate to and use these sources. SG insists that all Islamic knowledge transmitted within the group must be supported by references from the Qur'an, *hadith* or *tafsir*. This means that when one member shares her knowledge with the rest of the group, this knowledge is only regarded as trustworthy if she can support it with references to the revealed texts. If "new" knowledge cannot be supported by such references, it is recognized as untrustworthy. The participants in SG have agreed not to rely on "untrustworthy" information or to put it into practice. However, they do not immediately dismiss it, either. Rather, they usually investigate it further to find some other sources or religious authorities that can approve or dismiss it. Even though it is important for the women to legitimize their knowledge through references to the Qur'an, *hadith* or *tafsir*, they do not necessarily approach and search these sources on their own. Often, they rely on secondary sources, such as their husbands, family, friends and websites that can equip them with the references they need. Sometimes they double-check the information they get from their secondary sources with their primary sources, but not always. It all depends on how much they trust these secondary sources.

It is the emphasis the women put on the Qur'an, *hadith* and *tafsir*, and the almost absolute authority the women ascribe to these sources, that makes their methods to Islam similar to those of IN. Like IN, SG seems to regard the Islamic knowledge they can extract from these sources as more authentic or "true" than knowledge from other Islamic sources. The women also use other secondary sources to Islam, but these sources are not regarded as valid if they fail to trace their contents back to the written sources in the form of references to, or citations from, them. In this way, SG's methods of gaining knowledge about Islam correspond with IN's Salafi methods. And since IN can provide the women with the authentic

knowledge they are looking for, in the form of lectures and preachers who legitimize their interpretation and understanding of Islam with references and citations from the revealed texts, the women use IN as a source and engage in this Islamic field every now and then.

However, the fact that SG defines the revealed canon as its primary source to Islam does not make its sources and methods diverge from those of the local Islamic institutional fields of Mevlana, MST and DIC. But where Mevlana and MST put a lot of emphasis on various forms of "reasoning" to contextualize the Islamic message to the Muslim-minority situation in Trondheim, and where DIC and MST use all the Islamic law schools as sources for the same purpose, SG does not. Neither does the group use the Arabic language's ambiguity as a key to deduce the correct knowledge from the written sources, as DIC does. Instead, it relies on translated versions of the texts, which the members sometimes translate from English to Norwegian themselves, in its meetings. SG's return to the revealed sources, and the amount of authority it ascribes to these sources, makes its methods more similar to IN than the local Islamic institutional fields. However, this does not mean that SG strictly follows the Salafi method of gaining knowledge about Islam. As I have tried to show, the women's sources and methods are many. They also use husbands, friends, local imams, favorite imams and preachers and local customs/common practices as religious authorities and sources to Islam. Still, the group's main method for studying Islam is to approach translated versions of the Qur'an, *hadith* and *tafsirs* and to read and discuss these in its meetings.

4.5.2 The Indonesian Muslim Society Trondheim (KMIT)

Kajian Muslim Indonesia Trondheim is the original name of this national religious association in Trondheim. Today it presents itself as the Indonesian Muslim Society in Trondheim, and its members refer to it by the abbreviation KMIT. The association has around 70-80 members and is organized around nationality, language, religion and ideas about a "common" cultural background. All its members are Indonesian Muslims, and many of them study or work in Trondheim. Indonesian, or Bahasa Indonesia, is the official language within the association and the official language in Indonesia, which has several hundred living languages. KMIT is run by volunteers, and all its members contribute to its activities in one way or another. Every second week, KMIT arranges religious activities to increase its members' knowledge about Islam. In the weeks between, the members gather around social activities.

KMIT's members are eager to increase their religious knowledge. Hanne describes their quest for knowledge like this: "We are, actually they are, hungry to learn about Islam actually, I think." KMIT's religious activities are usually held in MST's and DIC's mosques.

Even though its meetings take place in a mosque, its activities are for KMIT's members only and held in Indonesian. Like SG's meetings, KMIT's religious activities are divided into different sessions. Some of the sessions are gender segregated. This means that its members are divided into two different forums, a women's forum and a men's forum. The forums are held in the same room, but the women and men use different parts of it. KMIT has plenary and discussion sessions, too, where both sexes participate.

The women's and the men's forums follow similar agendas, which include Qur'an recitation, discussions about Qur'an-related topics and open discussions. Different women oversee the different women's agendas, but one specific woman usually leads the Qur'an recitation and discussion. This woman functions as a teacher for the women. She has no formal religious education, but she is married to KMIT's imam and known for her embodied Islamic knowledge. The imam opens the plenary sessions by introducing a topic he wants the participants to discuss. Anything related to Islam can be discussed, for instance, general questions related to the Qur'an and *hadith*. Many discussions are, however, based on jurisprudence, *fiqh*, and oriented around details as to what they as Muslims can and cannot do in relation to child upbringing, vaccination, menstruation, prayer schedules, etc. During the plenary sessions, both women and men contribute to the discussion.

Online activities and meetings are very popular among KMIT's members. In addition to the above-mentioned women's *halaqa* group (see section 4.2.3), many of its members meet on Skype to recite the Qur'an and discuss Islam in small groups. Every Ramadan, KMIT establishes several online Qur'an recitation groups. Four to five families who recite and discuss the Qur'an together usually make up the groups. Some of the women in KMIT have also developed a website with information about food products and additives sold in Norway. The site, entitled "Trace Before You Taste," aims to provide Muslims in Norway with detailed product information that may be hard to get. How renowned this site is outside KMIT is unknown, but it aims at being a helpful resource for all Muslims in Norway. For several years, the women behind the site have written emails and letters to Norwegian food producers in which they have asked for information about their products. They publish the answers received with pictures of the products and analyses of the ingredients and additives and whether these are lawful, *halal*, or unlawful, *haram*, for Muslims to eat.

KMIT encourages all its members to engage in and contribute to its religious activities. Even though they have an imam and a woman who functions as a teacher, they are not in charge of all the activities. All members must take their turns and contribute with

presentations, "new" information, opinions, perspectives, etc. In this way, KMIT functions as an Islamic study group.

The Qur'an and *hadith* are KMIT's primary sources to Islam. Knowledge grounded on these sources is recognized as correct knowledge. Assertions made about Islam and Islamic practices are encouraged to be supported by strong references to these scriptures. However, several of the plenary discussions in KMIT are about questions and topics not mentioned in these sources. In these situations, it uses the Islamic jurisprudence, *fiqh*, as a secondary source. Agreements and disagreements between the law schools, as well as the story behind disagreements, are investigated. In this way, KMIT uses all the Sunni law schools even though the Shafii law school is the dominant one in Indonesia. If the members cannot find answers, or if they are not satisfied with the answers the law schools can offer, they turn to different Islamic scholars, *ulama,* and explore whether any of these have discussed the "problem" or made a legal opinion, *fatwa*, about it. If they discover a legal opinion concerning the issue at stake, they discuss whether or not they as Indonesian Muslims in Trondheim are obligated to follow it and try to end the discussion with a conclusion.

For instance, since some of the female members in KMIT are engaged in SG as well, a returning topic of discussion has been what a woman can and cannot do during menstruation – Can she read the Qur'an? Can she go to the mosque? Can she stay in the prayer hall? KMIT's members searched the different law schools for answers to these questions and found that, according to these schools, women are not allowed to enter a mosque during menstruation. This surprised many, and some of the women were unsatisfied with the findings. Thus, they decided to investigate it further. Their findings showed that Islamic scholars, *ulama*, have different opinions on this matter. Some scholars argue that one must distinguish between different types of mosques and that this rule does not include all of them. Other scholars argue that the rule is outdated because it was made in a time when women did not have access to the types of sanitary products that they do today. Today's women can use "protection" in the form of sanitary products; consequently, they can enter a mosque during their period. KMIT's members discussed the different law schools' and the different Islamic scholars' opinions, but they did not reach one single conclusion. Rather, they agreed that it is okay to have different opinions about it if they support their view with a strong reference. Thus, some of the women within KMIT use the mosque during their period, while others do not. This means that they choose differently from the "Islamic basket" due to personal differences (Hjärpe 1997, 1998; see section 2.2.5).

Disagreements are common, acceptable and respected within the association. Emma describes differences and different opinions concerning *fiqh* as "the beauty of Islam." She thinks everyone can have different viewpoints on practical matters if their views have a strong source. Her opinion reflects the KMIT's members' view on disagreements: It is okay to disagree on details concerning religious practice if everyone agrees on the oneness of God, *tawhid*. The imam at KMIT, who usually leads the plenary discussions, is often asked about his opinion. This does not mean that he gets the final word, or that everyone must agree with him, but he functions as a religious authority within the group. In situations where the imam cannot answer, or he is insecure, he can ask the imams at DIC or MST for advice. KMIT does not distinguish between DIC and MST, nor does it identify any differences between them except for their members. Instead, KMIT treats them as equal local Islamic institutions. Still, KMIT interacts more with the imams at DIC than those at MST because of their language skills. The main imam at DIC is fluent in English, while the main imam at MST is not. Thus, it is easier for them to cooperate with DIC.

The women behind the "Trace Before You Taste" site do superficial searches in the law schools' jurisprudence when they examine whether a food product or additive is allowed for Muslims. If the law schools disagree, the women sometimes explain the differences between the law schools for their readers and let them decide whether to eat the product or not. This means that the women behind the site make conditions favorable for their readers to choose differently from the "Islamic basket." In other situations, the women try to learn more about the law schools' differences. If they cannot find the answers themselves, they ask the imam at KMIT for help. If he cannot help them, they turn to the imams at DIC or MST. When the women have gained enough information, they try to conclude whether a product is lawful, *halal*, or unlawful, *haram*, based on the materials they have collected from the food producers, the law schools, discussions at KMIT and the local imams.

Like SG, KMIT identifies the revealed canon as its primary source for knowledge about Islam. However, since many of KMIT's topics of discussions are not mentioned in these sources, it actively uses the law schools' jurisprudence, *fiqh*, religious scholars, *ulama*, and local imams as sources as well. This is where its sources and methods diverge from those of SG. Even though both Islamic fields prefer to support "new" Islamic knowledge with references to the revealed texts, KMIT does not make it a request as SG does. Instead, KMIT is more concerned with contextualizing the new knowledge to explore whether it is valid for and can be adapted to new times and situations. By using all the different law schools, and modern Islamic scholars' opinions, they try to find the regulations or knowledge most suitable

for their minority situation. In this way, their methods for gaining knowledge correspond more with those of MST and DIC than SG. However, like SG, KMIT's study model is to learn from each other and to study and discuss religious matters in small groups. And in their studies, the members turn to authorities recognized as more learned than themselves, such as KMIT's imam, other local imams, the Islamic law schools or different Islamic scholars, *ulama*. This means that KMIT uses religious authorities as secondary and trustworthy sources to Islam to a larger degree than SG does.

KMIT does not identify MST and DIC with different methodologies and methods. It uses imams from both institutions as religious authorities, and KMIT's imam has functioned as an imam in both mosques. Because of this, it is difficult to say whether KMIT's sources and methods correspond better with one of the institutions than the other. What is relevant for this thesis is to point out that as an Islamic field some of the women in this study engage in, KMIT does not represent an Islamic methodology on its own, as do the women's other Islamic fields. Instead, KMIT's methodology and methods can be seen as in continuation with those of MST or DIC or as a mix between them.

4.6 Summary: The women and their Islamic fields

In this chapter, I have given a presentation of the women in this study's local Islamic fields and the Islamic methodologies and methods that relate to each of these fields. The presentation does not cover all Islamic fields in Trondheim, but those presented represent the specific informants' Islamic fields. Every woman in this project has a relationship to one of the local mosques and participated in this project for this reason. At an early phase of this project I realized that to study how the context of Trondheim might influence the women's knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam, it is not enough to look at how the local Islamic institutional fields – the mosques – influence the women, but that the other Islamic fields the women engage in must be included as well. This is because the women's collective quest for knowledge to a great extent takes place outside the local mosques. Consequently, SG, the KMIT and IN were included as local Islamic fields in this project.

The figure below illustrates how the women's Islamic fields relate to and sometimes overlap with each other:

The women's Islamic fields and how they relate to each other:
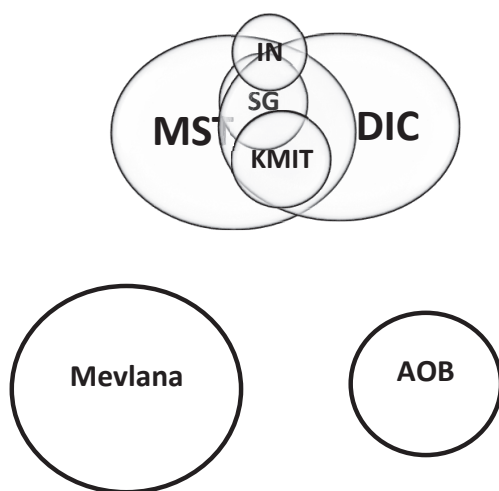
The informants from Mevlana and AOB are not engaged in any Islamic fields other than their local Islamic institution. These local Islamic institutional fields are organized around religious identity, law school, ethnicity, culture and language and do not overlap with any other Islamic fields in Trondheim.

The informants from MST are the ones who are engaged in the most Islamic fields. Some of them are only engaged in MST through membership and activities, while others participate in other Islamic fields that have some overlap with MST. SG's educational activities unite both members and non-members of MST, and SG uses MST's mosque as its place for learning. KMIT unites Indonesian Muslims who are members of MST or DIC. KMIT uses both institutions' mosques as their meeting places. IN is an Islamic field that gathers participants from SG, KMIT, other members of MST and non-members of MST.

In this chapter, I have shown that even if some of the women's Islamic fields overlap in the form of participants who are engaged in several fields, they should be recognized as independent fields because they represent different Islamic methodologies and methods. The Islamic fields are also made up by different groups of participants and organize different educational activities wherein the women relate to each other in different ways and thus hold different positions. To explore whether we can find processes of individualization in the

women's knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam, I have chosen to view the women's sources and methods to Islam in relation to their local Islamic fields' sources and methods and Islamic methodologies in general. In this chapter, I have shown that the different local Islamic fields the women in this study engage in can be seen as glocal representations of various Islamic methodologies, namely the Hanafi school's methodology, the Shafii school's methodology, the Twelver Shia's methodology, the Muslim Brotherhood's methodology and the Salafi' methodology. By treating the local Islamic fields as glocal representations of Islamic knowledge traditions, I have placed them within "the Islamic basket's" normative field (Roald 2001: 88-90; see sections 2.2.5 and 3.6). This means that the local Islamic fields are not isolated from the Islamic traditions of knowledge but that they are directly connected to them through their methodologies and methods for gaining knowledge about Islam. In this way, it is possible to regard the Islamic traditions of knowledge as Islamic norms regarding how to gain knowledge about Islam since they explicitly deal with questions concerning the nature of *sharia, sharia'*s sources and how to use these sources – that is, how to deduce *sharia* from its sources.

This chapter shows that the local Islamic fields actively relate themselves to various Islamic knowledge traditions by following their methodologies and methods. However, this chapter also shows that the local Islamic institutional fields make individual adjustments to adapt the Islamic message to the local context and Muslims in Trondheim. The adjustments they make do not make them diverge from the Islamic traditions of knowledge since different approaches and understandings of *sharia*, and how to deduce the law from its sources, as well as different understandings and approaches of "how" it is possible to contextualize the Islamic law and how to do it make up these traditions.

In the subsequent chapters, I will discuss the women's individual sources and methods to Islam in relation to the methodologies and methods presented in this chapter. Hence, this chapter offers an "emic" framework in relation to which discuss the women's sources and methods. In the following chapter (5), I will show how the women define themselves as Muslim in Trondheim and give a presentation of their individual sources and methods. In Chapters 6 and 7, I will discuss how local Islamic fields and local non-Islamic fields may function as the young Muslim women's sources and methods to Islam.

Chapter 5. Being Muslim in Trondheim: A lived religion approach

All the women who participated in this study live in Trondheim and define themselves as Muslims. Even though the women share a religious affiliation and place of residence, they understand and practice Islam differently due to cultural, social and personal differences. The women have different backgrounds; they are in different life situations; they have different religious and non-religious affiliations and they have different ambitions, hopes and dreams for their futures. It is therefore crucial to see the individuals who make up the category of "the Muslim women" in this study as autonomous individuals and not as a homogenous group. The women do not represent *one* understanding of Islam, nor do they represent *one* understanding of what it means to be and live as a Muslim. To identify similarities and differences between the women, this chapter deals with *how* and *why* they define themselves as Muslims and the women's individual sources and methods to gain knowledge about Islam.

Consequently, I will turn the attention from the local Islamic fields and these fields' methodologies and methods for gaining knowledge about Islam to parts of the women's lived Islam in Trondheim. Their definitions of Muslims and what the Muslim identity requires in terms of faith, ritual obligations, *ibadat,* and inter-human relationships, *mu'amalat*, and their religious self-definitions make up the first part of this chapter. Then, the women's emic descriptions of Muslims will be discussed in relation to how they correspond to different strategies of conceptualizing Islam, as presented in Chapter 2, and the way I have chosen to conceptualize Islam in this thesis (see section 3.1.4).

The second part of the chapter deals with the women's individual sources and methods to Islam in Trondheim. This refers to the sources and methods they use when they are studying Islam on their own and not participating in any of the Islamic fields. To describe what type of Islamic knowledge the women are acquiring, and what sources they are using, I will use Smart's dimensions of religion as a categorical tool (Smart 1998: 11-12; see section 3.2).

In the third part of the chapter, I will begin to analyze individualization processes in the women's knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam in Trondheim. To include a generational perspective to the study, I will compare the young women's sources and methods to Islam with those of their mothers or parents. The findings will then be discussed in relation to the theories of individualization presented and discussed in Chapters 2 and 3 (see sections 2.1-2.2 and 3.1).

All the informants come from Muslim families. Most of them were also born and raised in Muslim-majority countries. This means that they have gained knowledge about Islam from

various types of material, ritual and practical and/or social and institutional sources throughout their lives (Smart 1998: 11-12; see section 3.2). Together they have read numerous books about Islam; attended religious or Islamic classes in primary and secondary schools; participated in educational activities arranged by mosques or charity organizations; and learned about Islam from their family members, surroundings, etc. In the interviews, the informants' previous sources and methods to Islam were a returning subject as many of them described how they had been more or less socialized into Islam. Since the main objective of this project is to analyze individualization process in Muslim women's knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam in Trondheim, the second and third parts of this chapter are oriented around the women's *current* sources and methods to Islam since these are the ones the context of Trondheim might influence.

5.1 Defining Muslims

Frida: As far as I know, by terminology, a Muslim means surrender to God. To follow Him. Yeah. But, as a definition I think a Muslim is a person who has Islam as his or her religion, and they testify that there is only one God and that the Prophet Muhammad, *sallallahu alayhi wa sallam*, [peace and blessings of God be upon him – E-A] is His messenger. We call it *shahada*. Yeah. So, I think a Muslim is the one who believes. **E-A**: Mm. Do you have to do anything to be a Muslim except believe in God and…? **Frida**: the *shahada*? No, that is the one, the only thing. That if you want to be a Muslim you, we, have to testify, you have to say the *shahada*. And for the practice, that is another story…. **E-A**: Yeah, okay. So, you can be a Muslim without practicing? **Frida**: Yeah. As long as you say the *shahada* you are a Muslim.

Several of the women in this study define Muslims in ways similar to Frida, who is one of the Indonesian interviewees from the Muslim Society Trondheim (MST). They refer to faith, *iman* and the contents of the faith as expressed through the Islamic creed, the *shahada*, to describe what it means to be a Muslim. The Islamic creed is the essential and defining factor of the Muslim identity for these women, who do not think one has to practice Islam to be identified or to define oneself as Muslim. Faith in the creed is enough. In this way, these women treat the Islamic creed as a marker of religious identity and as a unifying factor for Muslims.

However, for some of the women, it is not enough to have faith in the creed to be identified as Muslim; one must also put faith into practice. For them, a Muslim is someone who surrenders to God by faith *and* practices. Thus, a Muslim must believe that God knows best and

obediently follow His guidance on how to live one's life, as expressed in the Qur'an and in the *sunna* of the Prophet. Anna, who is one of the other interviewees from MST, holds this view. She argues that involvement in Islamic practices is what distinguish Muslims from non-Muslims. The Qur'an, she explains, distinguishes between "believers" and "Muslims." "Believers" refers to everyone who has faith in God, such as Christians, Jews and Sabians[54]. It is important to have faith in the one God, Anna says, and His angles, His books, His prophets, the Judgment Day and destiny. Yet, these articles of faith are not what define you as a Muslim, but as a "believer." A Muslim must indeed have faith, but she must also practice, or at least try to practice, the Five Pillars of Islam. Thus, for Anna, it is the combination of faith and practices that defines a Muslim.

Three of the women's definitions of Muslims diverge from the rest. Camilla and Barbro are both members of MST; however, their definitions of Muslims differ from each other and the above-mentioned members. Camilla emphasizes practices only, while Barbro gives an essentialist characterization of Muslims with a normative touch: "Muslims are peaceful, friendly, social and helpful," presupposing that they have "proper knowledge about Islam." Katrine, on the other hand, who is one of the interviewees from Trondheim Mevlana Cultural Organization (Mevlana), points to a person's inner qualities: "A Muslim is someone who has God in her thoughts and heart." She does not think it is necessary for Muslims to display their religious belonging in the form of symbols such as clothes, a veil, etc. but that it should be expressed through behavior. From Katrine's point of view, Muslims should ground their lives on the revealed scriptures and make decisions in relation to what they think the Prophet Muhammad would have done. Thus, it is the faith in God, the quality of keeping God in one's mind and heart and behavior in accordance with the Prophet's *sunna* that make a Muslim, according to her.

Even though the young women believe that Muslims have something that unites them, they also emphasize diversity. Most of the women avoid essentialist presentations of Muslims and stress that Muslim individuals are just as different and "ordinary" as everyone else, meaning non-Muslims. For instance, when asked to define Muslims, some of the women use the opportunity to demystify Muslims. Nina, who is one of the interviewees from Ahl O'Bait (AOB), is an example of this:

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[54] Sabians is a religious group which is mentioned three times in the Qur'an (corpus.quran.com 2015).

Nina: A Muslim is an ordinary human. Yes? It is a human, it is only the faith. The only difference is that we have another faith and that we view life and the life in the hereafter differently. (…) Muslims are ordinary people. They have ordinary dreams, like others, and they love to be like everyone else. They do everything. Not all Muslims are very, follow the same path; some Muslims drink [alcohol – E-A]; they do all kinds of things; some are criminals. Yeah, it is ordinary people. We make mistakes and such. (…) But we have a faith. Not all practice the faith; some are just Muslims in the name.

In addition to emphasizing individual differences among Muslims, the women point to different cultural understandings of Islam and the Muslim identity as well. For instance, Muslims in Chechenia, Somalia and Pakistan may understand and practice Islam somehow differently. Still, they are believed to have something in common that unites them – the faith in the Islamic creed.

Even though the Islamic faith is essential in the informants' definitions of Muslims, there is a common agreement that faith ought to lead to practices. In relation to this, the women operate with normative categorizations of Muslims where they roughly distinguish between those who practice Islam and those who do not. Non-practicing Muslims are referred to as such but are also called "believers," "just Muslims," "Muslims in the name" and "low-quality Muslims." Practicing Muslims are referred to as that but also called "Muslims" and "religious Muslims."

There are no obvious connections between the informants' institutional affiliations and their definitions of Muslims. Their definitions vary transversely of institutional affiliation, as the MST interviewees illustrate, and can be divided between the majority who emphasize faith only and those who equal faith and practices as identifying factors, with the three exceptions mentioned above. In what follows, I will show what sorts of practices the women think Muslims should be involved in to be recognized as "practicing" or "religious" Muslim.

5.1.1 Defining Muslim practices
The women use both general and specific descriptions to define what sorts of practices Muslims should engage in. Widespread are descriptions referring to the idea that Muslims should follow God's guidance and the Prophet Muhammad's *sunna* on how to live one's life – or that Muslims should follow the teaching of God, with no further specifications on *how*. Some of the answers are, however, more specific. Most of the women see the Five Pillars of Islam, which together with the ritual purity make up the ritual obligations, '*ibadat*, as defining practices for the

Muslim identity (Hjärpe 1992: 8-10; Vogt 2005: 82-84; Wains 2003: 65, 89-93; see section 4.1.1). If you have faith in God and practice the pillars, you are a Muslim. In this way, the Five Pillars function as a confirmation of the women's faith: they perform these practices because they are Muslims. The women agree on the Five Pillars status as Islamic ritual obligations. Some refer to the pillars, which include the Islamic creed, *shahada,* as the foundation of Islamic creed, *aqida,* as well. Most Muslims approve of the *aqida,* the women argue. It is the details concerning *how* to perform the five pillars and other categories of action that cause internal discussion between Muslims.

Even though the women recognize the Five Pillars of Islam as ritual obligations for Muslims, it does not mean that one must practice all of them to be identified as a Muslim. Anna used to be of that opinion. She believed that a person who fasts but does not pray, or a person who pray but does not fasts, has completely lost it: "either you practice the whole package or nothing." Then, a TV lecture held by an international Sunni Islamic scholar, *alim*, made her change her mind:

> **Anna**: He [the *alim* – E-A] talked about his cousin or something. He [the cousin – E-A] got drunk all the time, and he was really not a good person, but he always went to pray when it was time for prayer. He used drugs and stole, but when it was time for prayer, he prayed. One day he went to the mosque and found a *hadith* I think, which said that if your prayer does not make you stop doing bad things, there is no point in praying. (…) So, he said okay, if that is true, I will stop. Then the *alim* first said that this *hadith* is very weak, and it might not be right because we get our rules from the religion and not a singular *hadith*. Secondly, he said, imagine that you have many lines, or ropes, he said, between you and God. And then you cut all of them off until you have just one left. Shall you stick to that one, or cut it? It is all you have left. Therefore, I think that day was very important, I learned something very important. And it is true; you never know what connects you to God.

After this lecture, Anna realized that it is not necessary to practice all the pillars to be a Muslim. Nevertheless, she is still of the opinion that the Five Pillars link Muslims to God, so she stresses the importance of trying to practice some of them. The other women share Anna's view on the pillars. Some of them regard the first two pillars, the creed, *shahada*, and the ritual prayer, *salat*, as more important than the rest. They view the prayer as a confirmation of the faith in the creed

and as the individual's personal meeting with God. Through prayer, Muslims both surrender to and bond with God, they explain. Thus, it is the second most important pillar after the creed.

Some interviewees believe that Muslims should do more than practicing *sharia*'s ritual obligations, *'ibadat*: they should also follow Islamic food and clothing regulations and engage in other religious practices embraced by *sharia*'s inter-human relationships, *mu'amalat* (Hjärpe 1992: 8-10; Vogt 2005: 82-84; Wains 2003: 65; see section 4.1.1). Lene, for instance, one of the interviewees from Mevlana, thinks Muslim women should display their religious identity through wearing the headscarf, known as the *hijab*. Women and men should also dress in accordance to Islamic clothing regulations. This means that they should avoid using too tight or transparent clothes that reveal too much of their body's shape, she explains. Still, Lene does not regard the *hijab* as an essential factor for being identified as Muslim since she acknowledges women without the *hijab* as Muslims as well. Lene and the other women find the *hijab* defining for Muslims per se and evaluate the choice of wearing it as better, meaning more Islamic, than not wearing it. However, even though they believe that practicing Muslims should follow Islamic food and clothing regulations, they do not regard these practices as so conclusive for the "practicing Muslim" identity as the Five Pillars of Islam.

Included in other religious practices Muslims should be involved in, the women identify the quest for knowledge about Islam. All the women think it is important to acquire knowledge about Islam, but they have different opinions regarding *how* important as well as *why* it is important.

In accordance with Muslim legal theorists and Islamic jurisprudence, *fiqh*, the women organize acts and practices into categories classified in relation to whether they are moral or legal and whether they are followed by religious reward or punishment – that is, in relation to their legal values (Hallaq 2009a: 84-87; see section 4.3.1). Due to language differences, the women use different terms for the different categories of actions, but the categories and their implications are the same: Obligatory, recommended, neutral, disapproved and forbidden (Hallaq 2009a: 84-85; Hallaq 2009b: 20-21; see section 4.3.1). The women believe that Muslims are required to perform acts that fall under the category of the obligatory. They believe that they will be rewarded for performing these acts and that omission of performing them will be punished. Acts categorized as recommended will be rewarded, while acts in the neutral category entail neither reward nor punishment. Further, the women think that they will be rewarded for avoiding acts categorized as disapproved and that they will be punished for performing acts categorized as forbidden. All actions that fall under one of the first four categories are defined as lawful, *halal*, by the women, while all actions in the last category are

defined as unlawful, *haram*. Since the women believe that all acts, except those categorized as neutral, will be rewarded or punished, in this life or the life in the hereafter, they think it is of major importance to be familiar with the different categorizes of actions and the acts that fall under them.

Several of the women consider it an obligatory act for Muslims to search for knowledge about Islam since to practice Islam, one needs knowledge about what and how to practice. Consequently, the women want knowledge about God and His guidance, as believed revealed through the Qur'an and the *sunna* of the Prophet. Yet, for someone who uses Islam as an overall system of meaning, this is not enough. They also want knowledge about the *sharia*'s ritual obligations, *ibadat,* the inter-human relationships, *mu'amalat* and the legal value of different categories of action. Nina and Oda, who are members of AOB, are among those who define the quest for Islamic knowledge as obligatory. They argue that by increasing their knowledge, they gain more control of their lives because when they can distinguish the lawful from the unlawful, it is easier to make the right choices. Others argue that even though God will not punish someone who unintentionally performs an unlawful act, He does not reward ignorance, either. Thus, it is the individual's responsibility to gain knowledge about the different categories of action and their legal value. Frida, one of the Indonesian interviewees from MST, holds this view and finds support for it in the descriptions of Judgment Day:

> **Frida**: It is obligatory in our religion to seek knowledge. **E-A**: Because it is important that you, yourself, have this knowledge? Is it not enough that your husband has this knowledge? **Frida**: No! On the Day of Judgment, Allah will not ask my husband or another person, but He will ask me, myself, what did you do during your life? And what knowledge do you have? Do you deserve to enter the paradise? Just like that.

Other women define the quest for Islamic knowledge as a highly recommended act that entails reward but not as a religious duty. Guro, for instance, another interviewee from MST, refers to a *hadith* where the Prophet Muhammad is recorded saying: "Search knowledge even if it is as far away as China" to legitimize her view. According to her, this *hadith* encourages Muslims to seek knowledge in general, and knowledge about Islam in particular, but she does not think it establishes the quest for knowledge as an obligatory act. Anna refers to the Prophet Muhammad as well to support her view. Instead of quoting one of his sayings, she points to his alleged illiteracy to legitimate it. Muhammad's illiteracy is an illustration of people's different qualifications for getting into self-studies, Anna argues. Not everyone has the possibility or the

capability to get involved in religious self-studies on their own, but they can seek knowledge from someone more learned than themselves. In this way, everyone has the possibility to learn more about Islam without studying it on their own, according to Anna.

5.1.2 Muslims' self-definitions

The women's reflections around what makes them Muslims are made up by references to factors such as faith and practices, family and cultural backgrounds, individual choices and personal reasons. Faith and practices, which include elements from *ibadat* and *mu'amalat,* are constituting elements in the women's self-definitions as Muslims. The women's backgrounds are recognized as what made them Muslims in the first place and what has shaped them as Muslims, in other words, why and how they *became* Muslims. Individual choices, personal reasons, faith and practices are used to describe why and how the women *are* Muslims today. All the women include three or more of the above-mentioned factors in their self-definitions as Muslim.

Some of the women, such as Petra, Katrine, Ida and Oda, refer to how they treat people around them and their own behavior in their Muslim self-presentations. They put as much emphasis on practices that fall under *mu'amalat* as on practices belonging under *ibadat* when they define being a Muslim. For instance, Petra, who is member of AOB, replied as follows when I ask what makes her a Muslim:

> **Petra**: Good question. I believe it is my behavior that describes me as a Muslim. How I behave in front of others, because everything else, like prayer and such things, that is more personal. That is very personal, between God and me. But how I should behave when I am with others, and how I treat people around me, and how I show myself as a Muslim, that I use *hijab* and such things, that is what makes me a Muslim.

In addition to faith and practices, most of the women refer to their family and cultural backgrounds in reflections around what makes them Muslims. Five of the women claim that they were born as Muslims. This is in accordance with Islamic beliefs saying that all humans are born Muslims (Roald 2004: 123-124), which these women seem to have internalized. However, these women do not see their "natural" Muslim identity as the main reason why they became Muslims; instead, they refer to their backgrounds.

Most of the interviewees were born and have lived parts of their lives in Muslim-majority countries. All come from Muslim families and refer to their parents as Muslims. Not all parents are practicing Muslims, but they identify, and are identified, as Muslims by the interviewees. The women's parents and families have played an important role in forming them as Muslims. As children, the women learned about Islam from their parents. Some state that their parents raised them to be Muslims. For instance, Hanne, one of the interviewees from MST, thinks her family is the main reason why she became a Muslim. She grew up in a Muslim home in Indonesia with parents and relatives who taught her about Islam. At school, she gained an Islamic education, and in her childhood, she mainly socialized with other Muslims. Thus, her family and surroundings socialized her into Islam. Many of the women tell similar stories. They are proud of their backgrounds, and some regard it as a privilege, such as AOB member Nina: "I think I am lucky to be born as a Muslim," she says, "because it is not so common these days to choose a religion when you grow up." Even though several of the women acknowledge being socialized into Islam, they emphasize that it is their individual choice to practice Islam. To exemplify this, MST member Emma describes herself as "returning to Islam." According to Emma, she was born as a Muslim in a Muslim non-practicing home in Indonesia. She decided to practice Islam in her late teens even though her parents did not. Because of this she does not regard her identity as a "practicing Muslim" as inherited but solely self-chosen.

The interviewees acknowledge their backgrounds' influence on their religious identity. Still, none of the women will agree that their backgrounds are the main reason why they are (still) Muslims to today because they regard it as a self-chosen identity – they have all individually decided to follow Islam and to be practicing Muslims. To underscore this for me, and to show that their religious identity is not only a product of their family backgrounds, several of them point to individual choices they have made that were not supported by those nearest to them, such as the choice of wearing the *hijab*.

Two of the women, Anna and Oda, respectively from MST and AOB, started to wear the *hijab* before they had turned 10. Their parents told them to wait until they got older, but they insisted on wearing it due to various reasons. Anna explains how she loved to read all kinds of books in her childhood, including books about Islam. From some of these books she learned that Muslim girls must start wearing the *hijab* when they reach puberty. When she got her period at a young age, she insisted on wearing it despite her parents', and particularly her mother's, objection[55]. Her mother refused to help her with the *hijab*, so before she learned to

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[55] This may illustrate the internal discussions among Muslims concerning the status of regulations that pertain to how women should dress in public, as referred to in section 4.1.1, note 26.

fasten the *hijab* pins herself, she asked some of her aunts and neighbors to help her. Oda, for her part, started to wear the *hijab* because she identified with her mother and older sisters and wanted to look like them. Her parents disapproved of her choice and tried to talk her out of it, but she ignored their wishes. The first two to three years she was on and off with the *hijab* and often covered her hair while she simultaneously dressed in shorts and a tank top, much to her family's amusement. One of the interviewees from Mevlana, Mai, started to cover her hair at the age of 16. Still, she experienced resistance from her parents and her local surroundings in Trondheim. Both parties told her to wait with it until she got married. Mai explains that in Turkey, her parents' country of origin, mainly married women wear the *hijab*. Still, even though her parents advised her to wait with the *hijab*, they supported her decision when she started to wear it. Mai was soon to discover that not everyone was as understanding as her parents. The first evening she wore the *hijab* at a public place in Trondheim, an older Turkish Muslim woman told her to take it off because she did not like brides with the *hijab*. Mai's first thought was "Well, then my wedding will be 'ugly,'" but the comment did not make her change her mind.

The women's *hijab* stories, and stories about how they started to follow different kinds of Islamic practices despite that their parents did not, are the women's way of communicating and manifesting their identity as practicing Muslims as self-chosen. It is important for the women to demonstrate that their religious identity is primarily a result of their own choices and not something they have passively inherited from their parents. The women's emphasis on individual choices does not allow us to regard their religious identities as solely inherited from their parents because, from an emic perspective, these identities are the result of the women's individual choices.

Several of the women have personal reasons for why they are Muslims today. For instance, Guro, one of the interviewees from MST, states the following:

Guro: What makes me Muslim? You know, I was born as a Muslim. I was born Muslim. But what has made me *still* be a Muslim is that I found out that Islam answers all my questions. **E-A**: Okay. Questions about what? **Guro**: About everything right? Everything I need to ask about, peace of mind, tranquility, yeah. I see that I have been created by this *one* God, okay, and that *one* God knows everything already, before I was born, so, I just live my simple life. Until I die. So, that is just it. **E-A**: But you say that you are born a Muslim; are your parents Muslims? Is that what you mean when you say it, or? **Guro**: We believe in Islam that every child is born a Muslim. This is what we believe. The people are coming from somewhere, when they, yeah. So that is, everything

about that is explained in the Qur'an: how they come, where they come from, you know, destiny, and everything about that. So, I am not confused in anyway with this life, no. So, life is just like this. And that life has been given to me by that *one* God, and my life will be taken from me by that *one* God. It is as simple as that. And so, that is why I am still a Muslim (laughs). My parents are Muslims, but my eldest sister is now a Christian. The eldest sister in the family is now a Christian, so you can also choose to not be a Muslim, even though you were born into a Muslim home.

Frida describes herself as "Muslim by heart" and regards her faith as a gift from God and verification of Islam being the right religion. Emma describes Islam as a guide to life: it provides her with rules and regulations and brings satisfaction and meaning to her life. Islam provides Katrine's life with meaning as well. She has faith in Islamic doctrines and claims to continuously discover proofs that verifies them. According to Katrine, she finds her true self in Islam and believes that the religion corresponds with her senses.

To communicate their Muslim identity as self-chosen, some women, such as Petra, Guro and Anna, argue that there is no compulsion in Islam. One cannot force a person to be Muslim, the women argue, because all Muslim practices should be grounded in the right faith and intensions. It is not possible to force a person to have faith in God or to perform ritual practices out of the right intentions. The reason for this, the women explain, is that faith and practices are closely intertwined in Islam and that the latter should be a confirmation of the first. A forced-upon Muslim identity, and associated Muslim practices, are therefore not good for anyone – God will not reward religious practices that are not done out of the right intentions, and He will punish those who compel others in regard to faith and practices, these women argue.

In our conversations about the self-chosen Muslim identity, we also talked about conversions and the possibility to leave Islam to convert to another religion. Reflections around this topic show that the women have different cultural backgrounds and individual opinions about it. All the women agreed that it is indeed possible to leave Islam for another religion. To illustrate this, some of the women refer to family members who have converted to Christianity, such as Guro does above. Guro's sister converted to Christianity after marrying a Christian man. Her family was not pleased with her decision but accepted it since conversions from one religion to another are common in her country of birth. Emma comes from an Indonesian diversely religious family made up by both Christians and Muslims and does not regard conversion as something extraordinary. Her parents are Muslims, but she has several Christians among her extended family members. Emma says that her family respects each other's religious

affiliations but that they seldom discuss matters related to religion. Her family has realized and accepted that they have different faiths and practices and have decided that these differences should not come between their family bonds. Lene and Petra, with backgrounds from respectively Turkey and Iraq, are not familiar with conversions from Islam. Lene does not think it is acceptable to change one's religion in Turkey even though it is possible and a legal right. Petra thinks it is possible to leave Islam even though she has never heard about anyone who has done that. She distinguishes between ceasing to practice Islam and leaving Islam. The first thing is rather common, she says, but she has never heard that this act has made people leave Islam. They are still Muslims; they just do not practice Islam, she explains.

Even if the women view religious identity as an individual choice, it is also recognized as a choice that affects families. Several of the women say that they could have left Islam for another religion if they had wanted but not without resistance from their families. Conversion is therefore not only an individual question but a question about family relations as well. Women from homogenously Muslim families think it would have been hard to leave Islam. Hanne, who grew up in an Indonesian Muslim family, thinks it would have been a disaster for her family if she had converted to another religion. Ida, on the other hand, who also comes from an Indonesian Muslim family, thinks that her parents would have strongly disagreed with her decision at first but accepted it after some time. Katrine thinks that had she left Islam, it would have led to huge consequences for her and her parents. She believes that even though her parents would have accepted it, she would probably be excluded from her extended family. Furthermore, her parents would probably have been accused of poor parenting and gained a bad reputation. Katrine's reflections around this topic correspond with Lene's answer that it is unacceptable to change one's religion in Turkey. Mai's answer reflects the same opinions, too. Mai is uncertain whether or not she could have left Islam because she sees her religious identity, even if it is self-chosen, as dependent upon her family and their "strong" faith as well.

Two of the other Indonesian interviewees from MST, Dorthe and Frida, and Lene from Mevlana did not want to engage in this kind of hypothetical talk about conversions to another religion and did not understand why they should. According to them, Islam is the only true religion, and they have never thought about leaving it, nor did they recognize it as a matter of discussion. In contrast to these women, we have Nina and Anna, respectively from AOB and MST, who have a more pragmatic view on religion and religious identity. Nina, for instance, thinks it is natural for humans to believe in God. She has chosen Islam because it suits her, and she thinks it covers everything, including Judaism and Christianity. Because of this, Islam is

the true religion for her. Anna shares her view but is even more pragmatic. She says it is possible for her to leave Islam, but why should she?

> **Anna**: To be honest, sometimes, when I think about it [leaving Islam – E-A], I think that I win, not them. Because I believe in Jesus, I believe in Moses, I believe in Muhammad. In case some of them are right, I might (laughs), might end up on the right way. So, I believe in Christianity and Judaism, I believe in the Bible and the old Testament, which we call Torah, but I think that some people have fooled around with parts of it, and made it their own choices, things. (…) But I believe and respect all, both religions, therefore I consider myself Christian and Jew, but in addition I believe in Muhammad. (…) Because of that I win, no matter what (laughs). (….) I remember a friend of mine asked, "Why should I believe in God?" I said, "What do you lose?" (…) I found out that it was a Greek, Greek philosopher who said the same, so I think like a philosopher (laughs). He said that he mused about things like God and life, and in the end, he came up with a conclusion; "If I believe in God, dies, and he is there, so yeah! If I believe in God, dies, and he is not there, who cares? But, if I do not believe in God and he is there, I will get in trouble. Either way, I win as long as I believe in him." And that is true, as I told my friend, what do you lose? If he is not there, he is not there. I have a good life; I have a husband who loves me, I have a kid, and in Islam nothing is forbidden. **E-A**: No? **Anna**: Even things that are forbidden [are so – E-A], because it is bad for my health, not for me. A glass of alcohol, pig or ham, how is that going to change my life in any way? (…) So, I lose nothing (laughs).

5.1.3 Emic versus etic descriptions of Islam

The interviewees' descriptions of what it means to be a Muslim, and their descriptions of how and why they are Muslims, tell us how they view Islam. From the women's emic perspective, Islam is a religion made up by faith in a creed, a series of rituals and practices and different rules and regulations that cover all aspects of life, including ethics. This means that they ascribe to Islam an essence – the ritual obligations, *ibadat*, and the inter-human relationships, *mu'amalat*. The women emphasize faith and various practices in their Muslim self-definition: what they believe and what they do are what make them Muslims. However, the women's emic descriptions of Islam do not correspond with Orientalist or essentialist approaches to Islam, which also describe Islam as having an "essence," because they differ on several major points (see section 2.2.1). First, even if the women identify Islam with an essence, they do think it is

possible to be a Muslim just by having faith in the Islamic creed. This means that the "essence," in the form of acts and practices and rules and regulations, is not absolute; one can still be a Muslim without it. Second, the women believe that there are numerous ways to be a Muslim. They believe that it is the individual's choice whether or not to follow the divine guidance, and how. Consequently, the individual must choose whether or not to follow rules and regulations and perform religious rituals and acts, which ones and how. The women do not think of Islam as a static and uniform religion (Sayyid 2003: 31-33; see section 2.2.1) but rather emphasize and represent its diversity. Their different ways of practicing Islam can be seen as different understandings of Islam and thus as representations of the diversity within Islam – diversity both described and represented by the women. Third, the young women who live and practice Islam in Trondheim would never think of the "West" and "Islam" as binary oppositions, as Orientalist or essentialist approaches often do (Said 2001; Sayyid 2003; see section 2.2.1). Rather the opposite: by being practicing Muslims in Trondheim, they are examples of how Islam can be practiced everywhere and adapted to its surroundings. Because of this, the women's emic descriptions of Muslims, and how they live as Muslims, do not correspond with the etic approach of Orientalist essentialism.

However, since the women describe Islam as *one* religion with an "essence," even though it is not absolute, their emic description does not correspond with anti-Orientalist approaches, either, since these rejects seeing Islam as one religion and essentialist presentations of it (see section 2.2.1). Even though both perspectives emphasize Islam's diversity and multitude of expressions, they approach it differently. Where the women see it as a natural part of Islam, and one of them also describes it as "the beauty of Islam" (see section 4.5.2), anti-Orientalist approaches use it as an argument to advocate that there is no such thing as Islam, only "Islams" (Sayyid 2003: 36-40; see section 2.2.1). Even though the women highlight that Muslims differ from each other, interpret and practice Islam in different ways, they would never speak of Islam in the plural. There is only one Islam, and despite the diversity among Muslims, Muslims have something that unite them: faith in the Islamic creed, according their emic perspective.

The fact that the women refer to and speak of Islam as one *faith* and one religion means that their emic descriptions do not correspond with etic descriptions that transform Islam into something else, such as a "discursive tradition" or "master signifier" (see sections 2.2.3-2.2.4). These conceptualization strategies aim to describe different understandings of Islam, different ways to practice Islam, and to preserve its singularity, as both described and represented by the interviewees. Still, they diverge from the women's emic perspectives because they

conceptualize Islam as a discursive production and not as a religion. Asad and Sayyid identify unifying factors for Muslims other than those the women do. Where Asad identifies the Islamic scriptural sources (the Qur'an and *hadith*) and Sayyid identifies the name of Islam as factors that unite Muslims, the women ascribe faith in the Islamic creed with the same function (Asad 1986: 14; Sayyid 2003: vii-xxii, 31-49; see sections 2.2.3-2.2.4). Thus, Asad and Sayyid seem to overlook the most important component in the women's emic descriptions of Islam, the Islamic faith, in their efforts to conceptualize Islam.

Hjärpe's "Islamic basket" is also an etic model of Islam (Hjärpe 1997, 1998; see section 2.2.5). Still, his model differs from the other etic conceptualizations of Islam since it is closer to the women's emic understandings. Hjärpe conceptualizes Islam as a religion at the same time as he uses the basket metaphor as an analytical tool to describe unity and diversity within Islam. Hjärpe recognizes Islam as one religion, and he emphasizes the Islamic creed as a unifying factor for Muslims (Hjärpe 1997: 267-269; Hjärpe 1998: 34-36; see section 2.2.5). This is in line with the women's emic descriptions of Muslims. The women's identification of Muslim practices shows that there are several activities, acts, rituals, regulations, etc. that Muslims can identify and describe as Islamic. However, what is chosen and presented as Islamic or belonging to Islam depends upon who chooses, where, when and in which situations. This is in accordance with the Islamic basket model that highlights what influence individuals, groups and various contexts may have on what is chosen from the Islamic basket and presented as Islam (Hjärpe 1997, 1998; see section 2.2.5). In this way, the Islamic basket model does not dismiss religion as a phenomenon and an analytical tool; rather, it helps us describe how Muslims "pick and choose" from the Islamic basket. As shown above and in Chapter 4, the women accept that Muslims can choose differently from the Islamic basket as long as their choices can be supported by references to authoritative Islamic sources (see sections 4.5.1-4.5.2). Thus, the Islamic basket model corresponds better with the women's understanding of what it means to be Muslim since it includes both faith and practices and can be used to explain both unity and diversity within Islam, as described and represented by the women.

5.2 The women's individual quest for knowledge about Islam

The quest for Islamic knowledge is leading the young Muslim women to various types of knowledge, sources and methods, and this part of the chapter looks at which types. The focus will be on the women's *individual* quests for knowledge. By this I mean what types of Islamic knowledge the women search for, and the sources and methods they use, when they study Islam individually in Trondheim. To distinguish the different types of knowledge and sources from

one another, and to offer etic descriptions of them, I have used Smart's dimensions of religion as a model of categorization (Smart 1998: 11-12; see section 3.2).

The subsequent presentation starts with a description of what types of knowledge the women are seeking. Then follows a presentation of their material and their social and institutional sources to Islam. Included in the second category, we find persons and institutions the women use as religious authorities. The women's individual religious authorities make up some of their social and institutional sources, though not all. A further presentation of how the local Islamic and non-Islamic fields in Trondheim may influence the informants' knowledge acquisition and practices of Islam, and how they may function as social and institutional and/or practical and ritual sources and methods to Islam, are the topics of Chapters 6 and 7. However, since this is a presentation of the women's individual sources and methods to Islam, some of these fields, persons or activities within these fields will be mentioned in this chapter as well.

5.2.1 Knowledge about what? Emic and etic descriptions

On questions concerning what types of Islamic knowledge they are seeking, several women point to "knowledge about life" and practical knowledge about how to live as a Muslim. Thus, they do not distinguish between knowledge about life and knowledge about God's guidance but believe that knowledge about the latter will broaden their understanding of life in general. This means that they believe that knowledge about God's guidance can provide them with knowledge about how to live good lives as humans in general and Muslims in particular. For instance, the MST members Ida, Emma and Dorthe assert to search for knowledge about what they refer to as "basic Islamic life rules." Guro, another interviewee from MST, regards the Qur'an as a guide to life and believes that it can provide her with what she refers to as the "fundamentals" of Islam:

> **Guro**: If you believe that the Qur'an is a guideline, it is like the manual of my life, then I will follow it. So, for example if I buy a new telephone, I will read them [the manuals – E-A], so, (…) Yeah, but even when I do not, no, maybe I will not read it in the full, but I will still read it, and try to follow it. (…) I just used that as a comparison, but, yeah. In Islam, that is the fundamental, I believe in the fundamentals, I do not choose about them. It is more like I am convinced, it is like this is the fundamentals of Islam. I follow it, and I will see the positive effects of it.

What the women refer to as "knowledge about life," "basic Islamic life rules," "fundamentals," etc. includes various types of Islamic knowledge, such as legal and ethical, practical and ritual, narrative and mythical, doctrinal and philosophical and social and institutional. This means that they are gaining knowledge about several of Smart's dimensions of religion (Smart 1998: 11-22; see section 3.2). However, the analyses show that a considerable amount of the Islamic knowledge the informants are searching for is legal and ethical and practical and ritual.

The informants aim to become better Muslims. To be able to achieve that goal, they believe that they need to increase their knowledge about the Islamic law, *sharia*, its two categories of regulations, *ibadat* and *mu'amalat*, and its different categories of actions and their legal values (see sections 4.1.1, 4.3.1 and 5.1.1). With knowledge about Islam's legal and ethical practical and ritual dimensions, the women can make sure that they are fulfilling their ritual obligations, and they can implement recommended practices that entail religious rewards in their daily lives. They also use these types of knowledge to question and correct individual religious practices and acts. Even though the women are familiar with the ritual obligations, *ibadat*, many of them have questions concerning how to practice these in the context of Trondheim. Prayer and fasting times and what times to follow in Trondheim, as well as why and how, are therefore topics that occupy the women.

The women search for knowledge about the Islamic categories of actions and their legal values to improve their current religious practices and to implement new ones. Lene (Mevlana) and Nina and Oda (AOB), for instance, want to increase their knowledge about how to perform the ritual prayer in ways that may maximize the religious rewards it might entail. Because of this, they want detailed knowledge about various actions that might influence the act of prayer, for instance, detailed descriptions of prayer sequences, *raka* (prostrations), body postures, how to dress and behave during prayer, what to eat or not eat before prayer and the various choices' legal values. Others, such as Guro from MST, want to improve the way they perform Islamic rituals and to implement more recommended and reward-giving acts in their daily lives.

> **Guro**: I know the foundations, but maybe, you know, I want to be a better Muslim. And I want to do more additional things. If you do some additional things, then you are sure that you are doing the compulsory ones. (…) For example, if you give *zakat*[56], and if you can give *sadaqa*[57], so if you are giving *sadaqa*, you also give, you get more rewards. But, you must give *zakat* if you have the money, but you must not, it is not a must to

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[56] *Zakat* refers to the giving of alms, the fourth pillar of Islam (see section 4.1.1).
[57] *Sadaqa* refers to voluntary charity, or voluntary alms (Roald 2004: 117).

give *sadaqa*, but it is very good. So, some day, I will do that. I want to be a better Muslim. I want to learn more, and maybe I have learned something wrong? I do not know. For example, it was a day at praying, and I did *Amin*[58]. I have been doing *Amin* because I think we should do that. But somebody showed me in the mosque that no, this is an innovation. This is not in the Qur'an or the *hadith*, or nowhere either (…). So, I had to think, why am I doing the *Amin*? So okay, we talked about it. We can, there are sometimes that you might have to rub your body when you say some practical prayer, when you want to sleep or something, but not the face. The Prophet has not been rubbing his face, but where does it come from? We did not know. So, they say that rubbing our faces, you are not doing something wrong, but it is, why are you doing it? So, since that time I have been trying not to do it, not to rub my face because it has not been documented that the Prophet was rubbing his face, *alayhi salam*. When he was asleep or, but many people do it. I still do it automatically, so **E-A**: Yeah, because you are so used to it? **Guro**: I am so used to it. **E-A**: But you cannot find any reason for it in the *hadith* or **Guro**: No. (…). Just like, you want to perfect, you want to be a better Muslim.

Knowledge about the Islamic categories of actions and their legal values is important for the women because it makes them able to distinguish lawful, *halal,* from unlawful, *haram*, and to make individual choices related to this. As Julie, another MST interviewee expresses it: "The more [Islamic – E-A] knowledge you have, the more can you restrain from what is wrong. And the other way around: the more knowledge you have, the better you can do." All categorizes of action and their legal values are of interest to the women since they believe that various actions can generate both religious rewards and punishments. The women believe that if they learn how to distinguish between the various categories of actions, they can individually choose if they want to perform what is obligated and recommended and avoid acts that are disapproved and unlawful. In this way, they can collect and maximize religious rewards.

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[58] *Amin,* or *Ameen*, is a word many Muslims say after reciting sura *al-Fathia*, during the ritual prayer, *salat*, or personal prayer, *du ʿa*. Sura *al-Fathia* is the Arabic name of the first chapter of the Qur'an, "the Opening." The act Guro refers to involves saying *Amin* silently at the same time as she rubs her palms against her face. Islamic authorities, such as the Sunni Islamic law schools and individual scholars, view the utterance and act of *Amin* differently. They disagree about whether or not pronouncing *Amin* after this *sura* is a recommended action, *sunna*, and whether one should say it out loud or silently. They also disagree on the legal value of the act of rubbing one's face while one says *Amin*. Some classify it as an innovation, *bidaʿ*, and thus a disapproved or unlawful act, while other classify it as "not prescribed," or "not sunna" (see, for instance, assimalhakeem.net 2015, Islam Question and Answer 2005, 2006 and Myreligionislam.com 2016, etc.).

Sharia's comprehensive character makes it possible to categorize most of the Islamic knowledge the women are acquiring as legal and ethical. However, since the women are gaining this knowledge *to implement* (at least parts of) it in their lives, it can also be categorized as practical and ritual knowledge. It is not only knowledge concerning *ibadat* that the women want to put into practice but also knowledge about *mu'amalat*. For instance, all Islamic rules and regulations regarded as relevant to their individual lives and life situations seem to interest the informants. These include rules and regulations concerning menstruation, gender roles, child upbringing, bank investments, etc. that the women may use as moral guidelines and practice in their daily lives. This means that the informants believe that it is possible to make choices and decisions inspired by God's guidance and to act in line with the divine guidance in almost all aspects of life, be they personal, ritual, social, economic or practical. This does not mean that the women turn to Islam with all their questions and trivialities but that they believe that it is possible to find guidelines or "recipes" for how to become better humans and Muslims "within" Islam – that is, in the Islamic source materials and interpretations of these.

The various types of Islamic knowledge are closely interrelated, just as Smart's seven dimensions of religion are (see section 3.2). When the women search for theoretical knowledge about *sharia*'s rules and regulations, this type of knowledge can be categorized as legal and ethical. However, when they are intentionally seeking this type of knowledge to implement it in their daily lives, it becomes practical and ritual. This means that theoretical knowledge about Islam's legal and ethical dimension transforms into practical and ritual knowledge about Islam when it is put into practice or lived. In the same way, knowledge about gender roles, child upbringing and clothing can be categorized as legal and ethical knowledge when it is approached at a theoretical level and as practical and ritual knowledge when it is put into practice. Knowledge about Islamic gender roles, child upbringing and clothing can also be categorized as social and institutional knowledge if it is approached as Islamic ways of organizing a society and its different social spheres and institutions, such as public and private spheres, the marriage institution, the family institution, etc. (Smart 1998: 19-21; see section 3.2).

Islamic rituals', rules' and regulations' origins in the form of narratives and material sources are other topics the Muslim women in Trondheim deal with in their quest for Islamic knowledge. These knowledge types can be categorized as narrative and mythical but also as material knowledge. It is narrative and mythical knowledge since *sharia*, according to Islamic beliefs, manifests the will of God as it is believed to be expressed through the Qur'an and the *sunna* of the Prophet Muhammad, as recorded in *hadith*. However, when the women increase

their knowledge about *sharia*'s material sources' content, meaning, structure, soundness, etc., it is possible to argue that they are gaining knowledge about Islam's material dimension as well. Still, the informants are more interested in the rituals, rules and practices they believe can be deduced from the material sources than the sources' historical origins, development and composition. This means that even though the Muslim women seek various types of Islamic knowledge, most of it should be understood as legal and ethical and ritual and practical knowledge since the women acquire it in order to increase their knowledge about how to practice Islam and live as Muslims in Trondheim.

If we translate the types of Islamic knowledge the informants are seeking into Hjärpe's etic model of "the Islamic basket" (see section 2.2.5), we can see that the women are searching for knowledge about the "basics" in the Islamic basket or the content of the Islamic basket in general. This is because the women want to learn more about different Islamic beliefs and activities, such as rituals, practices, terminology, categorizations, narratives and historiographies, which that they identify as "Islam."

5.2.2 Sources and methods to Islam

The women use various types of sources and methods to increase their knowledge about Islam. If they cannot find what they are looking for in one specific source, they will turn to another. There are individual differences in what types of sources and methods the informants prefer due to various backgrounds (lingual, national, institutional) and personal preferences.

Islamic scriptures, books, articles, various texts, TV-programs, movies and videos make up the Muslim women in Trondheim's material sources to Islam. Islamic fields, non-Islamic fields and religious authorities in the form of institutions and persons make up their social and institutional sources. Material and social and institutional sources may also function as ritual and practical sources. For instance, some women watch videos of religious performances, such as the ritual prayer, *salat*, or the ritual purification, *wudu*, to improve their own practices. Consciously or unconsciously, the women influence and are influenced by their surroundings. Through observations of, and interactions and conversations with, other Muslims, the women gain knowledge about Islam. In this way, their social and institutional sources may function as ritual and practical sources as well.

5.2.3 Material sources and methods: The scriptures

The Qur'an and *hadith* stand out as the informants' main material sources to Islam. The scriptures' position and authority within Islam are unquestioned by the women. As Guro expresses it:

> **Guro**: Qur'an first. (…) And then the *hadith* as a supplement (…). Because when the Prophet was dying, no, he was not dying then, it was under the last sermon, during his last sermon. (…) And he says that I have left two things for you, the Qur'an and the *sunna*. (…) So, those two things, it is complete, all of that is there.

The Qur'an's position as the primary source to Islam is reflected in the women's language and the fact that several of them use the words "Qur'an" and "Islam" synonymously. Some, such as Ida, use phrases like "within Islam," "it is stated in Islam" or "Islam says[59]" when referring to what is written in the Qur'an. If a ritual, regulation, practice or viewpoint is mentioned in the Qur'an, the women regard it as Islamic.

The informants treat the Qur'an's content as a moral and legal norm. They identify the Qur'an as the word of God and regard it as an incomparable divine source. Rules and regulations mentioned in the Qur'an are recognized as Islamic law. However, even though the women believe that most Islamic rules and regulations originate from the Qur'an, they describe its contents as general, theoretic and historical. Thus, the *hadith* is recognized as an invaluable supplement to the Qur'an because it elaborates and reveals the will of God (further) through the *sunna* of the Prophet Muhammad. In this way, the *hadith* provides the women with details concerning the ritual obligations and inter-human relations, which the Qur'an lacks.

> **Emma**: Yes, the first source which we have to use is the Qur'an. (…) If the Qur'an says no, but the other [sources – E-A] says yes, then it is wrong. (…) If not stated in the Qur'an, or it is stated in the Qur'an, but not completely stated, (…) we should find the details in the *hadith*s. (…) These two are reliable sources. Other than that, so we can, have to cross-check with these two (laughs).

*Tafsi*r, commentaries on and explanations of the Qur'an are by the women identified and used as a third source for Islamic knowledge. The women need help in order to read and understand

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[59] The phrase "Islam says" is a reification of Islam. When Ida uses the "Qur'an" and "Islam" synonymously, she also refers to the religion Islam as a physical thing and thus reifies it.

the message of the Qur'an and use *tafsir* as an interpretative tool to increase their knowledge about the different chapters, *sura*s, and verses, *aya*s, and the contexts within which they were revealed. The Qur'an, *hadith* and *tafsir* are treated as complementary sources by the women. They identify them with different contents but believe that all three sources can provide knowledge about God's guidance and thus basic knowledge about how to live proper lives as Muslims. According to Frida, these sources contain knowledge about "how to be a good Muslim, how to worship Allah, *tawhid*, and how to practice Islam in the same way as the Prophet Muhammad did."

Even though the women identify the Qur'an, *hadith* and *tafsir* as their primary sources, they use different versions of the scriptures. Many of the women know how to recite the Qur'an, or passages in the Qur'an, in Arabic, yet only a few *understand* Arabic. When these women individually read the Islamic scriptures, they use translated versions. Most of the women identify the Qur'an with a double function: it is a source for both religious knowledge and religious reward. When used as a source for religious knowledge, the women read and study it in a language they have mastered. For instance, Anna and Nina, who are fluent in Arabic, use Arabic versions of the Qur'an, while the interviewees with backgrounds from Indonesia or Turkey respectively use Indonesian, Turkish, English or Norwegian translations of the scripture. Language differences are thus one reason why the women use different "versions" of the sources. When the women use the Qur'an as a source for religious rewards, they recite it in Arabic since they regard this as an act that entails religious rewards, regardless whether or not the reciter understands the language. If one struggles with Arabic, the act of reciting the Qur'an in Arabic is believed to entail even more religious rewards since God rewards the effort in addition to the concrete recitation, according the women.

Confessional and institutional affiliations influence the women's versions of the scriptures as well. The women engaged in the Islamic institutional field of AOB use Shia *hadith* collections and *tafsir*s from central Twelver Shia figures, scholars and authorities (see section 4.3.4), while the informants who are members of Mevlana use *hadith* collections and *tafsir*s published by the Diyanet's Hanafi scholars (see section 4.3.2). The women engaged in the Islamic institutional field of MST do not have a shared "corpus" of specific versions of *hadith* or *tafsir*. Instead, the women use *hadith*s and *tafsir*s they are familiar with and have access to or that are written in a language they have mastered. However, the women involved in the Islamic fields of the Sister Group (SG) and the Indonesian Muslim Society Trondheim (KMIT) are more or less using the same *tafsir*s. The women engaged in SG prefer the English version of Ibn Kathir's *tafsir* in their self-studies even though their use of *tafsir* is not limited to this

version. The Indonesian informants use English and Indonesian translations and versions of *hadith* and *tafsir* and, amongst others, Ibn Kathir's *tafsir* and an Indonesian version called *tafsir* al-Azhar. Emma, who prefers the latter, describes it like this: "*Tafsir* it is written by the *ulama*. It is in Indonesian. It is much more convenient for me to understand. So, I learn from that, from *tafsir* (…). We call it *tafsir* al-Azhar (…) because the authors have been to al-Azhar[60], Egypt, to learn the Qur'an things."

The women regard the Qur'an, *hadith* and *tafsir* as sound sources to Islam, but there are some differences in their reliability. The Qur'an is regarded as a safe source, and none question its soundness. *Hadith* and *tafsir* are also identified as sound sources. Still, not all *hadith*s are regarded as sound, and because of that the women distinguish between "strong" and "weak" *hadith*s. Guro explains in the following:

> **E-A**: How do you know if a source is reliable? **Guro**: As we get with the Qur'an it is, that is not difficult to know: either it is in the Qur'an, or it is not in the Qur'an. But, for the *hadith*s, there are some weak *hadith*s, and there are some strong *hadith*s. So, some people really learn about the chain of these *hadith*s. So, if the chain is broken somewhere along the line, okay. Abu Huraira told Sofia. Sofia told Alima. Alima told…. And then someone could not figure out, and they will leave the line for centuries. So, if that was broken, we find out that this is a weak *hadith*. So, that is not easy to learn, except if someone really likes reading this. You know there are many books of *hadith,* many, many books. So, there is this *hadith* called Sahih Bukhari *hadith*. The Sahih Bukhari *hadith* is a strong *hadith* that have been tested, tried and trusted. (…) You know? Tested and trusted, so those are not so easy, or not so difficult to know. But there are some weak *hadith*s, and we have to think about it, is this logical? (…) So, I do not like to wonder about weak *hadith*s because I do not want to waste my time on it, (…) but I want to use my time believing in the one God to which I say my prayers.

The women identify a *hadith* as weak if its chain of narrators is broken or if its message contradicts passages in the Qur'an. Since the women are not trained in *hadith* and lack the

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[60] Al-Azhar is a university and a mosque in Cairo, Egypt. Established in 970-972, it is one of Egypt's oldest and foremost universities. Al-Azhar is recognized as one of the most influential Sunni Islamic universities in the world. It represents all the four Sunni Islamic schools of law as well as the main Sufi orders and various theological schools. For this reason, it plays a significant role in intellectual, religious and political life in Egypt and the Sunni Muslim world (Zeghal and Elston 2017; Store norske leksikon 2019).

knowledge and skills to distinguish a weak *hadith* from a strong one, they use well-known and trusted *hadith* collections. Many of the women are familiar with Bukhari's and Muslim's *hadith* collections and use and regard these as sound sources to Islam.

> **Julie**: Because there are two sources that are known and that is Bukhari and Muslim. (…) these have been known for years, (…) so if I go online to search for *hadith* (…) and I see that this *hadith* is from Bukhari, then I am a hundred percent sure that it is right. **E-A**: Okay. **Julie**: So, I am not in doubt. **E-A**: But from where have you learned that Bukhari is sound? **Julie**: Because, within, you have Islamic sources, and among the Islamic sources there are some that are trustworthy, and they are known for being trustworthy. You learn which ones are trustworthy and which ones are not. And Bukhari himself, sometimes, he has a *hadith*, but he can grade it as not strong. And he can give you a *hadith* and tell you that it is strong. (…) He is a person who evaluates and tells.

Bukhari's and Muslim's *hadith* collections are regarded as sound since they are well known among Muslims and because they have a reputation of being sound. Some of their "soundness" come from the collectors Bukhari and Muslim themselves because they are known for being honorable persons who strictly choose among the many stories about the Prophet who existed at that time. Julie explains:

> **Julie**: We have stories about how they [Bukhari and Muslim – E-A] traveled far to find them. This specific *hadith* belongs to him; he knows something from the Prophet. Then he leaves, and he was-, in Islam, for instance, if you were a proper Muslim at that time, you could not eat while you walked. That was wrong. You had to sit down. If he spotted that a person did something wrong, he would not collect a *hadith* from him. **E-A**: No? **Julie**: No. **E-A**: So, they had to behave? **Julie**: They had to behave as Muslims because if they did, he would know that they were okay and that they had the right knowledge. There is in fact a story about how he traveled *far* away to meet a man. Then he discovered that this man had done something wrong. **E-A**: So, he would not? **Julie**: Then he would not, he did not take that source.

Among the interviewees, it is the women engaged in the overlapping fields of MST, SG, Islam Net (IN) and KMIT that are most concerned about *hadith*'s status and position. If they read or hear a *hadith* without knowing whether or not it is sound, they will run a "background check" on it. If the *hadith*'s status is unknown, they will treat it as insecure and weak until proven

otherwise. This means that they will not follow it – adjust or correct their behavior and practices in relation to it – before they know whether or not it is reliable.

The women engaged in the Islamic field of Mevlana distinguish between sound and weak *hadith*s as well but are less individually involved in *hadith* "classification." Lene identifies *hadith* collections and *hadith*s published by the Diyanet as reliable sources and uses them as sound sources in her self-studies.

> **E-A**: But when you read that book [*hadith* collection published by the Diyanet – E-A], do you trust it? **Lene**: One hundred percent (laughs). Yes. Well, it is our main source, the Diyanet. **E-A**: It is? So, what comes from them is reliable? But do you trust them more than the Qur'an, or are both, are they just different sources? **Lene**: They are only different sources. Because what we get from this, we do not get from the Qur'an. So, no. **E-A**: So, it is a supplement **Lene**: It is a supplement. We need to use both at the same time, in a way.

The women from AOB classify *hadith*s as weak and strong as well, but out of other principles' than the Sunni Muslim women. They follow Twelver Shia methodology. This means that they only recognize *hadith*s narrated by the Imams and their companions as sound sources to Islam and *sharia*. Because of this, they do not recognize the same narrator chains as the Sunni Muslim informants do. Nina explains why:

> **Nina**: (…) we take it [*hadith*s – E-A] from the Imams. Because we trust them the most. We believe that some are wrong, that not all *hadiths* are right because they have been through different times. There have been many kings, and not all of them accepted the Imams, and they burned a lot of books. (….) However, someone saved some books, some of them, and some of them have turned up, or a hundred years ago. Then they were rewritten by imams like [a grand *ayatollah* many in AOB follow – E-A]. (…) But you cannot trust all of them that have written *hadith*s, either. You must read their stories, all the books about them, and sometimes you find a lot of holes. (…) We have some people who have not lived with the Prophet, and we have a lot of *hadith*s from them. Then you have people like Imam Ali and such, who lived with the Prophet. Whom should you trust the most? I think, or we think, his nearest are the ones he lived with. Those who lived with him, and not those who came around after 20 years or so. They heard it from other people and such. **E-A**: So, it depends on who one trusts? **Nina**: I also believe that it is we as a family; we have a lot of inheritance, our kids and such. We believe that it

runs through inheritance as well. The Imams, they get it through inheritance, like Ali, Hasan and Husayn, etc. **E-A**: So, the line of successors must be right as well? **Nina**: And the knowledge, this is what I believe.

All the women recognize *tafsir* as a reliable source to Islam and the law. They prefer *tafsir* that are well known and that have been introduced to them by people they trust, such as teachers, parents, friends, family, etc. Some choose *tafsir*s due to their style or form and out of individual preferences. Julie for instance, prefers Ibn Kathir's *tafsir* because she likes his style.

> **Julie**: Ibn Kathir, he is also very special. (…) and he is good at presenting many sides. (…) He is good at telling what he believes to be right, and he is good at telling that other people have other opinions. He never claims to be right. (…) He was one of those who did not believe *niqab* [face veil – E-A] to be obligatory (…). But at the same time, he said that there is someone in Saudi Arabia[61] who believes that it is.   **E-A**: I think there are many books and *tafsir*s to keep track on. Where have you learned that this *tafsir* is good, or he presents it **Julie**: Again, again you have reputation. They are all known for their special things. Ibn Kathir is known for presenting many viewpoints. (….) But if you take one from Saudi Arabia, he will write about how things are in Saudi Arabia.

The Shia informants define *tafsir* as a reliable source as well. However, they use *tafsir*s other than those of the Sunni informants due to methodological differences between Sunni and Shia Islam. Nina uses the *tafsir* of Fatima, the daughter of the Prophet Muhammad.

> **Nina**: The Qur'an you can trust one hundred percent. And *tafsir*. We use the *tafsir* of Fatima, the daughter of the Prophet, as well. Sunni Muslims refer to that as our Qur'an. They believe that it is our Qur'an. But we call it her *tafsir*, not Qur'an. She has written a Qur'an, she got it from her father. She wrote *tafsir*s to the *aya*s in the Qur'an, just the way she was told. They believe that this is the Qur'an, and they claim that Shias have their own Qur'an, but they have misunderstood. (…) It is a *tafsir* to each *aya* in a way, which she has gotten from her father. We believe that Imam Madhi has preserved it.

Even though the Qur'an, *hadith* and some of the *tafsir*s were written many years ago, the women find them relevant for their modern lifestyles. The content of the Qur'an is described as timeless

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[61] This is Julie's choice of words and example. Ibn Kathir, who died in 1372, cannot have referred to the modern Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, which was established in 1932 (Roald 2004: 39; Store Norske Leksikon 2017).

and universal. It fits all times and all places. According to Julie, the Qur'an is relevant today because it contains knowledge about what it means to be human. To exemplify this, she points to human qualities such as jealousy and impatience and to the prophets mentioned in the Qur'an. People never change, according to her; they were jealous before and are jealous today. People were impatient before and are impatient today. It is the same with the prophets – they were special persons but only humans. Because of that, it is possible for humans today to relate themselves and their lives to the content of the scripture. The other women seem to share Julie's view. They regard the Qur'an as the word of God, and His words are always relevant. Guro argues that if someone disagrees with the Islamic scriptures, it is because they wish to do so:

> **E-A**: The Islamic scriptures, they have existed for many years now. They were written many, many years ago. How relevant will you say that they are today? **Guro**: Absolutely relevant! (…) If we think that they are not relevant, is it because we do not want them to be relevant. That is the way I see it. So, modernity, modern lifestyles and Islam can sometimes clash, but it is because we want it to clash. **E-A**: Okay. **Guro**: So, they are relevant at all times and will continue to be relevant in the future.

5.2.4 Other material sources

In addition to the Islamic scriptures, multiple other material sources, such as printed and online books, articles, texts, websites, online encyclopedias, TV programs, online TV, radio, videos and movies, are used as sources to Islam by the women. Hanne is fascinated by history and reads history books to learn more about Islam and for pure amusement. Oda and Julie prefer books about Islam that are written in Norwegian or a Scandinavian language. Oda reads Norwegian books about the prophets and the Prophet Muhammad's wives that her mother has bought her, while Julie likes biographic books about the Prophet Muhammad and books authored by other Muslims that emphasize the meaning of being Muslim. Julie likes to read books that are adapted to her life situation. As newly married, she reads about how the Prophet treated his wives and the marriage institution within Islam – gender roles, the married couple's rights and duties within the marriage, etc. Julie regards these books as valuable sources to Islam since they often ask and answer existential questions.

> **Julie**: I will say that reading a book is the best source because you get a lot of **E-A**: Do you mean the Qur'an? **Julie**: In fact, not the Qur'an. (…) But books about Islam (…)

written by Muslims. These are books that, if a person wanted to become a Muslim, I would not give him the Qur'an and tell him: "here you are, now go and be a Muslim" **E-A**: No? **Julie**: I would give him a book about what it means to be a Muslim. What do we have faith in? Why do we have these beliefs? Questions I would ask. (…) **E-A**: Do you recognize yourself in those books? **Julie**: Yes, but not because I read about how Muslims are, (…) but what Islam is all about. (…) The big questions, because if one has faith in God, why do we have evil things in the world? This is the first question one should ask, it is a very common question, why do we have, or why does He not stop evil? (…) These questions are very important, (….) if you cannot find answers to them, you might start blaming your religion. And lose, lose parts of your religion. I am sure that many people lose something because they have not explored, they just ask questions, but they will not explore (…) They cannot find the answers.

There are differences between what types of books and articles the women read due to their language and institutional backgrounds. Lene, for instance, reads Turkish books, articles and texts published by the Diyanet about *ibadat* and *mu'amalat*. The texts she reads in relation to the latter category reflect her current life-situation and deal with topics such as how to be a good mother, how to be a single mother, how to live without a husband, how to dress in public etc. Nina, on the other hand, identifies books and texts written by and about a grand *ayatollah* followed by many of the Iraqi members in AOB as important sources to Islam. He addresses people in different situations, such as youths, Muslims in Europe and Muslims in Muslim countries and is thus oriented around legal questions and Islamic jurisprudence, *fiqh*, within various contexts. In addition, Nina uses religious books about Shia doctrines and figures, such as the Imamate and Imam Mahdi, as her individual sources to Islam.

Lingual, national and institutional backgrounds influence what websites, online encyclopedias, TV and radio programs, videos, movies, etc. the women use as sources as well. By using the Internet as a medium, the women get access to, and are confronted with, various Islamic discourses and methodologies that are transmitted, maintained and (re)produced on the Internet. This means that even though the women are settled in Trondheim, they are not disembedded[62] (or isolated) from global and national discourses about Islam because they take part in these when they use various Internet sites in their self-studies. For instance, the Indonesian interviewees use Indonesian websites published by governmental and private organizations. The Arabic-speaking women use Arabic, but also Norwegian, websites in their

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[62] The concept of *disembedding* is borrowed from Anthony Giddens (Giddens 1990: 21).

quest for knowledge, while the members of Mevlana use Turkish and Norwegian websites. Not all websites are trusted as sources to Islam by the women, who distinguish between reliable and unreliable sites. Websites published by the institutional religious authorities the women are affiliated with are regarded as reliable. Lene trusts sites published and maintained by the Diyanet, while Nina trusts sites related to the Twelver Shia grand *ayatollah* that she follows. The Indonesian women seldom doubt the knowledge and information they find on Indonesian sites produced and maintained by representatives from Indonesian *ulama*. To define a website as trustworthy, the women must have knowledge about its publishers and their motives for publishing. Frida explains:

> **E-A**: Last time you told me that you do not trust all the sources you find on the Web. **Frida**: I do not mean that the entire Internet is wrong, but you cannot trust all the information, either. I do not trust all the sources because I often discover that the information on the Internet is wrong. Particularly information about the Prophet Muhammad, that is very different, and about Muslims in general. **E-A**: What type of sites do you use? Are they Muslim, or Islamic or other? **Frida**: The wrong sources I have found are often non-Islamic sources. It is, for instance, I am not sure, it can be comments to the text, for me they are just nonsenses. **E-A**: Yes, you can never read the comments; they are terrible (laughs). However, if you find a site that is Muslim or Islamic, do you trust it or are you skeptical? **Frida**: I never trust it a hundred percent. Because there are many types of Muslim, and there are many different Muslim beliefs that you cannot trust a hundred percent.

Katrine uses websites to gain historical knowledge about Islam. She has experienced the importance of having a critical approach to various websites:

> **E-A**: Do you use Internet to gain knowledge about Islam (…)? **Katrine**: I use it to gain historical Islam. (…) I can even use Wikipedia to gain, when did Muhammad travel to that place, and when was the war between this and that, that famous battle, and their various techniques? I am very interested in history, and there is a lot of history within Islam and Christianity, the various techniques they used when they fought against their enemies, these are things I search the Web for (….). When I give a presentation about the Kaba, (….) I will use the Web in a historical way, but I do not trust what people write about other things, because we have different Muslim branches, so other might

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say…. I remember once, we were going to give a presentation at the mosque. This is just a tiny example, and I got the assignment to find the first Muslims, or humans, on Earth, except Adam and Eva. Then I found it, and it was a website where a community bragged about being the first ones. Then I wrote it and presented it. The mosque just: "What? Where did you get *that* name from? Hahaha!" So: "I just found it on the Web, and blablabla." And they just: "No, no. We do not believe that." So, I was not capable of seeing, what kind of people, what kind of people they were.

Lectures and speeches held by imams and religious scholars published on YouTube or similar websites and videos and movies about Islam are other "material" sources the women use in their quest for knowledge. Nina and Oda, for instance, watch Islamic lectures and discussion programs by and with Shia Islamic scholars. They prefer religious authorities with reputations of being trustworthy over random online religious experts. Through satellite dishes, the women access multiple TV channels. The Arabic-speaking women are frequent users of Arabic TV channels. Anna, Barbro and Camilla use IKRA-TV (both television and online), which offers documentaries, lectures, debate programs held by imams and the latest news about the "miracles in the Qur'an," as a source to Islam. Nina and Oda watch programs about the Prophet Muhammad on similar channels. Some women are very fond of programs where an imam or a scholar answers questions from an audience. Mai, for instance, regards Turkish question-and-answer programs as sources to Islam and as pure entertainment. Camilla believes she learns a lot from these types of programs:

> **Camilla**: I learn from television. For instance, every Sunday it is a program where a sheikh talks for one hour, and people can ask him questions. He calls it "Problems with life." People call him on the phone and ask questions, and he answers immediately. **E-A**: Do you like it? **Camilla**: Yes, I like it a lot. **E-A**: Do you learn a lot about Islam from it? **Camilla**: Yes, many things. What is right and wrong, and many of those who call him live in Europe. They ask many questions about kids, interest [on loans – E-A] and such. **E-A**: Questions that are important for you as well? **Camilla**: Yes. (…) **E-A**: Can you trust what you learn from a TV program, or do you have to check it up against the Qur'an? **Camilla**: Yes. Because these persons have studied for years and they have more knowledge than me, so yes.

Hanne differs from the women above since she is critical toward religious TV programs and religious authorities who are figures on TV. She refrains from using these as sources to Islam based on her own experiences.

> **Hanne**: I do not really believe in the persons who speak in television (laughs). **E-A**: No, you do not? **Hanne**: Because sometimes they just make beyond what they are capable of speaking, that is in Indonesia, my experience in Indonesia. I have one example: that is a person that, we really *adored* him. But I do not know, he married again. That is the case (…) so, I do not like him (…) and almost every woman in that group [KMIT – E-A] do not like him. And the men have been asked by their wives not to follow him because he got married again. Actually, he was kind of pure idea when he started, but then he started his second marriage, to practice polygamy, but (…) but that topic is really sensitive. **E-A**: In Indonesia? **Hanne**: In every side of world I guess (....) That is, that is why I never believe somebody who speaks on television.

The examples above show that it is not only the women's various backgrounds (lingual, national and institutional) that influence what and whom they use as sources to Islam but that their choices are also dependent upon their personal taste, and thus whom they like, dislike, can identify with and not.

5.2.5 Social and institutional sources and methods: Religious authorities

The informants use different religious authorities, both persons and institutions, as sources to Islam. Some of these are local, that is, they are present in Trondheim, and others are external or global. Whom they use as religious authorities depends upon factors such as nationality, language, local and global institutional affiliations and individual preferences.

The women engaged in the Islamic field of MST use different local authorities. Anna, Julie, Guro and Barbro identify and use the imams at MST as their main local religious authorities. Others, such as Camilla and the Indonesian women, use imams at the Dar El Eman Islamic Center (DIC) as sources and authorities, too. Some regard the imams in the two institutions as equally good, while others distinguish between them. Camilla prefers one of the imams at DIC to those at MST because of personal reasons. She is familiar with him and likes and trusts him. Because of this, she attends his Friday sermon, *khutba*[63] and turns to him with

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[63] Khutba means sermon (Roald 2004: 231). The Friday khutba is a sermon held by an imam/preacher during Friday congregational prayer in the mosque and on other special occasions.

questions. Some of the women, such as Camilla, Julie, Guro, Ida, Frida and Dorthe, not only use local imams as religious authorities but are of the opinion that they can us all persons with more Islamic knowledge than themselves as such.

The Indonesian informants from MST define and use the imam at KMIT as a local religious authority. He is respected and has a good reputation among the women. Emma describes him as "the person within the group with most knowledge about Islam," and Frida refers to him as "a walking Qur'an." Ida uses not only the imam but the whole KMIT group as a source to Islam because she thinks that together its participants "embody" much Islamic knowledge. Dorthe and Frida use the wife of the KMIT imam as a local source and authority as well. When they have religious questions, they prefer to approach her instead of her husband. Dorthe argues that the imam and his wife represent the "same" Islam, thus she can seek guidance from both. Frida uses the imam's wife as a source for knowledge about Islamic gender roles and topics she regards as relevant for women: "Usually it is women's issues. For instance, how to behave in front of one's husband. About our bodies and how to minimize sex appeal and such things. (….) And, it is also a question about cake recipes (laughs)."

One of the imams at DIC is by several of the Indonesian interviewees regarded as the main Islamic authority in Trondheim due to his educational background. They see him as the most knowledgeable Islamic authority in Trondheim and refer to him as a *hadith* scholar. Still, only Emma uses him as a direct source to Islam. She emails him if she has religious questions. The other women use him as an indirect source through their husbands. Their husbands attend the respective imam's *hadith* lectures and share their newly gained knowledge with their spouses. This means that even though the Indonesian interviewees recognize one of DIC's imams as the main local Islamic authority, it is only Emma who actively uses him as such. The other women prefer to use the imam at KMIT and his wife as religious authorities and sources in their individual quests for knowledge.

The woman imam in Mevlana functions as a religious authority for several of the institutions' women members. Lene explains in the following:

E-A: Do you follow the local imam? **Lene**: I do. **E-A**: Both the man and the woman? **Lene**: Woman. **E-A**: How do you follow them? **Lene**: How, I follow everything they say. Why, because it is the must trustworthy source here in Trondheim. **E-A**: The imams. The woman, is she also an imam? **Lene**: She is; she went to an upper secondary school which is, what should I say, an upper secondary school where you study all the subjects but which is founded on Islam. When you attend that school, you must use *hijab,* and

boys and girls are segregated. (….) and she is from a religious family. It also helps.
E-A: (…) Do you follow any religious leaders or authorities outside Trondheim? **Lene**:
Not me. **E-A**: Why not? **Lene**: I do not think we need it. (…) We are doing fine here.

Lene thinks that the woman imam and Mevlana's official imam represent the same form of
Islam, that is, Hanafi Islam. She only interacts with and uses the woman imam as a direct source
and authority to Islam but identifies Mevlana's official imam as one of her sources as well. He
is, however, an indirect source since Lene's main contact with him is through his wife. Mai
follows the woman imam as well. In addition to her, she also identifies another local Turkish
woman as one of her sources to Islam. This woman is engaged in a Fetullah Gülen-inspired
local organization called Nor Kunnskapsforening (Norkuf) (Myhr 2011), which offers various
activities, including homework help services for pupils and students in elementary, secondary
and upper secondary school and meetings about Islam for adults, held in Turkish. The woman
Mai identif as a local source and religious authority organizes some of Norkuf's women's
meetings about Islam[64]. In contrast to Lene and Mai, Katrine does not use any of the two above-
mentioned women as sources to Islam. Instead, she uses a former Islamic teacher in Mevlana
for this purpose. Even though her teacher has moved to another part of Norway, Katrine still
seeks her advice in religious and non-religious matters through emails, phone calls and visits.

The women engaged in the Islamic field of AOB do not have any local religious
authorities. As Petra describes it: "No, I do not believe that there are any in Trondheim. Yes,
we do follow religious leaders, but not here in Trondheim." In the absence of local religious
authorities, the AOB women use external and global ones. Nina and Oda use an *ayatollah*
situated in Karbala as a religious source and authority. They watch his sermons and lectures on
YouTube and use these to increase their religious knowledge. They describe him as a celebrity,
and as a very prominent sheikh and lecturer, and regard him as a reliable source to Islam. Petra,
on the other hand, does not follow any specific sheikhs, *ayatollah*s or authorities from her home
country. Instead, she follows global Shia authorities in general.

As a global religious authority and source to Islam, the three interviewees from AOB
use a grand *ayatollah* popular among the Iraqi members of the institutions. They regard him as
the most qualified and knowledgeable grand *ayatollah* of his time:

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[64] Mevlana and Norkuf are not competitive organizations. Rather, the members of Mevlana and the
participants in Norkuf's meetings about Islam are more or less the same women. This include some of the
women in charge of their respective organizations' Islamic meetings and educational activities. Norkuf is not
included as an Islamic field in this study because none of the main interviewees participated in this field on a
regular basis when the interviews and observations were conducted, only sporadically.

Petra: (…) He is an *al-Sayyid* [a descendant of the Prophet Muhammad – E-A]. There are many different leaders, but we believe that he, [the name of the grand *ayatollah*] is the most knowledgeable. He is also the oldest. However, there are many with high knowledge. Most Shia Muslims follow him (…). (…) He has many books and many schools (….) in Iraq. If something is missing in the Qur'an, there are books with questions and answers that we can read. And *al-Sayyid* [the name of the grand *ayatollah* – E-A] is the person who is most learned really, about Shia, who is the leader among Shia Muslims, that we follow. **E-A**: Then you search his books, or the Internet? **Petra**: Yeah, right. (…) He is not on television. However, his pupils and students have studied a lot so they can transmit his knowledge. They appear on television.

Only Nina identifies the Ja'fari law school as a global religious authority. She follows this law school as an indirect source to Islam and as an Islamic institutional authority through her grand *ayatollah*. This means that she is not reading the law school's publications nor publications about the law school herself but that she is following it through her grand *ayatollah* and publications written by him or about him. Even though the informants from AOB identify as Twelver Shias, only Nina knew about the Ja'fari school of law and its position within Shia Islam. Oda and Petra had not heard about it, nor did they identify it as an individual source to Islam and *sharia*.

As shown above, the informants from Mevlana use the Diyanet as a local and external source and authority to Islam (see sections 5.2.3-5.2.4). According to Lene, the Diyanet can provide her with all the knowledge and answers she wants through its websites:

E-A: Is Diyanet a religious authority that you follow, or do you see them as something else? **Lene**: When I have questions in my head which I need an immediate answer to, "how should I do that," and I do not have the possibility to ask the imam, so "tap, tap" [pretends to be writing on her computer – E-A]: "Diyanet, can I do this?" and "yes, you can." **E-A**: So, you email them your questions? **Lene**: You can email them, but you do not need questions, you do not need to ask, because *eeeeverything* is there, *eeeeverything*.

As a global Islamic authority, the informants from Mevlana use the Hanafi law school. The women identify as Hanafi, view and use Hanafi imams and scholars they meet in Mevlana's mosque or watch on television as trusted sources to Islam and as religious authorities.

The informants from MST use various persons and institutions as external and global authorities on Islam. Some of these are situated in different parts of Norway, while others are situated in the women's different home countries or in other parts of the world. For instance, Barbro uses an imam from her home country who is situated in Oslo as an external religious authority. And Julie encountered an imam in her home country before she moved to Trondheim, whom she still uses as an authority because she trusts and likes him. She reads publications written and translated by him and communicates with him through emails if she wants his opinions about religious issues.

All the Indonesian informants use Indonesian *ulama*s as religious authorities. This does not mean that they follow them or their regulations steadily but that they search for their *fatwa*s and opinions when they need it. Emma, for instance, follows the leaders of the Indonesian Ulama Council, *Majelis Ulama Indonesia* (MUI), who function as representatives for "official Islam" in Indonesia (Bruinessen 2013a: 6-7, 2013b: 30) and their *fatwa* concerning vaccinations in relation to the pilgrimage to Mecca, *hajj*. One of the vaccines recommended for pilgrims may contain pork, but the *fatwa* allows them to take it because they classify it as an emergency[65]. Some of the Indonesian interviewees, such as Emma and Ida, also use the European Council of Fatwa and Research (ECFR) as an external religious authority when it comes to adjusting their religious practices to their new surroundings in Norway.

> **Emma**: Now it is for the timing, for the pray timing and the fasting timing. Since in Indonesia there is no issue for that. But here, since we have a winter for the fasting, then it is an issue. There is a *fatwa ulama*, that are, for those who lives in, near North Pole (laughs) (…) Near North Pole, where the sunrise and the sunset is not, is not normal (…) So there are some exceptions. We are allowed to choose three options: First we can follow the times based on the Mecca schedule, and the second one, if we are strong enough, we can follow the local, the nearest country, the nearest Islamic country that has the same, (….) latitude. And the third one, you can make a combination of that. If the days are normal you can just follow the normal, the normal schedule. But if the days are not normal, like we have in winter, there is an exception that you can follow the combination, so now we can choose one of the approaches, so there are some adjustments, but it is not made by us, but it is made from *ulama*.

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[65] This means that they use the "*darura* principle," which is a legal principle that makes the unlawful lawful in situations of need, if necessary (Vogt 2005: 94; see section 4.4.2).

By combining and using legal opinions, *ijtihad*, and *fatwa*s issued from both Indonesian and European *ulama*s, Emma gains knowledge about how to deal with technological innovations and how to face challenges considering prayer and fasting times in Norway. Ida follows the ECFR's *fatwa* concerning food additives that allows Muslims to eat food that contains E-additives[66]. According to her, other Indonesian Muslims in Trondheim restrain from food that contain these additives since Indonesian *ulama*s recommend Muslims not to eat it. This illustrates that *who* or *what* the women use as Islamic authorities influences what they pick from the "Islamic basket" and thus how they practice Islam in Trondheim (Hjärpe 1998: 34-36; see section 2.2.5).

The interviewees from MST use global Islamic authorities as sources to Islam, too. Most of them do not have a specific sheikh or scholar they follow but use different persons as sources in various situations. Guro describes her "favorites": "Mine changes like the weather." Two of the women, Anna and Julie, stand out from the rest in that they have some regular scholars, *ulama*, or preachers that they turn to. Anna identifies international Sunni Islamic scholars, where some of them represent the Muslim Brotherhood's (MB's) methodology, as her sources to Islam. This does not mean that she agrees with everything they say, or that she follows them steadily, but that they are some of the religious authorities she regularly turns to in her quest for Islamic knowledge.

> **Anna**: The person I feel, not appeals, but who convinces me, it's all about conviction, I have read a lot of [name of a Sunni Islamic scholar that represent the MB's methodology – E-A], and I have studied him from head to toe, but I am, I am not very convinced about his talk about polygamy. Because he takes it for granted. I do not think that polygamy is wrong, it is absolutely right, and it is a man's right, but *why*? That is the difference. There are other *ulama*s, even Salafis and such, who convince me more than him. He takes it no, that is the way it is. Punctuation mark. And he had other *fatwa*s and other opinions about friend marriages and such, and I totally disagreed with him. However, I find 90 percent of his opinions to be right. **E-A**: So, it is right. Is he a leader that you follow or? **Anna**: An *alim*. A man of knowledge, he studied religion, and he has studied

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[66] The logic behind this particular fatwa is that food containing E-additives with compounds of animal origin, or compounds dissolved in alcohol, becomes lawful, *halal*, during the process of manufacturing. For instance, compounds of animal origin are believed to be radically transformed into a new, pure and lawful form through a process of chemical transformation that not only affects the form of the ingredient but also its legal ruling/value (Islam Online Archive 2016).

other subjects, and he has followers, doctors and such. (….) and he asks people who has knowledge about that specific issue. (….) There are others as well, but he is an example.

Julie uses Salafi preachers, introduced to her by the Islamic fields of Islam Net and the Sister Group, as individual sources and authorities to Islam. Julie prefers religious authorities that she can identify with in one way or another. Because of this, she uses Muslims who live the West, or converts to Islam, as sources to Islam since she believes these to be more familiar than others with Western contexts and how it is to live as a Muslim minority in a non-Muslim country.

The informants from MST relate differently to Islamic law schools than the informants from Mevlana and AOB. Instead of identifying with one specific law school, several of the women identify with and use *all* the Sunni Islamic law schools as global religious authorities. This means that when they have questions or want to increase their knowledge about an issue, they search the different law schools' jurisprudence, *fiqh,* and opinions on the issue. The women's sources in regard to the law schools' jurisprudence are many. They use websites where they can encounter scholars or jurists from the various schools or websites where they can compare or read comparisons of the law schools' different views and opinions on legal matters. Books with a comparative approach to the law schools' jurisprudence, such as Ibn Rushd's *The Distinguished Jurist's Primer,* are also used. Most of the interviewees from MST regard the four Sunni Islamic law schools as complementing each other and not as competitive. For this reason, they do not distinguish between them as Islamic authorities but use all of them. However, not all the women from MST use the law schools as religious authorities and sources in the same ways as the women described above. Ida, for instance, does not pay any attention to them and knows little about them. Camilla, on the other hand, is not sure but believes that she is a Shafii follower. However, she is not actively questing for knowledge about Shafii's or any of the other law schools' jurisprudence. Hanne is very interested in Islamic jurisprudence and legal questions but not the law schools. This means that even though she reads various opinions and interpretations on legal questions, she pays very little attention to the scholars', or *alim*s', institutional or organizational affiliations, that is, which law schools or modern movements they represent, because she thinks that it is irrelevant.

5.2.6 The methods: Elaborated and specified

Characteristic of the women's individual search for Islamic knowledge is their use of various types of sources and methods. The women combine material sources, such as Islamic scriptures and virtual videos with social and institutional sources in the form of local, external and global

Islamic authorities. To gain knowledge about Islam from these sources they use various methods, such as reading, watching, listening, discussing, etc. The women's use of a variety of sources, and their conscious combination of these, make up their primary and overall method in their individual quest for knowledge. All identify material and social and institutional sources as *their* individual sources to Islam and emphasize the necessity of using both types. Ida, for instance, stresses that she must discuss her material sources' theoretical content with her social and institutional sources, such as her husband, the local imam, friends, etc. to be able to transform it into ritual and practical knowledge that she can implement in her daily life. Ida knows that, according to the Qur'an, Muslims should fast from sunrise to sunset during the month of Ramadan. However, to be able to observe that ritual obligation in Trondheim, she must seek guidance and advice from other Muslims in Trondheim to gain knowledge about local adjustments. Others, such as Emma, see the combination of sources as a methodic necessity since she cannot get all the knowledge she wants to practice Islam from only one source:

> **E-A**: Why should you use several types of sources do you think? **Emma**: Because I feel like only one source is not enough. **E-A**: Okay. **Emma**: So, you need to, really capture everything. As much as you can (laughs). **E-A**: Okay. So, the more the better? **Emma**: Yes, yes.

To understand why the women combine various sources in their individual quests for Islamic knowledge, we must take a closer look at how they view and approach the sources. Even though the women identify the Qur'an and *hadith* as their primary sources to Islam and *sharia*, they have various opinions about how to read them. For instance, among the interviewees involved in the Islamic field of MST, we have Julie, who describes the Qur'an as a rich metaphor that should be read metaphorically and as a whole, not literally. Moreover, we have Hanne, who thinks the Qur'an should be read both literally *and* as a whole:

> **Hanne**: We should read it literally, *aya* for *aya,* so we can understand the connection between one *aya* and the other. Because, the Qur'an was collected based on the time the *sura* came to our Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him (…) so, eh, I think this is the way we can bring into the whole interpretation.

In addition, we have Guro, who thinks the message of the Qur'an is so concrete that she can use it as "the word of the day." This means that she often looks up random pages and passages in the Qur'an in order to receive her "message of the day."

Although there are individual differences between how the women read and approach the Qur'an and the other Islamic scriptures, none of them think that they as individuals can or should interpret the Qur'an and *hadith* on their own. Laypersons are not capable of interpreting the Qur'an, nor is it methodically accepted for them to do this, according the women. Thus, to gain knowledge about the message of the Qur'an, and hence the will of God, the women use secondary sources such as religious authorities and/or supplementary literature. As Julie phrases it: "Individuals shall not interpret the Qur'an, they should only read *tafsir*." Methodically speaking, this means that the women *must* use and combine different sources because they cannot deduce the will of God and hence *sharia* from the Qur'an and *hadith* themselves.

To orient themselves in the ocean of Islamic sources that surrounds them, the interviewees use the Qur'an and *hadith*, in that order, as answer books and norms to cross-check information against. As Emma expressed it above: "These two are reliable sources. Other than that, so we can, have to cross-check with these two (laughs)" (see section 5.2.3). This means that the information about Islam the women gain from other sources must be accompanied by references to one or both scriptures, or be possible to trace back to at least one of them. If it lacks such traces or references, the women will try to find it on their own. If they cannot trace the information back to these two sources, they will regard it as untrustworthy. This means that they will not adjust their religious practices in relation to this information, nor will they classify it as sound or "Islamic" (see section 5.2.3). Cross-checking secondary sources to Islam (both material and social and institutional) with the Qur'an and *hadith* is therefore one of the methods the informants use.

However, a great deal of the information the women gain from their various sources is not accompanied by references to the Qur'an or *hadith,* nor can it be traced back to these sources since it deals with contemporary issues, such as new technology, medicine or details in the women's Muslim-minority situation in the West. In situations such as these, the women also practice the method of cross-checking, but instead of cross-checking the new information against the Qur'an and *hadith*, they cross-check it with other sources that deal with the same topic. When the women compare the information they find in one source with information from other sources, they look for conformity and divergence. If the information corresponds, they regard it as trustworthy. If it diverges, they will either regard it as untrustworthy and not use it,

or they will continue to cross-check it against more sources until they are secure of its status. The women often cross-check information from material sources on their own. However, if they have problems with establishing its validity, they turn to their social and institutional sources such as family, friends, local imams, etc. for help.

The women also "screen" their sources in order to evaluate their soundness. This means that they check their backgrounds. To be able to classify the information they find as "Islamic," or sound, it is important for the women to know its transmitter(s). For this reason, they collect information about the authors of the books and articles they read, the movies and videos they watch, the sheikhs and imams they watch/listen to on television or the Internet and the person or the organization behind the websites they use. To get the information, they either Google the persons or the organization or ask around about their reputation. Then they use the background information to evaluate whether or not the person or organization is trustworthy as a source or authority to Islam.

There are some institutional differences between how preoccupied the women are with their sources' background. Some are very concerned and refer to the specific versions of the Islamic scriptures they are using, such as "an Arabic Qur'an," "Bukhari and Muslim's *hadith* collections" or "Ibn Kathir's *tafsir*." Alternatively, others refer more generally to categories of scriptures, such as "the Qur'an," "*hadith*" and "*tafsir*," and use these as collective terms of different versions of the scriptures. It is the women engaged in the Islamic fields of SG and KMIT, and thus the institutional field of MST, who are most preoccupied with their sources' background. These are also the women who are most concerned about *hadith*'s status and position, as shown above (see section 5.2.2).

There are also institutional differences in how the women use and relate to their social and institutional sources. The women consider it a proper method to seek knowledge about Islam from persons or institutions believed to have more knowledge than they themselves do. Included in this category are established religious authorities as well as "laypersons" the women regard as knowledgeable. Since the women cannot interpret the Islamic scriptures themselves, they must use these types of sources. In relation to this, the members of Mevlana and AOB seek knowledge from established Hanafi or Twelver Shiite authorities and chase "conformity" in *fiqh* questions. They also consider it the right method to follow one law school in all questions concerning *ibadat* and *mu'amalat* and are unfamiliar with the method of combining and/or using all of the law schools, *fiqh al-muqarin*. The women from MST, on the other hand, have other and different approaches to the Sunni law schools' jurisprudence. According to Dorthe,

Muslims are not obligated to follow one law school, since the law schools' jurisprudence are the product of human activity and therefore changeable in relation to time and developments:

> **Dorthe**: You are free to choose, but I remember one thing, that one of the imams, I do not remember whom, but he had a student who also became an imam. Then he told his student that "if you in the future learn to know that anything I have said, or what I think, or what I said are not correct, do not follow me. Do not follow me, stop following me." You must fix it, in a way. So, I believe that following a law school or imam does not mean that everyone there is the best. (…) That one must follow all the time, because the imam who said that was aware that, was aware that they are ordinary human which might do wrong, so for me it is just to seek knowledge from different, yes, not to follow.

This means that Dorthe uses all the Sunni Islamic law schools as equal sources to Islam instead of choosing one as her religious authority. Julie, on the other hand, believes that Sunni Muslims are not allowed to follow just one law school but that they must follow them all since they have four great imams. This means that even though Dorthe and Julie end up doing the same thing, use all the law schools as sources to Islam, they view the relationship between Muslims and law schools a bit differently. As a third approach, we have Frida:

> **Frida**: Shafii is the majority school in my home country. I automatically became a follower of it in Indonesia, but now when I am here, as I mentioned, here I can choose the one which is simplest for me, and I am not obligated to follow one *madhab,* but I can rather study their viewpoints and choose one. **E-A**: But do you do that? **Frida**: Yes, sometimes, together with other views or sisters in our online community on Thursdays' nights. We talk a lot about *madhhab*s. (…) We have a book about it, imam, a huge book which consists of rules about their viewpoints, so we can cross-check it. **E-A**: So you do not start on page one, but you **Frida**: No, if we suddenly discuss a topic, then we seek the answer of it from the Shafii school **E-A**: But what do you do in cases of disagreement: if three of the *madhab*s tells you not to do it, and the last one says that you can? **Frida**: Are you talking about cases where their answers are contradicting? **E-A**: Yes. **Frida**: Then I follow my feelings, your heart can help you **E-A**: So, it is allowed to let one's heart guide you? **Frida**: Yes, as long as we follow their, what they have written, as long as they have mentioned this **E-A**: You are free to choose? **Frida**: Yes, it is simple. Very simple.

Frida follows the Shafii school when she is in Indonesia but chooses from among the various law schools' solutions when she is in Norway. She thinks that if you follow the Sunni Islamic law schools' jurisprudence, you can choose from among their different solutions. Common to the MST women is that they believe all the Sunni Islamic law schools to be right and that they view them as trusted sources and authorities to Islam with solutions they can choose from among. The reason for this is that the law schools, according to the women, never disagree about "the fundamentals" of Islam, such as questions concerning God's existence and his unity, *tawhid*, but that their disagreements are over details in the Islamic jurisprudence, *fiqh*. Because of this, the women regard the law schools' differing jurisprudence as diverse interpretations of *sharia* and thus as different ways to live in accordance with the will of God (see section 4.1.1). Where Frida lets her heart, or the solution's simplicity, guide her choices concerning which law school to follow in a situation, others pick the solution which "makes most sense," or appears to be "most logical," or choose the solution that "appears most solid." This means that the young Muslim women in Trondheim confront Islam's diversity in various ways. Where the young Muslim women in Mevlana and AOB tend to stick to their branches' and law schools' sources and established authorities, the women from MST use the Sunni Islamic diversity to increase their knowledge about Islam and to improve how they live as Muslims. Like this, they use the Sunni Islamic law schools as various interpretations of *sharia* to choose from among.

5.2.7 Internet as a medium and method

Several of the women refer to the Internet as one of their individual sources to Islam. However, my analyses show that they are not using the Internet as a source in itself but rather as a medium and a search method to get access to a variety of Islamic source materials. For instance, the women use the Internet to access material sources such as the Qur'an, *hadith* and *tafsir* but also other texts, articles and books about Islam. All the women are in possession of a copy of the Qur'an, but only a few have material copies of *hadith* and *tafsir*. Instead, they use online versions of *hadith* and *tafsir* in their quest for Islamic knowledge. Islamic authorities, institutions, organizations and scholars use the Internet as a medium to broadcast and promote their jurisprudence, *fiqh*, research, works, opinions, viewpoints, etc. This means that the authorities' viewpoints on legal and moral questions are only keystrokes away for the Muslim women in Trondheim who use the Internet as a medium to get access to these social and institutional sources. Furthermore, some of the women use the Internet to gain access to practical and ritual sources to Islam as well, such as films and videos about how to perform Islamic rituals.

The women also use the Internet as a search method. This means that they go online to find various views on religious questions to compare with each other and choose from among. In this way, the women use the Internet as a search method to get access to a diversity of religious opinions. Some women use social networks on the Internet, such as Facebook, as "triggers" to read Islamic texts and as "sorters" of material sources. For instance, through Facebook Nina gets motivated to read *hadith*s:

> **Nina**: I do not sit and read about it [Islam – E-A] every day, but on Facebook I can find a *hadith* or something, and then I read that *hadith*. I also subscribe to websites where I can read a new *hadith* every day. That is good, because it entails *hasanat*[67]. (…) So, I can just read and push "like." Yes, (laughs).

Dorthe, on the other hand, uses Facebook as a tool to get access to graded and recommended texts and articles about Islam.

> **E-A**: So, you read *hadith* and the Qur'an. Do you read other books and articles? **Dorthe**: Most articles, I think. I do not read many books, especially not here. **E-A**: Who has written these articles? You do not have to namedrop the authors, but are the articles written by Muslims, Islamic scholars or? **Dorthe**: Mostly *ulama* I think. **E-A**: *Ulama* **Dorthe**: Or essays written by fellow Muslims. Short essays. **E-A**: Indonesian? **Dorthe**: Most of them are Indonesian. The Indonesian ones are very easy to find on the Internet, there are zillions (…). Now I am on Facebook, and I use Facebook a lot to sort out pieces that I wish to read. In this way I do not need to run background checks on all the websites, but I only look to Facebook because I have a lot of sisters, Indonesian sisters who share my interests, so **E-A**: Then you can follow their recommendations? **Dorthe**: What they recommend and such.

This illustrates that the women do not use the Internet as a source in itself, but as a method and medium to get access to various types of Islamic sources.

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[67] *Hasanat* is the Arabic word for the religious reward or merit the informants believe that actions categorized as recommended might entail.

5.3 Exploring individualization processes in the women's individual quest for knowledge

Many of the studies concerning individualization processes among Muslims in Europe emphasize that these processes are influencing the young Muslims in particular (see section 2.1.7). Because of this, I wanted to include a generational perspective in this study by comparing the young Muslim women's individual sources and methods with those of their parents, and particularly their mothers', sources and methods to Islam. Since only a handful of the informants have a mother living in Trondheim, I did not have the opportunity to meet and interview all the mothers. Instead, the women were asked questions about their mothers' and parents' previous and current sources and methods to Islam. In addition, the informants were asked to reflect upon similarities and differences between their own sources and methods and those of their mother or parents.

Three of the young women's mothers, who live in Trondheim, were interviewed, Anna's, Mai's and Petra's mothers. During these interviews, I asked the daughters and the mothers questions about their sources and methods to Islam and encouraged them to reflect around similarities and differences between how they gain knowledge about and practice Islam in Trondheim (see section 3.8.5). Since the mothers are not fluent in Norwegian, the daughters functioned as interpreters during the interviews (see section 3.8.7). Anna's and Mai's mothers understand and can speak some Norwegian, while Petra's mother neither speaks nor understands Norwegian. Because of this, Anna and Mai translated parts of the interview for me and their mothers, while Petra translated all the questions for her mother and all her mother's answers for me.

Even though the original intention was to interview the young Muslim women about their mothers' sources and methods to Islam, several of them chose to talk about their parents, or just their fathers' sources and methods due to various reasons. A few had lost their mothers, and some of the mothers had serious illnesses. Thus, some of the women had more knowledge about their fathers' sources and methods and talked about these instead. Others believed that their mothers and fathers used the same sources and methods to Islam and would not or could not distinguish between them. This means that the subsequent presentation is a comparison of the young Muslim women's and their parents' sources and methods to Islam, which emphasizes similarities and differences between the daughters' and mothers' sources and methods.

5.3.1 A generational perspective on sources and methods

There are some differences between the women from AOB and their parents' sources and methods to Islam, but these are mainly due to the parents' past and upbringing in Iraq. Since

the parents have lived large parts of their lives in Iraq, a country with Muslim majorities, they have had access to more sources than their daughters have, such as Islamic classes at school, Islamic institutions and Islamic educational activities, local imams and Islamic scholars and surroundings influenced by Islam and practicing Muslims. Nina describes how her father had access to a variety of social and institutional sources just by living in Iraq:

> **Nina**: I asked him today, from where you have learned about Islam? He said that he has read and learned about if from his parents and such, and imams. It is there, we have the city of Najaf, where you can find imams everywhere. Because it is a university college there, an Islamic university college, not a regular university college, but one where you can start as a child and just continue until you become an *ayatollah* and imam, or a real imam. (…) Yes, when you are strolling the streets you can ask anyone of those who have a, black or white [turban – E-A] on their heads. (…) They are easier to find, like, you can in fact visit imam [name of a grand *ayatollah* many in the Iraqi group follow]. There is a long que to visit him.

In Iraq, the women's parents learned about Islam from their surroundings, which offered several social and institutional sources to Islam in the form of religious authorities and ritual and practical sources in the form of Muslims who practiced Islam in various ways. This is in contrast to the context of Trondheim, where Islam is a minority religion, the Islamic institutions are few, the Shiite Muslims are a minority among the Muslims and there is a lack of both local religious authorities and educational activities.

In Trondheim, the women from AOB and their parents access the same material and social and institutional sources. Being Twelver Shiites, their sources and methods to Islam are the same. The Qur'an and *hadith* are the parents' primary sources. Like their daughters, they believe that they are not allowed to interpret the Qur'an themselves; consequently, they use *tafsir* literature and religious authorities to gain more knowledge about its contents. Petra and her mother follow the same grand *ayatollah*, *marja al-taqlid,* as a religious authority. Nina and Oda follow the same *marja* as Petra, but their parents follow another and deceased *marja* as their main religious authority. Twelver Shia methodology implies that everyone must individually choose one *marja al-taqlid* to follow in religious questions (Momen 1985: 175-176, 204-206; Roald 2004: 105; see section 4.3.4). Thus, it is possible and common to follow different *marja*s within a Twelver Shia family.

Due to different Arabic skills and "levels" of Islamic knowledge, there are differences in how the women and their parents approach the Islamic sources. The parents have Arabic as their first language, and by growing up in Iraq and attending Iraqi schools, they have gained basic knowledge about Islam. Thus, it is easier for them to read and understand Islamic scriptures in Arabic and to watch Arabic TV programs about Islam. Nina, who is fluent in Arabic, approaches these sources in the same ways as her parents. Oda and Petra, who struggle with Arabic, in their individual quests for knowledge prefer translated versions of the scriptures or secondary sources that deal with the scriptures' contents. They, too, watch Arabic TV programs about Islam but prefer to use non-Arabic sources in their self-studies. This means that even though Oda and Petra, like their parents, identify the Shia Islamic scriptures as Islam's and *sharia*'s primary sources, they are "forced" to use more secondary sources since they cannot read the scriptures on their own. For instance, where Petra's mother prefers to use material sources in the form of the Shia Islamic scriptures, Petra prefers to use a social and institutional source for gaining knowledge about Islam, namely her mother. And when her mother reads the Qur'an and *tafsir* in Arabic, Petra prefers to use the Internet as a medium to get access to translated versions of these scriptures or to use English and Norwegian Islamic websites that offer various interpretations and opinions on religious questions.

The women from AOB and their parents are all trying to increase their knowledge about Islam. Even though some of their parents spent more time on self-studies earlier, they are still searching for Islamic knowledge from various sources. The women and their parents follow the same Islamic methodology even though Oda and Petra must use secondary sources to access the contents of the Shia Islamic scriptures. Methodologically speaking, they are using the same methods and sources as their parents since they follow Twelver Shiite scriptures and authorities.

There are many similarities between the young women from Mevlana and their mothers' sources and methods to Islam, too. All of them identify as Hanafi, and they follow the Diyanet as a religious authority. Thus, they follow the Hanafi school's methodology and jurisprudence, *fiqh*. Mai and Katrine's mothers use the Diyanet's publications of the Islamic scriptures and other books published by the Diyanet as their main material sources to Islam. They use Mevlana as a social and institutional source by attending some of its educational and ritual activities for women and by following its imams. The mothers' combination of various types of sources correspond with their daughters' sources and methods. There are, however, some generational differences. Mai's and Katrine's mothers spend more time on self-studies and are more actively engaged in Islamic educational activities than their daughters are. Mai's mother prefers to read religious books, while Mai prefers verbal sources – social and institutional sources – and to use

the Internet as a medium to access Turkish sites about Islam and the Diyanet. It is unproblematic for the mothers that their daughters are less involved in Islamic studies than they are. They perceive it as "normal" behavior due to their daughters' age and life situation:

> **Mai**: Mommy reads a lot in the Qur'an. (…). She reads a lot. I cannot remember the last time I did that (laughs). (…) I do not have the time; I have so many textbooks I have to read, so I do not have the time. But she reads a lot, and she prays, she performs some additional prayers. I stick to the five daily prayers (laughs). **E-A** [to Mai's mother]: Do you have any idea why you read more in the Qur'an and perform more prayers than Mai? **Mai** [translates her mother's answer]: She says that she does not want to waste her time. She spends much of her time on her children, but her personal life is mainly made up by additional religious duties. **E-A**: I think, I understand why you are busy studying and such, but do you [Mai's mother] think, you probably do not think that Mai is wasting her time? **Mai's mother**: No. **Mai** [translates her mother's further answer]: She says that if she had the opportunity to study, she would have taken it as well, and due to that, she would probably have done less of those duties. She wants me to be a good Muslim *and* to have a career in the future. **Mai's mother**: You are a child; you should live your life as well, not only have a religion (laughs).

Even though Mai and Katrine and their mothers grew up respectively in Trondheim and Turkey, their access to material and social and institutional sources and authorities during childhood have been similar due to Mevlana. However, historically, women have had limited access to Islamic educational activities in parts of Turkey. Mai's mother explains that her mother, Mai's grandmother, did not have access to similar sources when she grew up. Mai's grandmother was illiterate and could not read Islamic books on her own. She could not attend the local Qur'an school, either, since it was for boys only. Thus, to learn about Islam, she sat outside the Qur'an school and listened to the lectures through the windows. In this way, she learned how to pray, and what to recite during prayer. The grandmother's lack of access to religious education made her insist on giving her daughters religious training. Consequently, Mai's mother and her sisters all attended a one-year Qur'an school. There, Mai's mother learned how to read and recite from the Qur'an in Arabic, some of the same things Mai is learning in Trondheim through Mevlana's educational activities.

Differences in Lene' and her mother's sources and methods to Islam are mainly due to qualifications and personal interests. Lene's mother is illiterate, so she cannot read books or use

a computer even though she has access to it. Lene's mother is not very interested in increasing her religious knowledge or to improve her religious practices but seems to be satisfied with the knowledge she has acquired from her parents, surroundings and school. Lene's mother lives in Turkey. She has access to several mosques that offer religious education, local imams and scholars. However, her local surroundings do not offer a woman imam like Lene's local mosque does, and the local imams have less contact with women than men. This means that even though Lene and her mother both identify as Hanafi, Lene's mother has less access to material sources due to her illiteracy and is less interested in using the social and institutional ones she is offered because she is satisfied with the way she lives and practices Islam. Thus, the differences between Mevlana's young women's and their mothers' knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam cannot be explained with references to different Islamic sources and methods but are mainly influenced by their ages, life situations, reading skills and personal interests.

Due to MST's "pan-Islamic" character and its members' diverse backgrounds, it would be fair to expect more divergence between the young women's and their parents' sources and methods to Islam. However, many of the women describe a correlation between their and their parents' sources and methods. Some of the women who emphasize similarities in sources and methods regard their parents as knowledgeable about Islam. Anna, for instance, claims that it was her parents' love of and interest in Islam that brought them together and ascribes both with much knowledge about Islam. Some of the Indonesian interviewees come from families with a reputation of being well-informed and pious Muslims, and some have family members who have worked in the Indonesian department of religion. For instance, one of the women belongs to an ethnic group called Minangkabau, which is well-known for being a Muslim ethnic group (Whalley 1998). Ida has a father who has worked in the Indonesian department of religion. According to her, there are only minor contextual differences between her and her parents' sources and methods to Islam. For instance, like she, Ida's father uses the Islamic scriptures as primary sources and cross-checks his other sources with these (see sections 5.2.5-5.2.6). Like Ida, her parents use local and national religious authorities such as imams and the MUI as social and institutional sources to Islam. One of the differences between them is that Ida uses imams in Trondheim and European *ulama* as religious authorities as well. Because of this, Ida's parents follow MUI more strictly than she since she uses more and other religious authorities, such as the ECFR, too, in Trondheim (see section 5.2.5). The main difference between Ida's and her parents' sources and methods to Islam is that her parents do not have access to the Internet. Because of this, they have a more direct approach to their material and social and institutional

sources than Ida has: they read the physical books and meet the imams in person, while Ida usually uses the Internet as a medium to access scriptures and religious authorities.

However, not all the interviewees from MST ascribe to their families much Islamic knowledge. Emma and Guro are among these. Still, they consider their and their parents' sources and methods to Islam to be the same. The reason for this is that they have studied Islam together with their parents or functioned as a source to Islam for them. Guro, for instance, knows that her father's sources are similar to hers since they used to study Islam together. Like she, Guro's father uses Ibn Kathir's *Tafsir* as one of his primary (material) sources to Islam. And like Guro, her parents follow various Islamic authorities, such as imams, preachers and law schools. Emma not only studied Islam together with her parents but also functioned as "source" and as a transmitter of sources in regard to Islam for them – a tutoring role she got because she started to practice Islam before them.

Despite many similarities, there are also some generational and contextual differences between the MST women's and their parents' sources and methods. Anna and her mother have corresponding material and social and institutional sources to Islam. They both define the Islamic scriptures as their primary sources for Islam, and as secondary sources they use Arabic TV programs and various Islamic websites. Further, they use all the Sunni Islamic law schools, international Sunni Islamic scholars that represent MB's methodology and their husband and families as sources. The differences in Anna's and her mother's knowledge acquisition have less to do with methodology and more to do with the level of frequency of their self-studies as well as generational differences related to what stage in the educational process they are in. Anna's mother reads regularly in the Islamic scriptures and participates weekly in an online Islamic study group led by Arabic teachers but used to spend more time on self-studies in her youth. Anna, on the other hand, is more actively trying to increase her Islamic knowledge and aims "to learn something new every day." Where Anna is preoccupied with reading books about Islamic practices to improve her own, her mother has a more relaxed relationship to this. The reason for this is that Anna's mother has found "her Islamic path," which means that she has found a way to live in accordance with God's will that is suitable for her, while Anna is still searching for her own path (see section 4.1.1). Because of this, Anna is less secure than her mother when it comes to what Islamic rules and regulations to follow in what situations and what "knowledge" to follow and not. For instance, when a new *fatwa* is issued, Anna can start to doubt her own knowledge, while her mother will not pay much attention to it.

> **Anna**: For instance, when a new *fatwa* is issued, a new *fatwa* is a new topic of conversation, she [refers to her mother] does not care much. Because she knows that it cannot be right. That it is wrong. But for me it is like, "What on Earth!" Then I will look it up, ask around, so I am more on the "search path." A couple of days ago I was thinking about the thing with Salafism, is it possible that they are right? I think, is it possible that I am *that* wrong? Is it possible? This is the way I am thinking when I am searching, in a way. But she, **E-A**: has already **Anna**: Yes, yes, she knows that it is just nonsense, from her point of view. Do you understand mommy? **Anna's mother**: Yes. **E-A**: Do you agree? **Anna's mother**: Yes.

The generational differences between Anna and her mother when it comes to gaining knowledge about Islam is reflected in their religious practices as well. Anna performs more additional rituals than her mother does because she is insecure of what recommendations to follow in which situations and afraid of missing out on some rituals. Anna's mother is a dedicated Muslim who practices the ritual obligations, follows the food and clothing regulations and tries to fulfill what she identifies as her role in the family, which means taking care of her children, home and husband. By being a good Muslim wife, Anna's mother believes that she lives in accordance with God's will and that she is following one of His many "paths" – the path most suitable for her. Anna aims at being a good Muslim wife as well but does not believe this to be "enough." Thus, her mother's "path" is not right for her. Instead, she performs additional rituals, such as extra prayers and night prayers, to gain more religious rewards. Her mother does not think that this is necessary because she believes that if she performs her daily chores, such as earning money for her family, making dinner for her children, etc., God will reward her. Thus, she compares daily chores to additional rituals and believes that both types of action may entail equal religious rewards. Anna's and her mother's different attitudes toward "new" Islamic knowledge and how to practice Islam properly have more to do with their different life situations, ages and levels of Islamic knowledge than their sources and methods. Their sources and methods are the same, but Anna's mother has more trust and confidence in her own knowledge and way of practicing Islam than Anna has – trust and confidence she developed from her earlier studies of Islam – an educational process Anna now finds herself in. Anna's insecurity about how to best practice Islam may also have contextual explanations. Anna's mother grew up and lived large parts of her life in Muslim-majority countries. Anna, on the other hand, has lived most of her life in Trondheim, where she has encountered very different understandings of Islam from other Muslims and the non-Muslim majority. That she

has observed a diversity of Muslim practices in Trondheim may have made her question her own religious practices more than if she had lived in less diverse Muslim surroundings. Thus, her insecurity may have both generational and contextual explanations.

The Indonesian interviewees Frida and Dorthe point only to contextual differences when it comes to their and their parents' sources and methods to Islam. Since their parents live in Indonesia, they have access to more material and social and institutional sources than the women have in Trondheim, such as many local and national TV and radio programs about Islam, more mosques, a variety of educational Islamic activities and religious authorities such as imams, scholars, etc. There are also differences in how the Indonesian women and their parents relate to the Sunni Islamic law schools. Most of the parents are consciously or unconsciously following the Shafii school of law in legal questions. Frida's parents, for instance, are proud and strict followers of the Shafii school of law. Dorthe, on the other hand, believes that her parents have not taken an individual choice to follow Imam Shafii but that they just do it because they live in Indonesia. Frida and Dorthe themselves do not identify with one law school but with all of them. This means that they view them as equal and complementary sources to Islam.

Some of the interviewees from MST describe their parents' sources and methods as different from theirs. Julie, for instance, describes her father as a "Muslim by tradition" because he was born and raised in a Muslim country by Muslim parents and because he has gained most of his knowledge about Islam from his surroundings. His surroundings' "traditions and customs" have been and still are his main sources to Islam, according to Julie, who claims to have never seen him read any books about Islam, including the Islamic scriptures. Julie, who identifies the Islamic scriptures and books about Islam as her primary sources, believes that her father has gained most of his knowledge about Islam from social and institutional and practical and ritual sources, such as family, friends and surroundings. Because of this, he knows how to practice the ritual obligations but lacks knowledge about why he should do it. As a result, he fasts during Ramadan but out of the wrong intention, according Julie, who believes that he fasts because this is common practice in his home country and not because he has a burning wish to do so. She, on the other hand, has a more personal and spiritual relationship with Islam. She is preoccupied with practicing Islam for the right intentions and to gain "pure" knowledge about Islam from the "right" sources. Thus, she fasts because she wants to purify her soul and to confirm her faith in God. For this reason, Julie describes her sources and methods to Islam, and her relationship with the religion, as different from her father.

Hanne explains that her parents use local traditions and customs unconsciously as sources to some Islamic rituals and practices. That some of their religious practices are made up by elements from local traditions and Islam is nothing unique in an Indonesian context, according to her, because she believes that this reflects the history of Islam in her home country. When Islam came to Indonesia, many of its "missionaries" believed that the best way to spread the word about Islam was to collaborate and adapt it to the local traditions and customs, Hanne explains. Thus, many Islamic rituals are still today influenced by local tradition and culture in Indonesia, such as the funeral and post-burial rituals in Hanne's hometown:

> **Hanne**: When people die, they gather the local community, for example, to pray for them. And we divide into several steps for each day in seven, for each day in seven days. We gather in a house and read *suras* or *ayas*, and then people can get some food as reward because they pray for a family member who has died. The "second day" is [on the – E-A] fortieth day, and the second step is forty days. The third step is on thousand day or two thousand day or something, like that. (…) It is not a rule in the Qur'an (…) It is not a rule in Islam, but in, Muhammad, Prophet Muhammad's time. And I, I realized it when I studied here because I was following a study about that, how should we respect the people who have died. I actually told that message to my parents, and my parents got angry because they thought that I did not respect about, about them. (…) When they pass away. And, but I said that it was just an interpretation from the messengers [missionaries – E-A] to make people attracted with Islam, because it represented that we are kind, that we still respect people who have died by praying for them. (…) Something like this, and they said that there is no question any more, you should do that when we die. That is what my mother said, so that was quite a fight for discussion. (…) Because my parents, because my parents' knowledge about Islam is a mix between the tradition and also Islam itself, and they never had that knowledge about [how to – E-A] respect people who died. They did not add their knowledge. (…) But I added my knowledge when I come here. (…) In Islam, for example, if people, if a person pass away, we should [do the – E-A] bathing, you know? **E-A**: Yeah, to wash them **Hanne**: To wash them. We have the same knowledge about that. We should pray in front of their body, we have the same knowledge as well. But not after they are buried **E-A**: There is the difference. **Hanne**: Yes, that is the example, that we sometimes have a different point of view because I came here. But I think it is still in a positive way, I mean, I still follow Islam as it should be. **E-A**: Yeah, but you will say that your knowledge is more

correct than theirs because you are not depending on tradition? In questions like that?

Hanne: I can say it like that, but when I come back to Indonesia, to implement what I got is difficult because if my parents, for example, if my parents died and I did not do the gathering, people will talk about our family. Maybe they will say that I got a fight with my parents, so I, so I want to respect them. Yeah, that is my country, so it depends where I, where I can live, I guess.

After she moved from Indonesia to Trondheim, Hanne learned that some of the religious rituals and practices that are defined as "Islamic" in her hometown are highly influenced by local traditions and customs. Because of this, she meets resistance from her parents when she tries to share her newly acquired knowledge about Islamic burial practices with them because her new knowledge delegitimizes her parents' and their local community's post-burial practices as "Islamic." The context of Trondheim – the Islamic fields and the Islamic educational activities Hanne engages in here – has provided her with new knowledge and made her see how local traditions and customs are used as sources to Islam in her hometown. Because of this, Hanne has become more aware about what sources she uses and their soundness. Consequently, she is now using the Islamic scriptures to distinguish between "tradition" and "religion" more actively than her parents do in order to "purify" her own religious practices.

There is much correspondence between the young Muslim women's and their parents' sources and methods to Islam, independent of the women's institutional affiliations. The differences that exist between the women's and their parents' sources and methods can be explained with reference to their different backgrounds in the form of different pasts and upbringings; different ages and life situations; different qualifications, such as reading and language skills; embodied Islamic knowledge; personal interests; and contextual differences when it comes to where they live and what access they have to various types of sources. This means that the generational differences in the women's and their parents' sources and methods are mainly due to reasons other than differing Islamic methodologies.

5.3.2 The women's sources and methods in light of the theories of individualization

The individualism expressed in the sociological "religion à la carte" theory emphasizes the individual's *freedom* and *wish* to choose and compose their own religious life in the form of beliefs and practices. Individuals in modern societies have the possibility to break away from "official" or "institutional" religion and to actively design their own religious life according to the theory, which also stresses the individual's desire to do so. Thus, it is the modern

individual's possible and voluntary break with prescribed religion that characterizes this theory of individualization (McGuire 2002: 292-294; see section 2.1.1).

In Trondheim, the young women have the freedom to choose their beliefs and practices and their relationship to Islam, hereunder institutionalized Islam. Islam's minority situation in Norway and the context of Trondheim both strengthen and demonstrate this freedom since the non-Muslim surroundings force Muslims to make active and reflective individual choices concerning religious identity and their relationship to Islam. The individual's possibility and freedom to choose Islam, to practice Islam and in what ways were emphasized by the women in their emic descriptions of Islam and Muslims (see section 5.1.2). However, despite the women's freedom to choose their own beliefs and practices, they cannot be ascribed with a burning wish to do so – rather the opposite since they orient themselves in relation to a normative view of "Islam" and "Muslims" and how to live as proper Muslims. Practices believed to be in accordance with *sharia* are regarded as lawful and good, while practices that go against it are regarded as unlawful and wrong. This means that the women do not have a wish to implement beliefs and practices that do not correspond – or worse, contradict – *sharia* in their lives but that they seek orthodoxy in the form of living in accordance with the divine guidance (see section 5.1.1). The same attitude is shown in relation to Islamic knowledge and knowledge acquisition. The women operate with a normative categorization of sources, where some are regarded as "purer," or more "authentic and sound," than others in relation to whether they are believed to express the will of God, human interpretations or explanations of it and the methodology they are grounded in. So, even though the women's main method is to combine and use several different sources in their quest for Islamic knowledge, they still operate within a normative Islamic framework with a hierarchical classification of sources, where some are regarded as better than others (see sections 5.2.2-5.2.7). Thus, they are not practicing a "religion à la carte" or fully acting as "bricoleurs," who put together beliefs and practices from various religious traditions or uncritically use all sorts of sources; rather, they remain within and choose from Hjärpe's classic "Islamic basket," hereunder the Islamic tradition of knowledge (Hjärpe 1997, 1998). In this way, their practices correspond more with what Christine Jacobsen refers to as a "restricted bricolage" (Jacobsen 2006: 212-229; see section 2.1.6).

The individual's *freedom* and *desire* to choose from among different religious options are reflected in the individualism expressed in Jacobsen's "restricted bricolage" as well. However, unlike "full bricoleurs," her informants only choose elements from authoritative Islamic sources, in the form of authorized Islamic discourses and religious authorities, to increase their knowledge about Islam. This means that even though Jacobsen's informants have

the freedom to disconnect from the Islamic traditions of knowledge and established Islamic methodologies, they choose to relate to these and to use them as sources and authorities to Islam (Jacobsen 2006: 268-269; see section 2.1.6).

The informants' use of various types of sources, their engagement in different Islamic and non-Islamic fields, their backgrounds and their individual preferences cause them to be surrounded by different Islamic discourses, which they critically choose from and among. However, some of the women are faced with fewer Islamic discourses than others due to their local Islamic institutional affiliation, such as the women from Mevlana and AOB. The interviewees from Mevlana and AOB are not engaged in any Islamic fields other than their respective local Islamic institutions (see section 4.6), nor can their local Islamic institutions be characterized as "pan-Islamic" organizations of fields, such as Jacobsen's student and youth organizations and MST can (Jacobsen 2006: 65-86; see sections 2.1.6 and 4.1.4). Because of this, the women from Mevlana and AOB encounter more homogenous Islamic sources in their local Islamic and non-Islamic fields than the interviewees from MST.

The AOB women regard their Twelver Shiite identity both as inherited from their parents and self-chosen. This means that even though they have been socialized into Shia Islam, they have made and make individual choices of remaining Shiite Muslims in Trondheim when they choose to use Shia sources and methods in their quest for Islamic knowledge. For this reason, there is correspondence between the Islamic discourses they are surrounded by when they are discussing Islam in their families or in AOB's mosque and when they are studying Islam on their own (see sections 5.1.2, 5.2.3-5.2.6 and 4.3.4). Similar tendencies are recognizable with the women from Mevlana, who use Hanafi sources and methods in their individual quests for knowledge and in Mevlana's mosque (see sections 5.2.3-5.2.6 and 4.3.2). Because of this, the informants from AOB and Mevlana can be said to practice a more *restricted* version of the "restricted bricolage" than Jacobsen's informants and the women engaged in MST do, because they are mainly oriented around *one* Islamic methodology that they choose and evaluate their sources in relation to. However, their practices should still be regarded as a form for "restricted bricolage" because they make individual choices concerning what sources and methods to use based upon their individual backgrounds, skills, personal preferences, etc. (see sections 5.2.3-5.2.7 and 5.3.1). This means that even though the women engaged in AOB and Mevlana practice a more restricted "restricted bricolage," their knowledge acquisition is *still* individualized in Jacobsen's meaning of the term due to the individual choices they make. The women are influenced by family and cultural and geographical backgrounds when it comes to methodology, but it is still their individual choices to follow a specific Islamic law school's

methodology in Trondheim. We should therefore recognize their sources and methods to Islam as a result of their individual choices and not something they use because they are inherited or forced upon them by others.

Since the young women in Trondheim do not practice an unlimited "bricolage," they do not *claim their right* to put together beliefs and practices from different religions in their Muslim lives, as Hervieu-Léger emphasizes in her theory of individualization (Hervieu-Léger 1998: 217; see section 2.1.2). Instead, they choose to remain Muslims and to use Islam as an overall normative system of meaning and norms that they rank their own practices in relation to, like Fadil's and Jacobsen's informants (Fadil 2005: 143-154; Jacobsen 2006: 212-229; see sections 2.1.5-2.1.6). Like Fadil's informants, the women in this study believe that it is the individual's right to decide whether to enter Islam and how to practice Islam (see sections 5.1.2-5.1.3). Because of this it is possible to regard their entry into and involvement with Islam as "individualized," in Fadil's use of the term (Fadil 2005: 143-153).

Because the women make individual choices of being Muslims, and how to be Muslims, their relationship to Islam is also individualized, according to Cesari, who emphasizes the individualization of the religious choice in her theory (Cesari 2004: 45-46; see section 2.1.4). However, since the women emphasize several different elements in their self-definitions as Muslims, it is difficult to place them within *one* of Cesari's categories of "Muslim identities." Most of the women in this study identify themselves as practicing Muslims. Because of this, they do not represent the more personal forms of ethical, cultural and emotional Islam that Cesari argues dominate in the West. Moreover, if we see the women's self-definitions as Muslims in relation to the trend of a more "individualized and secular Islam" that, according to Cesari, emerges in the West, the picture becomes even more complex (Cesari 2004: 46-56; see section 2.1.4). The women identify with Islam at an emotional, cultural and ethical level in Trondheim at the same time as they also pursue orthodoxy and the observance of religious rituals (see sections 5.1.1-5.1.3). However, this does not mean that they follow *all* Islamic rituals and regulations, as Cesari's category of "fundamentalist Muslim" implies, since they make individual choices concerning what rituals and regulations to follow or not (Cesari 2004: 53-56; see section 2.1.4). So, even though the women's relationship to Islam can be described as individualized in Cesari's meaning of the term, their self-definitions as Muslims diverge from her categories of "Muslim identities."

The individualization processes that Roy identifies among Muslims in the West, and which according to him "reshape" Western Muslims' relationship to Islam, involve Western Muslim's sources and methods to Islam. Roy views Western Muslims' sources and methods to

Islam as the result of series of causes and consequences, which trigger and are triggered by individualization processes among Muslims in the West. A deterritorialization of Islam leads to a pluralization and fragmentation of Islamic authority, especially in the West, according to Roy, who refers to this as "Islam's crisis of authority." Due to this "crisis," the individual experiences a lack of external pressure to be a good Muslim from his/her surroundings (Roy 2004: 1-30, 148-175; see section 2.3.1). The individual's task to interpret Islam is one of the practices that make up the individualization processes, according to Roy. This means that Roy, instead of stressing the individual's freedom and desire to choose from among different religious options, emphasizes that it is *necessary* for Muslims in the West to choose from among various religious options to define "Islam" and "Muslim" due to "Islam's crisis of authority" and the lack of external pressure (Roy 2004: 17-29, 148-151, 156-164; see section 2.3.1). As a religious minority in Trondheim, the Muslim women encounter questions about Islam and Muslims from their non-Muslim surroundings. They are also surrounded by various discourses about Islam, and what it means to be a Muslims, through the Islamic and non-Islamic fields they engage in. Because of this, they must make individual choices regarding how to understand, define, present and practice Islam in Trondheim. Roy argues that in these interpretative and definitional processes, individuals are free to define what Islam means for them and how they want Islam to influence their daily lives. This corresponds with the informants' emic descriptions of Islam and Muslims that emphasize the freedom to choose how to live as Muslims in Trondheim. However, even though the context of Trondheim grants the women a definitional freedom, they use the Islamic tradition of knowledge as a normative framework through which to see their individual definitions and choices. This means that even though it becomes the individual women's task and freedom to define Islam and Muslim in Trondheim, they do not start from "scratch" in these definitional processes but build their definitions on authoritative Islamic sources and religious authorities because these are what legitimize their "definitions."

Roy argues that the definitional processes Muslims in the West are faced with make them turn to Islamic source materials that they start to read and interpret on their own. It is the individual's *turn to* the Islamic sources, and his/her *reading and interpretation* of these, which characterize the second category of practices in Roy's theory of individualization (Roy 2004: 17-29, 148-151, 156-164; see section 2.1.3). The young women in Trondheim turn to the Islamic scriptures, directly or indirectly through their social and institutional sources, in their quest for Islamic knowledge. Several of them read the scriptures themselves in a language they have mastered, while others prefer secondary material or social and institutional sources that

can provide knowledge about the scriptures' content. Despite some individual differences in how they approach and read these sources, the women agree about the scriptures' status as the primary sources to Islam (see sections 5.2.3-5.2.7). This means that the young Muslim women's turn to the Islamic material sources in their quest for Islamic knowledge corresponds with some of the practices that Roy characterizes as "individualized" in his theory. However, the women's *emic* understandings of their own practices diverge from Roy's theory when it comes to interpretation: Where Roy argues that Muslims in the West both *read* and *interpret* the Islamic scriptures on their own, the informants share the opinion that they are neither capable of interpreting, nor methodologically speaking allowed to interpret, the Qur'an and *hadith* on their own (see section 5.2.6). Thus, they read the scriptures to gain religious rewards or as part of their self-studies but use secondary sources in the form of supplementing or authoritative commentaries on the Qur'an and *hadith* or religious authorities to gain knowledge about the message of these sources. From an etic perspective, it is possible to argue that every reading or translation of a text involves interpretation. Still, the women do not trust, or put into practice, the "Islamic knowledge" they gain from their personal reading of these scriptures that have not been verified by religious authorities or authoritative supplementing literature. This means that both emic and etic understandings of the women's practices when it comes to interpretation diverge a bit from those Roy identifies as individualized in his theory. Instead of interpreting the Islamic scriptures on their own, the women follow established normative Islamic methods when it comes to interpretations – they seek help and support from Islamic interpretative literature, such as Qur'an commentaries, *tafsir*s, *hadith* commentaries and religious authorities, to deduce meaning and knowledge from these sources. When the women read, discuss and adjust the content of the interpretative literature to their own situations, they do interpret it. However, their practices are still oriented toward the Islamic traditions of knowledge and the Islamic methodologies that make up these traditions because they use their sources and methods as a norm in their individual quest for knowledge.

The third of Roy's categories of practices that characterize the Western Muslims' individualization processes is that individual Muslims in their quest for Islamic knowledge surf the Internet and "pick and choose" from among the numerous variations of religious ideas and information they find there until they find something that suits them (Roy 2004: 158-164, 174-175). The women in this study use the Internet as a medium to get access to various types of Islamic sources and as a search method. Through the Internet, they access various Islamic scriptures, texts and articles about Islam and Islamic authorities such as imams, scholars and institutions. They also use the Internet as a method of search to gain access to the diversity of

religious opinions, and they use online social networks as sorters and triggers of various material sources, such as *hadith*s (see section 5.2.7).

Still, the women in this study do not use the Internet and the sources and information they may access online as freely as the Muslims in Roy's study seem to do. The main reason for this is that even though the women use the Internet to access various sources, they distinguish between the sources and information they find there in relation to their validity and soundness. For instance, they cross-check the various sources' information against each other, or with the Qur'an and *hadith*, and they may screen the sources' backgrounds in order to establish their validity (see sections 5.2.4 and 5.2.6). None of the women mix between Sunni and Shia Islamic sources but regard only sources from the branch they identify with as trustworthy. For instance, the women from AOB use the Internet to access Shia Islamic scriptures, interpretations and commentaries on Shia Islamic scriptures and Shia Islamic authorities, while the women from Mevlana mainly use the Internet to access Sunni Islamic sources and particularly Hanafi sources and authorities. The MST women, who operate within more fields and more varied Islamic discourses than the women from AOB and Mevlana, orient their knowledge quests toward established Sunni Islamic sources and authorities. Even though the MST women choose more freely which scholars and institutions to take knowledge from, they are only picking and mixing between established Sunni Islamic sources. Because of this, the MST women do not uncritically choose from among all the sources they find on the Internet but their choice of sources is influenced by their institutional affiliation, theological orientation, background and personal preferences. For instance, Anna uses international Sunni Islamic scholars, some of which represent the MB's methodology, as religious authorities. The Indonesian interviewees can use Indonesian *ulama* but also European *ulama* as authorities. Julie, on the other hand, prefers religious authorities who live in the West because she can identify with them (see section 5.2.5). Thus, despite the women's freedom to choose sources that suit them, their choice is to remain within the Islamic tradition of knowledge and choose their sources and methods to Islam in relation to its institutionalized criteria of trustworthiness and untrustworthiness.

The young Muslim women's ways of gaining knowledge about and practicing Islam in Trondheim cannot be seen as fully individualized in Roy's meaning of the term. Even though the context of Trondheim provides the women with the possibility to interpret and define Islam and Muslims the way they want and to choose their individual sources to Islam, they remain within and evaluate their choices in relation to the Islamic traditions of knowledge. The women know that their sources and methods to Islam gain legitimacy only if proven to be in continuity

with the Islamic tradition of knowledge. Because of this, they orient their quests for knowledge toward this tradition's established institutions and organizations and their methodologies. This shows that the Islamic authority the Muslim women in Trondheim orient their individual quests for knowledge toward seems to be less fragmented than the authority Roy describes in his study.

5.4 Concluding analysis: Being Muslims in Trondheim

The women aim to become better Muslims and to develop their virtuous selves through faith, knowledge, practices and good deeds. In their emic descriptions, the young women recognize the Islamic faith, or faith and practices, as unifying factor(s) of Muslim. Even though the Islamic faith is recognized as the main unifying factor among Muslims, it entails various religious rituals and practices, according the interviewees. The rituals and practices the women refer to in relation to this is *sharia*'s two categories of regulations – the ritual obligations, *ibadat*, and the inter-human relationships, *mu'amalat.* This means that the women do not distinguish between faith, practices and morality but that all these aspects go hand-in-hand with being a "good Muslim." The women emphasize the importance of the two categorizes of regulations differently, and even though they identify some of the same practices and rituals as obligatory for practicing Muslims, their understanding and performance of them vary. Thus, the women's lived Islam in Trondheim is made up by a faith in the Islamic creed and various rituals and practices, including "good deeds" (morality) that the women think the Islamic faith entails.

The women's emphasis on practices *and* morality and their belief that they must improve both to become better Muslims are not unique. Similar thoughts are present in classical emic descriptions and understanding of Muslims as well, such as in the Muslim theologian al-Ghazzālī's ethical writhing. Robert Landau Ames's (2016) article shows how everything that has to do with the body was important in al-Ghazzālī's ethical theory and understanding of what it meant to be a Muslim. Al-Ghazzālī's ethics emphasizes the right faith, knowledge about the self, God, the afterlife and the world in addition to *ibadat* and "proper conduct" governing practical life, that is, *mu'amalat*. Thus, it represents a duty- (deontological) and virtue ethics where the virtues must be acquired and cultivated through refining one's character (Ames 2016: 133-137). In relation to this, al-Ghazzālī argues that both the body and the soul must be recognized and trained since "shaping the spirit required work on the body," according to Ames (2016: 129). No human activity or habit was too small to gain al-Ghazzālī's attention. He believed that everything was connected and necessary to obtain the ultimate goal, which, according to him, was the meeting with God:

because the goal of all wayfarers is meeting God, and the seed of this is knowledge and practice, and attention to knowledge and practice is not possible without bodily health, and bodily health is not possible without eating and drinking, then eating is a necessity of the path of religion, and is therefore part of religion (Ghazzālī quoted in Ames 2016: 136).

Because of this, al-Ghazzālī did not distinguish between various forms of human activity but believed that we should pay the same close attention to all (Ames 2016: 136).

Central to the women's self-definitions as Muslims is also individual choice. Even though most of the women acknowledge their family background's influence on their religious identities, they live as practicing Muslims in Trondheim due to individual choices.

The women agree that they need knowledge about Islam to practice Islam and to become better Muslims though they ascribe different legal values to the quest for Islamic knowledge. To gain knowledge about Islam, they use material and social and institutional Islamic sources and authorities, such as scriptures and commentary literature from the Islamic traditions of knowledge and established Islamic authorities such as local, national and global imams, preachers and scholars, *ulama*. My material shows that the women's institutional affiliations to local Islamic fields and global Islamic law schools and organizations are important because these relationships influence the women's individual quests for Islamic knowledge and their individual sources and methods. The women from AOB use Twelver Shia sources and methods to increase their knowledge about Islam, while the women from Mevlana use material and social and institutional Hanafi sources and methods as authoritative in their individual quests and collective quest for knowledge. The women engaged in MST, on the other hand, do not follow one specific law school's or organization's sources and methods. Instead, they may use all the Sunni Islamic law schools and their scholars as social and institutional sources to Islam. In this way, the MST women have the same way of relating to the Islamic law schools even though there may be individual differences in how they use the law schools as sources and authorities to Islam and why. All the women identify the Qur'an, *hadith* and *tafsir* as their primary sources to Islam and *sharia*. However, institutional affiliations, backgrounds, language skills and individual preferences influence the women's versions and translations of the scriptures they use in addition to their secondary sources. Institutional and individual differences in the women's sources and methods to Islam make them choose differently from the Islamic basket and thus practice Islam differently in Trondheim (Hjärpe 1998: 34-36; see section 2.2.5).

There is much correspondence between the young women's and their mothers' and parents' sources and methods to Islam. This means that institutional and organizational differences between the women's sources and methods are reflected in their parents' sources and methods. The AOB and Mevlana interviewees' parents identify with the same branches and law schools as their daughters and use Islamic sources that are authoritative within these. This means that the AOB women's parents use authoritative Twelver Shia sources and methods, while the parents affiliated with Mevlana use authoritative Hanafi sources and methods. Minor differences in the daughters' and the parents' sources to Islam can be explained by their different pasts and upbringings in addition to various language skills, levels of embodied Islamic knowledge and personal preferences. For instance, where the parents prefer to seek knowledge from the Qur'an, *hadith* and *tafsir* directly and individually, several of the young women prefer to seek this knowledge from secondary and verbal sources. Despite individual differences in source preferences, the daughters and their parents follow the same Islamic methodology and orient their knowledge quests toward the same Islamic authorities. There is also much correspondence between the MST interviewees' and their parents' sources and methods to Islam, with a few exceptions (Julie and Hanne). Some of the differences that exist may be given contextual explanations in relation to their different pasts and upbringings, where they live today and their access to material and social and institutional sources. Other differences have more to do with generational differences: various ages and life situations, levels of embodied Islamic knowledge and what part of the Islamic educational process they find themselves in.

The young Muslim women's relationship to Islam – their knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam – can be characterized as individualized in light of several of the theories of individualization, as shown above (see section 5.3.2) For instance, it is possible to view the interviewees' entry into and involvement with Islam as individualized in Fadil's meaning of the term since they emphasize the individual's choice as to whether or not to enter Islam and how to practice Islam. And since the women make individual choices of being Muslims, and how to live as Muslims, they are also individualized according to Cesari, who emphasizes the individualization of the religious choice in her theory.

In their quest for Islamic knowledge, the young Muslim women practice what Jacobsen calls a "restricted bricolage." They do not uncritically use all the sources they have at hand in order to gain Islamic knowledge but relate themselves to established Islamic methodologies from which they choose their sources and methods. The women from AOB and Mevlana practice a more restricted "restricted bricolage" than the women within MST since they are

mainly oriented around one Islamic methodology from which they choose their sources and methods. Even though it is possible to identify several of the practices that make up the individualization processes in Roy's theory of individualization in the young Muslim women's knowledge acquisition in Trondheim, some of their practices also diverge from his theory. The main reason for this is that the Islamic authority the young Muslim women in Trondheim orient their quest for knowledge to seems to be less pluralized and fragmented than the Islamic authority Roy describes. For instance, even though it becomes the individual women's task to define Islam and Muslims in Trondheim, the women choose to build their definitions of authoritative Islamic sources and authorities since these are what legitimize their definitions. And even though the young women's practices of turning to the Islamic scriptures correspond with Roy's theory, they diverge from it when they refrain from interpreting the Qur'an and *hadith* by themselves and instead use authoritative Islamic sources to gain knowledge about their content. Since the young Muslim women in Trondheim use the Islamic traditions of knowledge and their methodologies as a framework in their quest for Islamic knowledge, they have several Islamic authorities to turn to. What and whom they choose to use as their religious authorities are dependent upon their institutional and organizational affiliation in addition to their backgrounds, nationalities, language skills and individual preferences.

To discuss what might trigger individualization processes in the young women's knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam, we must take a closer look at how the context of Trondheim influences their knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam. In Chapters 6 and 7, I will therefore look at how the Islamic and the non-Islamic fields in Trondheim function as the young Muslim women's sources and methods to Islam.

Chapter 6. Islamic fields as the young Muslim women's sources and methods to Islam

To explore individualization processes in the young Muslim women's knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam in Trondheim, and the local context's influence on these, I will look at how the local Islamic and non-Islamic fields function as sources and methods to Islam for the women (see section 3.6). After describing the local Islamic fields and their glocal methodologies in Chapter 4, and the young women's individual sources and methods to Islam in Chapter 5, this chapter turns attention to *the local Islamic fields and how they function as the women's sources and methods to Islam.*

The chapter focuses on the local Islamic fields the young women engage in, which each make up a section. It starts with the local Islamic institution of the Muslim Society Trondheim (MST) and its influence on the young women's knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam. Subsequently follows a presentation of the MST interviewees' other, and sometimes overlapping, Islamic fields, namely the Sister Group (SG), Islam Net (IN), the Indonesian Muslim Society of Trondheim (KMIT) and the Dar El Eman Islamic Center (DIC). Then follows a presentation of the two local Islamic institutional fields that are not overlapping with other Islamic fields, namely Trondheim Mevlana Cultural Organization (Mevlana) and Ahl O'Bait (AOB) (see section 4.6).

To analyze how the local Islamic fields may influence the women's knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam, I approach the women's involvement in them from different angles. The women's relationship to the Islamic fields are dealt with first. Then follows a presentation of how the women use the Islamic fields as social and institutional and/or practical and ritual sources to Islam (Smart 1998: 11-22; see sections 3.2-3.2.1). In the third part of each section follows an analysis of what species of capital the women have access to and are in possession of within each field. Here I have paid particular attention to what capital is attributed to the women's Islamic knowledge within the various fields (Bourdieu 2006: 5, 8-17; Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992: 98, 118-120; see sections 3.4.2-3.4.4). Fourth, to identify similarities and differences between the women's and the local Islamic institutional fields' sources and methods to Islam, I have looked at the women's *tactical maneuvers* within these fields' glocal methodologies – or *strategies*, in de Certeau's meaning of the term. This means that I explore how the women relate themselves to, and operate within, the local Islamic institutional fields and their strategies in their quest for knowledge about Islam (de Certeau 1984: xix, 35-37; see

sections 3.5.2, 3.5.4 and 4.1.2). In the fifth and last part of each section, I use the "renewed Islamic basket" to describe how the various Islamic fields influence the women's "normative field" and thus their knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam. Here I also explore how the women's various Islamic *institutional fields* may trigger different individualization processes, or trigger individualization processes in their knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam differently, due to their various forms of capital (Roald 2001: 88-92; see section 3.6).

6.1 Muslim Society Trondheim (MST)

All the women engaged in the Islamic field of MST are members of the institution except Julie. Still, she uses the mosque and its facilities. The women explain their membership according to social, economic and practical reasons. Most of the women emphasize solidarity with other Muslims and the sense of belonging to a Muslim community in their explanations. Dorthe, for instance, who is one of the Indonesian interviewees, emphasizes the social aspects of her membership and argues that it is important to be a part of a Muslim organization when you live as a Muslim minority in Trondheim. Guro emphasizes the social aspects, too, but is also a member of MST because she wants to be identified with the institution and its members:

> **Guro**: (….) I want to be associated with Muslims who practice the Qur'an, or no, practice Islam, based on the Qur'an and the *Sunna*. And I know MST does. That is why I am a member of MST. (…) **E-A**: (…) Do you think that it is important to be a member of a Muslim organization? **Guro**: Social, yeah. And, it is important because we have to keep our ties, [as stated – E-A] in the Qur'an (…). And that is a way.

The women are familiar with the public funding system in Norway, which grants all publicly registered faith communities financial support per registered members annually (see section 4.1.4, note 28). Some of them refer to it to explain their membership in MST. Dorthe and Emma, for instance, know that their membership means more financial support for MST and regard it as a way to support and show loyalty to the mosque and their fellow Muslims. None of the women attribute their membership in MST solely to the public funding system, but some regard it as one important explanatory factor. In contrast to the rest of the MST women, the Indonesian women Frida and Ida have mainly practical reasons for being members of the mosque.

> **Frida**: I am a member of MST because it is easier to do *da'wa* in a *jami* [mosque – E-A]. As members, we can make the Islamic activities more organized. More organized.

And it is easier to do this in collaborations with others, than alone. Because of this, I believe that it is important to be a member of a Muslim organization.

Ida, on the other hand, explains her membership in relation to her need for updated information about how to practice Islam in Trondheim. To live a proper Muslim life in Trondheim, she needs information about local prayer and fasting times as well as "news concerning Muslim practical issues" – information that MST, according to Ida, provides its members.

6.1.1 MST as a source and method to Islam

The women use MST as a social and institutional source to Islam in various ways. Some use it regularly as a place for worship, while others use it as a place for learning or simply as a meeting place. Barbro and Guro attend Friday prayer and sermon whenever they have the possibility. Barbro sometimes visits the mosque on Saturdays as well, to pray and hang out. She explains that the mosque gives her peace and makes her feel relaxed and that she "must go there" at least two to three times a month. The interviewees engaged in the Islamic field of SG use the mosque as a place for learning by attending the group's weekly meetings. The women engaged in KMIT do the same since the group holds some of its meetings there. However, even though these groups use the mosque as a place for learning, the educational activities are not initiated nor arranged by MST. They only take place within its mosque.

All interviewees use MST as a local religious authority in one way or another. They follow the institution's local prayer and fasting times, and several of the women use MST's imams as religious authorities (see section 5.2.5). Julie, for instance, turned to one of its imams for answers and guidance when SG discussed whether or not a woman with menstruation could enter a mosque (see section 4.5.1). And Anna, who seldom frequents the mosque itself, appreciates and uses its imams as local religious authorities in times of need, such as in the cartoon controversy[68]:

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[68] The Norwegian cartoon controversy erupted in 2006 after the Christian magazine *Magazinet* reprinted the cartoons, or more specifically the caricatures, of the Prophet Muhammad, first published in the Danish newspaper *Jyllands-Posten* in 2005 (Leirvik 2011: 125-127). In 2008, a local newspaper in Trondheim, *Adresseavisen,* published a new cartoon in the form of a caricature that many interpreted as insulting against the Prophet Muhammad (Eggen 2008). MST's response to the local cartoon controversy was to hold dialogue with its members, the artist behind the cartoon and the non-Muslim majority with the help of their Christian dialogue partners in Forum for Muslim-Christian Dialogue in Trondheim (Forum for Muslim-Christian Dialogue in Trondheim 2010). In 2010, another Norwegian daily newspaper, *Dagbladet*, printed a new caricature of the Prophet Muhammad that led to a Muslim demonstration in Oslo in the time that followed (Staude et al. 2010).

Anna: I think that all humans who have something in common should have a place to meet and talk. And I believe that, when we have a situation, like that with the cartoon controversy, even though some individuals took initiative to a protest march, many listened to MST and did not. Because it was more negative than positive. To have a leader, or a leadership that is wise of course, if we had stupidity, it would have caused more problems, that is very important. **Anna's mother**: Someone who thinks **Anna**: Further than one's nose, not follows feelings. One of the best characteristics, to know if a leader is right or not, whether he follow his heart or his brain. (…) If you know that a situation can get out of control, you should calm down and think twice about it.

Because only a few of the women participate in activities arranged by MST and use it as a place of worship regularly, its influence as a practical and ritual source to Islam is rather small. There are, however, exceptions. After comparing and discussing her performance of the ritual prayer with other members of MST, Guro changed the way she performed the end of the ritual prayer, *amin.* Thus, MST functions as a ritual and practical source for her (see quotation in section 5.2.1: 204-205).

6.1.2 The women's capital within MST
None of the interviewees hold any position within MST's Steering Committee, *Shura* Committee or imam office (see section 4.4.2) and nor do any other women within the institution. MST's bylaws do not distinguish between men and women in relation to the mosque's organization and allow both men and women to hold central positions. Since MST was established, these positions have traditionally been held by men, with a few exceptions, since there have been a few women in the Steering and *Shura* committees earlier. There has never been a female member of the imam office even though the mosque does not exclude women from this office. However, a woman's roles and functions within the imam office would be limited to teaching and counselling because she can only function as a ritual leader for other women. This means that even though MST does not have any rules that prevent women from getting access to cultural capital in the form of positions and titles, it is unevenly distributed between men and women within the institution (Bourdieu 2006: 5-17). Still, women within MST are both taking and given responsibility within the institution since several female members, among them Anna, have volunteered as Islamic and Arabic teachers for the children.

    MST has developed a considerable social network and has access to various forms of capital through its involvement in various interfaith and intercultural dialogues with public

institutions (Mårtensson and Eriksen 2014; Bourdieu 2006: 5, 8; see section 4.1.4). Women have been involved in some of these dialogues, such as with the Trondheim municipality and the child care authorities, but seldom as regular participants. For instance, in MST's most prestigious interfaith dialogue the Forum for Muslim-Christian Dialogue in Trondheim, established in 2003 as a local branch of the national Contact Group for dialogue between the Church of Norway and the Islamic Council of Norway (IRN), six men appointed by MST make up the dialogue group together with six Christians men and women appointed by the Bishop of Nidaros (Den norske kirke 2015; Mårtensson and Eriksen 2014). This means that the cultural capital in the form of the prestige and power these intercultural and interfaith dialogues might generate traditionally becomes the possession of men.

As a volunteer-driven mosque, MST must prioritize its use of resources. Since it aims to be in dialogue with the surrounding community, MST has thus far used many of its resources on interfaith and intercultural dialogues in addition to Islamic educational activities for children (see sections 4.1.4 and 4.2.3). This influences the interviewees' quests for knowledge. From 2010 to 2014, MST *did not* offer any Islamic educational activities for its adult members. The women's only access to knowledge about Islam was therefore to seek individual guidance from the imams, listen to the imam's Friday sermons or attend (very) sporadic lectures given by the imams or visiting imams.

MST's "pan-Islamic" profile influences the Islamic knowledge the Muslim women can acquire from the mosque and its Friday sermons as well. As a "pan-Islamic" mosque, MST does not prescribe how its members should perform religious practices and rituals and is not oriented around details in the Islamic jurisprudence, *fiqh*. Yet, knowledge about the ritual obligations, *ibadat,* and inter-human relationships, *mu'amalat* are precisely the types of knowledge the young women want. Instead, MST tries to unite its members around the main Islamic principles and general Islamic rules and ethics, knowledge many of the women already possess (see sections 4.4.2 and 5.2.1). Because MST lacks educational activities for adult members and avoids getting into details about the Islamic jurisprudence, *fiqh,* the interviewees *do not have access to the cultural capital they wish to embody*, namely knowledge about Islamic rituals and codes of conduct, within their local Islamic institution, nor do they have access to a written corpus of Islamic sources within the institution. Due to its pan-Islamic profile, MST does not interfere with what versions of the Islamic scriptures – the Qur'an, *hadith* or *tafsir*s – its members are using, nor does it recommend specific versions of the scriptures but allows its members to use versions they are familiar with or in a language they understand. The same attitude is maintained toward Islamic authorities: MST recommends that its members seek

Islamic knowledge from learned persons but does not prescribe whom (see sections 4.4.2, 5.2.3 and 5.2.5). Thus, MST's lack of constraints in these matters leaves it up to the women to choose which versions of the scriptures and which Islamic authorities to use as sources.

All interviewees engaged in MST have access to social capital in the form of networks and contacts within the mosque (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992: 119; Bourdieu 2006: 17; see section 3.4.2). However, there are some differences in how they describe the network's importance and size and what it can provide them with. Some of these can be explained due to the women's various and changing levels of involvement in mosque activities. Anna, for instance, volunteered as an Arabic and Qur'an teacher for children every weekend when I started this study. At the time, she had a large network and many contacts in the mosque. At the time of our second interview, Anna hardly frequented the mosque, not even during holidays. She has kept parts of her mosque network, but it mainly consists of long-time members and does not include any newer members. Anna feels close to parts of her network and describes how members in it overlap with members in other fields she engages in, such as friends and family. Other persons in her mosque network are of little importance for her daily life because she only sees them occasionally. According to Anna, a mosque network has its limitations because you cannot build a solid network around a common religious identity only:

> **E-A**: (…) You being a Muslim, have maybe helped you build a network? **Anna**: No.
> **E-A**: No? You do not think that, it is more **Anna**: No. Sometimes people believe that since we are Muslims, we are like a MC, or what is it called? **E-A**: MC? **Anna**: MC Club; that everyone must greet each other and... I do not feel that way. I do say "*salam aleikum*," but that does not mean that I am your best friend. **E-A**: No. **Anna**: Many believe that, because many, I got into conflict that way; "You call me brother and sister, why are we not good?" But that has to do with chemistry. "I do not say that I hate you, I, *salam aleikum*, goodbye, done with it. I do not need to be your best friend. Why on earth are you saying that?" That is the way it is. I am like that.

Several of the women view their mosque network and contacts more or less the same way as Anna. They feel close to some people within their networks but have a more distant relationship to others. Others ascribe their mosque networks with more significance. They think that the members' shared religious and institutional affiliation entails responsibilities. Dorthe, for instance, regards her network and contacts within MST as a safety net. If required, people in this network can provide help, according to her, who emphasizes that this is of special

importance for the "newly arrived" – those who lack family bonds and networks in Trondheim. Hanne points to the feeling of belonging, and the opportunity to broaden her personal network, when she describes what the mosque network means to her:

> **Hanne**: Sense of belonging I guess. (…) I feel like I have friends, because, when I came here, I felt so lonely, something like that. By having the title of a Muslim group and, when I met another Muslim and they asked me: "Are you a MST member?" Then I can say yes, and they became more friendly to me, this is what I feel. (…) I got advantages, the advantages in the social way, not in the religious way. (…) I got advantages in the religious way when I learn, or when, or when I am with Indonesian Muslim Society. **E-A**: Mmm. So it is more the social, you have a place you belong to? **Hanne**: Yes. Because if I am only with Indonesian Muslim Society, then I am, then my friends are only Indonesian. But I can spread the network if I (…) If I am member of a Muslim group.

What role the MST network plays in each woman's personal life depends upon factors such as life situation, how long they have lived in Trondheim and their possibility, access and ability to generate social capital outside the institution. Despite differences in how the women use and evaluate their mosque network, they believe that it can provide them with different kinds of help and support if they need it.

Even though only a few of the interviewees have been involved in the institution's interfaith and intercultural dialogues, they receive benefits from them in the form of social capital. Several of the women appreciate MST's established networks and contacts with other Muslim and non-Muslim institutions. They feel that when MST has good relations with other institutions, so do they personally. Some women think that MST's large network provides easier access to institutions and persons who participate in the dialogues. For this reason, some of them regard MST's broadened network as a potential expansion of their own personal network.

Since MST is run by volunteers, the women cannot generate economic capital as paid work directly from the institution. However, the women's mosque networks can provide other forms of economic capital. For instance, the women can benefit from MST's contacts established through interfaith and intercultural dialogues. Two of the women have been offered job positions within public institutions due to these contacts. The women within MST, and especially SG, also announce job opportunities and encourage each other to apply for various positions. Moreover, they use their mosque contacts to sell products such as *hijab*s, clothes,

carpets, etc. Finally, mosque networks and contacts can also provide some of the women with financial support, such as interest-free loans.

6.1.3 The women's tactical maneuvers within MST

Woodhead' description of "strategic religion" and its "challenges" have many similarities with the local Islamic institution of MST. Like strategic religion, MST seek alliance with political power and social elites through its intercultural and interfaith dialouges. Its priority of spending resources outside the institution to develop its own social capital in the form of networks and contacts influences the women, who cannot access the cultural knowledge capital they wish within the institution. Thus, MST's prioritization distances it from the women's "everyday worries" and pushes them into what Woodhead calls "tactical modus" (Woodhead 2013: 18-21; see sections 3.5.3 and 4.1.4).

The *strategy* – the glocal Islamic methodology – that surrounds the MST women's quest for Islamic knowledge within the institution is the Muslim Brotherhood's (global) methodology (de Certeau 1984: 36-37; see sections 3.5.2, 3.5.4 and 4.4.2). At first glance, the women's sources and methods to Islam do not seem to diverge much from those of MST. Both parties identify and use the same material sources, the Qur'an and *hadith*, as their primary sources to Islam and *sharia*. They also share the opinion that individuals are not allowed to interpret the Islamic scriptures on their own but that they must use interpretative and commentary literature, such as *tafsir*s, or seek answers or guidance from Islamic authorities in the form of persons or institutions (see sections 4.4.2, 5.2.3 and 5.2.6). However, a closer look shows that there are some differences in how the women and the MST institution approach various Islamic sources and methods. The women's lack of *access* to knowledge about Islam and Islamic methodologies within MST pushes them into a tactical modus. To acquire the knowledge they want, the women use Islamic sources and methods in ways that both correspond with and differ from MST's strategy. Some women also engage in, and have even established, other Islamic fields where they can access such knowledge.

MST's strategy gives it more strings to its bow than the women have. MST's imams have more knowledge about, and have access to, more Islamic sources and methods than the women have. For instance, where MST's imams recognize and use consensus among the Prophet's Companions, *ijma sahaba*, Islamic scholars, *ijma ulama*, and analogical reasoning, *qiyas*, as sources to Islam and *sharia,* the women do not use these sources individually. Instead, the women put even more emphasis on the Qur'an and *hadith* and use these scriptures tactically as norms and answer books to verify or disqualify information as trustworthy or untrustworthy,

that is, Islamic or un-Islamic (see sections 4.4.2 and 5.2.6). MST's strategy and knowledge about the roots of jurisprudence, *usul al-fiqh*, give it more sources to activate. The women, who neither possess nor have access to advanced knowledge about Islamic methodologies, must use the sources they know and have at hand in their quest knowledge. Since all the women have access to the Qur'an and *hadith* and trust these sources, they use them, not only as their primary sources to Islam but also as "truths" to cross-check information and other sources against. This means that the Islamic scriptures are sources the women tactically use to gain the knowledge MST does not offer them since the scriptures exist and are regarded as authoritative sources to Islam independent of the MST institution. By using the scriptures as ultimate norms to what Islam is and is not, the women operate within the terrain of MST. However, when they rely on these, and do not include consensus and analogical reasoning as supplementing sources, the interviewees use the sources in autonomous ways that diverge from MST's glocal methodology (de Certeau 1984: 36-37; see section 3.5.2).

By having a strategy, MST is also in possession of knowledge about *usul al-fiqh*, which many of the women lack (de Certeau 1984: 36; see section 3.5.2). This include knowledge about the scriptural sources. By not offering it members a corpus of written Islamic sources, MST "pushes" the women to make individual choices concerning what versions of the scriptures to use. To make sure that they choose the "right" ones, several of the women choose their scriptural sources according to the scriptures' position and status. For instance, instead of choosing freely from among the numerous collections of *hadith*s, the women prefer to use well-known and trusted *hadith* collections, such as Bukhari and Muslim's collections. They also prefer to use *tafsir*s written by Islamic scholar(s) with a good reputation. This means that to compensate for their lack of access to a corpus of Islamic scriptures within MST, they use authorized versions of the scriptures (see section 5.2.3). Thus, when the women cannot access the scriptures that they want, nor knowledge about these scriptures within MST, they tactically orient themselves toward the Islamic tradition of knowledge and use this as a normative system from which they choose their sources.

Like MST, the women use secondary sources to Islam and *sharia*. MST uses institutionalized sources to the law, such as local customs, *urf*, independent reasoning, *ijtihad,* and established legal principles within legal theory – that is, the "*darura"* principle – and "the permissibility of God's creation" (see section 4.4.2). The women's choices of secondary sources are influenced by their backgrounds, language skills and individual preferences. This means that where MST is choosing sources in line with its strategy, the women do not relate their choice of secondary sources to one major strategy but choose freely from and among

various strategies. Thus, they do not share a corpus of secondary sources but use different material sources, such as books, texts, websites, TV programs and different local, external and global religious authorities. Their tactics are therefore to use secondary sources they are familiar with and have easy access to, which transmit information in a language they have mastered and which "speak" to them and their life situation in one way or another. Included in these tactics are also the operations the women undertake to make sure of their sources' "validity," such as their combination of different material and social and institutional sources, their methods for cross-checking their sources against the Qur'an and *hadith*, their methods for cross-checking information from various sources with each other and their methods for screening their sources' backgrounds (see sections 5.2.4-5.2.6).

This does not mean that none of the women relate to the same institutionalized sources to *sharia*, or the legal principles that MST does, because they do – however, mostly indirectly through their secondary sources and often "unconsciously" and without referring to them as sources. For instance, the women involved in SG referred to "common practices" in their country of origin when they argued that a woman can be in a mosque during her menstruation (see section 4.5.1). None of the women mentioned local custom, *urf*, directly in this discussion. Still, trying to legitimate an action as lawful by referring to how "common and publicly" accepted it is can be seen as an indirect use of *urf* as a source to Islam. Some of the MST women use legal principles indirectly as sources to Islam and *sharia* through their secondary sources as well. Emma, for instance, follows the Indonesian ulama's *fatwa* concerning pilgrimage, *hajj,* vaccination. This is grounded on the "*darura* principle," which makes the unlawful lawful if necessary (see sections 4.4.2 and 5.2.5). She also uses the "*darura* principle" as a source to Islam herself even though she does not refer to it as a legal principle or by name:

> **Emma**: It is very an extreme example, but, for example if you are in an island alone, no one can help you, and there is no food to get. Well, yeah, there is no food except pork for example (…) Well, if you don't eat it you will die (laughs). Because you will be starving. But pork is not allowed in the Qur'an. But Allah gives us, how to say, the ease (…) Yeah, it is like if there, because it is an, the definition is emergency. You have tried as best as you can but you, at the end you have no choice other than doing this that is not allowed in the Qur'an. So, it is okay.

That the women and MST use some of the same secondary sources to Islam does not mean that the women are consciously following MST's strategy. It rather supports the fact that MST uses

sources that are widespread, established and institutionalized within Sunni Islamic legal theory and thus sources the women encounter through their individual secondary sources (see sections 4.3.1 and 4.4.2).

MST and the women use the Sunni Islamic law schools as global religious authorities and thus secondary sources to Islam and *sharia*. Both parties view the law schools and their jurisprudence, *fiqh*, as complementary sources that Muslims are free to choose from among (see sections 4.4.2 and 5.2.5). There are, however, differences between *why* and *how* MST and the women use the law schools as Islamic sources. MST uses knowledge, solutions and regulations from the law schools' jurisprudence to *contextualize* the Islamic message to the current situation. The institution believes that the Islamic sources must be interpreted in light of current times and situations and use the law schools' jurisprudence as sources for various solutions and answers. Thus, MST uses the law schools as sources to adapt Islam's *changeable* aspects to the context of Trondheim and its members various situations (see section 4.4.2). For the women, the Sunni Islamic law schools function as sources for detailed information about Islamic rituals and rules of conduct. Since they cannot access these types of knowledge within MST, they must go beyond their local Islamic institution to gain it. The women's tactics are to use representatives from the law schools as religious authorities and to use the law schools' jurisprudence as sources to ritual and practical and/or ethical and juridical knowledge about Islam. By using the law schools' jurisprudence as various interpretations of *sharia*, the women are tactically using the Sunni Muslim diversity as a source of knowledge about various ways to live in accordance with the will of God (de Certeau 1984: 36-37; see sections 3.5.2 and 5.2.5-5.2.6). In this way, they get access to detailed knowledge about *ibadat, mu'amalat* and *sharia*'s categories of action. The women's tactical use of the Sunni Islamic law schools as secondary sources correspond with MST's strategy. Still, where MST "picks and chooses" among the law schools' various solutions and regulations to find the ones that are most suitable for specific situations, the women make individual judgments of what to choose and why. When the women let their "heart guide them" or choose the solution they believe is most "solid," "logical" or "simple," they are putting their mark on the sources, or the "products," that they use (de Certeau 1984: 165-170; see sections 3.5.2 and 5.2.6).

Many of the MST interviewees are also *tactically engaging in other Islamic fields* to increase their Islamic knowledge. Since MST cannot provide the women with the knowledge they seek, their tactics are to establish or approach other local Islamic fields to get it. Following this line, the women's establishment of SG and their involvement in IN, KMIT and DIC are tactical operations they undertake to access the knowledge they want. *In this chapter I therefore*

treat them as such: Islamic fields interviewees from MST tactically engage in to gain access to knowledge about Islam that MST cannot offer them. When the women approach other Islamic fields in their quest for knowledge, they encounter these fields' different Islamic methodologies as well. Thus, their engagement in other Islamic fields give them access to more knowledge about Islam and more sources and methods.

6.1.4 MST's influence on the women's knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam
MST's pan-Islamic profile, its lack of educational activities for adult members and its lack of an articulated and clearly defined corpus of Islamic sources make it difficult for the interviewees to access the Islamic *knowledge capital* they wish to embody. This includes detailed knowledge about *sharia*'s ritual obligations, inter-human relationships and categories of action (see sections 5.2.1 and 6.1.2). Because of this, MST functions more as a social arena, where the women can gather with other Muslims, perform rituals, celebrate holidays and thus generate social and sometimes economic capital, than as an institution of knowledge for the women (see sections 6.1-6.1.2).

Since the women's only access to knowledge about Islam within MST is to seek individual guidance from the imams and attend Friday sermons or very sporadic lectures, the women cannot generate much knowledge from the institution. Neither can they generate knowledge about what sources and methods to use in their individual quest for knowledge since MST lacks institutional constrains concerning this issue (see section 6.1.2). This means that the women within MST are left to themselves in their quest for Islamic knowledge and that they must make individual choices concerning what sources and methods to use. Thus, MST's influence on the women's "normative field" – meaning what Islamic sources and literature they choose from the "Islamic basket" and their interpretation of these – is therefore rather small (Roald 2001: 88-92; see section 3.6).

By not providing the women with the knowledge they want and seek, MST pushes the women to engage in other Islamic fields to access such knowledge and to make individual choices concerning what sources and methods to use. This means that MST's limited influence on the women's normative field forces them into individual searches for Islamic knowledge. In their individual quests, the women use different sources and methods to Islam due to their involvement in various Islamic fields and their various backgrounds, nationalities, language skill levels, life situations and personal preferences. Thus, they choose differently from the "Islamic basket" and view and practice Islamic regulations and practices differently (Hjärpe 1997, 1988; see sections 2.2.5 and 5.2-5.3).

The women's lack of access to Islamic knowledge capital within MST *triggers* individualization processes in their knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam. Because MST mainly offers knowledge about Islamic doctrines and principles, it becomes the women's task to fill in the details. The lack of external pressure of how to be and live as Muslim the women experience from MST makes them take individual choices concerning how they want Islam to influence their lives. Thus, MST enforces individualization processes among the women in Roy's meaning of the term (Roy 2004: 1-30, 148-175; see sections 2.1.3 and 5.3.2).

In line with Roy's theory, the women turn to the Islamic scriptures, the Qur'an and *hadith*, in their individual quest for knowledge and use these tactically to gain the knowledge MST cannot offer them (Roy 2004: 17-29, 148-149, 156-164; see sections 2.1.3 and 6.1.3). However, contrary to Roy's description of individualization processes in European Muslim knowledge acquisition, the women are not starting to interpret these sources on their own. Instead, they orient themselves and their reading of these scriptures toward authoritative commentaries on the Qur'an and *hadith* and religious authorities' interpretations of these scriptures. MST's lack of "pressure" and restrictions in relation to its members sources and methods to Islam make the women turn toward the Islamic traditions of knowledge and use these as normative systems to choose their sources and methods from. This means that MST's limited influence on the women's "normative field" is not making them interpret the scriptures on their own, but it makes them seek knowledge from other established local, external and global Islamic authorities. Consequently, the women's practices correspond more with the individualization processes Jacobsen refers to as a "restricted bricolage." This is because they pick and choose their sources and methods in relation to the Islamic traditions of knowledge, and their various Islamic methodologies, since it is their authority that legitimizes their sources and methods as "Islamic" (Jacobsen 2006: 212-229; see section 2.1.6).

The interviewees from MST must take responsibility for their own religious learning and choose their own sources to Islam. In their individual quests for knowledge, they choose various material and social and institutional sources. The women's different sources, and their tactical involvement in other Islamic fields, introduce them to other Islamic strategies than that MST represents and thus other sources and methods. Because of this, it is not only MST and its strategy that influence the interviewees' normative field but also other Islamic fields and their strategies. This explains why the women sometimes choose differently from the Islamic basket.

6.2 The Sister Group (SG)

Four of the informants engaged in the Islamic institutional field of MST are part of SG, which gathers in MST's mosque once a week. SG's meetings are announced on MST's website, but the group is established and run by the women's initiative only (see section 4.1.4). Meetings in SG are made up by different educational sessions and a social gathering session, and last from two to four hours depending upon the number of attendees and the group's agenda for the day.

6.2.1 SG as a source and method to Islam

As a study group, SG functions as a social and institutional source and method to Islam for its participants. The women participate in the group to increase their Islamic knowledge through self- and group studies with other Muslim women. That "transmission" of Islamic knowledge is the main purpose behind this group is reflected in the women's reference to the group as a women's *halaqa* (see section 4.2.3).

　　Through various activities, the women learn about Islam from the group, in the group and from self-studies they engage in to prepare presentations for the group (see section 4.2.3). In this way, they use SG both as a method and as a source to Islam. The social aspects of SG motivate and trigger the participants' individual quests for knowledge:

> **Julie**: I am not the type who study Islam on my own all the time. My basic things are always there, like praying and fasting (…) But I do not study Islam every day. (…) It is fun to learn about Islam together with others. (…) Because, sometimes, I have to confess that sometimes when I read a book it can be a bit boring, so then I do not bother. But, when you are in a group and you are going to hold a presentation, you prepare for this, and then you can discuss it, and you can remember it, so you want to do it. Sometimes I do it with my husband as well, we read a book together because it gives you something else than when you read it on your own. So, the Sister Group is very important for me, I can feel it. I am very happy for it and really appreciate it.

None of the informants use SG as a religious authority since it is made up by laypersons only. To legitimate the knowledge that they transmit within the group, they need references to authoritative Islamic sources, such as the Islamic scriptures, or local or external religious authorities, such as imams, law schools, etc. However, by sharing individual experiences of how it is to live as Muslims in different countries and contexts, such as as a religious minority

or majority, the women gain knowledge about various ways to live as a Muslim. In this way, SG function as a social (and institutional) source to Islam and "Muslims" for the women.

SG both performs religious rituals together – for instance, they pray, recite from the Qur'an, fast or break the fast – and discusses details concerning their ritual performances. In this way, the group functions as a practical and ritual source for some of its participants as well. For instance, in a session about how to perform the ritual prayer, *salat*, a participant held a presentation about the legal values of acts one may perform during prayer. The presentation built on a widely distributed book about Islamic jurisprudence, *fiqh*, written by an international Sunni Islamic scholar and legal theorist, and contained detailed information about recommended, lawful, disapproved and unlawful actions during prayer. The presenter told the group members that they can move someone's foot or arm if it blocks their prayer direction, *qibla*, and that they can walk during prayer if they walk toward *qibla.* The presentation contained information about disapproved acts during prayer, too, such as correcting one's hair or clothes, and unlawful acts, such as talking and passing gas, which may ruin the prayer and thus the religious reward it is supposed to entail. During the presentation of how to perform the various prayer sequences, *raka*, two of the women discovered that they had been performing the prostration sequence, *sujūd*, incorrectly, according to the author of the book. Instead of going into the prostration position with their hands first, they usually sat down on their knees before they touched the ground with their hands. After discussing their performances with the other women, who all claimed to perform the prostration in accordance with the legal theorist's instructions, and thus correctly, the two women decided to change their performance of this prayer sequence due to the new knowledge they gained in this session.

SG's debate concerning lawful and unlawful acts during menstruation is another example of how the group functions as a ritual and practical source to Islam for the participants (see section 4.5.1). When one of the participants became insecure about whether or not she could enter a mosque during menstruation, the women's individual experiences and practices in relation to this became a frequent topic of discussion. In these situations, the women who believed that a woman can enter a mosque during her period used each other's common experiences and practices on this matter as a source to confirm their individual practices.

6.2.2 The women's capital within SG
As an Islamic study group driven by and for women, SG cannot be compared to the local Islamic institutions when it comes to organizational structure. All of the women participate in SG on an equal premise. None of them possess or have access to cultural capital in the form of specific

titles or positions since there are no such active forms of capital within the field. Everyone can contribute, and are encouraged to do so, on equal terms (see section 4.2.3). As an independent women's group that holds its meetings at MST's mosque, SG is not involved in MST's board or organization (see section 4.1.4). Still, SG contributes to MST's mosque, and MST recognizes the group as a resource in some ways. For instance, several of SG's members sometimes clean and tidy in the mosque. The group has also offered MST to host pupils from elementary school who visit the mosque and to hold presentations of Islam and MST, a task the group has been trusted with on more than one occasion. Thus, there is a relationship between MST and SG, where the latter is both recognized and sometimes used as a resource for the mosque. In this way, some of the participants in SG are generating some cultural capital from MST by being given responsibility to present and represent Islam and MST to visitors.

The Islamic knowledge capital the members of SG have access to is knowledge individual members of the group are in possession of and share with the others and knowledge the women (re)produce through group and self-studies. Through conversations and discussions, the women in the group identify what they regard as important Islamic knowledge and what kind of knowledge and skills a Muslim should be in possession of. The Islamic knowledge the women classify as important is knowledge that can be categorized as practical and ritual, ethical and legal, narrative and mythical and doctrinal, in line with Smart's dimensions of religion (Smart 1998: 11-22; see sections 3.2-3.2.1). However, most of the topics the women discuss during their meetings can be classified as practical and ritual *and* ethical and legal knowledge since they deal with *ibadat* and *mu'amalat* (see section 5.2.1). For instance, the women want practical knowledge about how to recite from the Qur'an, how to perform the ritual prayer, *salat*, how to dress properly and how to behave/act during the ritual call for prayer, *adhan*. They want detailed knowledge about how to perform the various rituals and practices and knowledge about the legal interpretations, *fiqh*, of why they should act and behave in certain ways. This means that they want to improve their practical knowledge about how to live in accordance with *sharia* at the same time as they want to increase their theoretical knowledge about *sharia*'s regulations, which are the product of Islamic jurisprudence, *fiqh*, and thus legal knowledge. The women regard all kinds of practical and ritual knowledge about "how to practice Islam" as relevant Islamic knowledge. Guro refers to these types of knowledge as "nice to know" things:

> **Guro**: It was a day we were discussing the *hadith*s, and we found out that a particular quantity of water cannot be polluted, and I did not know about that before. It is like about 200 liters, that, it cannot be polluted. If it is so much you can safely use it for *wudu*

(ritual purification – E-A), and that also, that you can use water from slowing rivers, something like that (…). "Nice to know" things.

SG can also provide the women with contextual and practical knowledge about how to practice Islam in the Muslim-minority situation in Trondheim. This includes knowledge about how to perform Islamic rituals and obligations in Trondheim but also knowledge about how a Muslim woman should interact with her non-Muslims surroundings. The women have discussed how they can dress properly as Muslim women when they are engaged in non-Islamic fields through work and studies. They have also discussed how to obey Islamic regulations concerning gender segregation and at the same time respect the majority society's customs and usage when it comes, for example, to shaking hands. For instance, in Trondheim, and Norway, it is a common practice to shake hands when one greets someone. For this reason, a topic of discussion has been whether or not they should shake hands with men in various situations. To increase their knowledge about "proper practices" in relation to this, the women turned to the Sunni Islamic law schools' jurisprudence, *fiqh,* and shared their personal experiences. They did not unite around one solution but agreed that each woman should do what she felt was right in the specific situation. Due to individual differences, the members in SG choose differently from the "Islamic basket" when it comes to handshakes: some choose to shake hands with men to appear polite, while others choose not to shake hands with men at the same time as they politely explain why they do not (Hjärpe 1997, 1988; see section 2.2.5).

Narrative and mythical knowledge about the Prophet Muhammad's *sunna*, his wives, and other prophets in Islam, is also recognized as important Islamic knowledge and thematized in SG, as is doctrinal knowledge about the life in the hereafter, Judgment Day, paradise, hell, God's 99 names and qualities and *djinn*s. The knowledge the women gain about these topics is, in one way, theoretical knowledge about prominent figures in Islam or Islamic doctrines. However, since the women seek this knowledge in order to improve how they live as Muslims, it can also be categorized as practical knowledge. For instance, when the women study narratives and descriptions about the Day of Judgment, they seek knowledge about what is believed to happen on this day according to Islamic beliefs and how to prepare for this day. According to Islamic doctrines, your body will witness in your favor or disfavor on the Day of Judgment. In relation to this, the women have sought information about whether or not it is allowed to pluck one's eyebrows since every single eyebrow hair can possibly give a testimony in your favor on Judgment day. SG agreed that, due to the bodily testimony, one should avoid tampering with one's body, and especially one's eyebrows, just for fun, and only do this when

"necessary." However, during the discussion it became apparent that there were individual differences between what the women identified as "necessary." During their group studies about the bodily testimony, the women learned that they should use their fingers, not prayer beads, to keep track of extra and recommended worship rituals in order to make their fingers witness in their favor on the Day of Judgment. This means that even though SG seeks theoretical and doctrinal knowledge about Islam, its members intend to put parts of this knowledge into practice since they believe that this knowledge can help them reach paradise and avoid hell. Thus, it is possible to classify some of this knowledge as practical and ritual.

The members of SG do not have access to cultural capital in the form of an established corpus of Islamic scriptures. Instead, the women use what they have at hand. This means that they use their "individual" sources to Islam when they prepare presentations for the group and bring and use their individual sources in their group studies.

SG is an important social arena for many of the women who have few relatives in Trondheim. By engaging in SG, the women get access to social capital in the form of networks, contacts and friendships. Its name reflects the fact that the women feel close to each other: they call each other and recognize each other as sisters in Islam. In addition to studying Islam together, the women are also very interested in each other's lives and wellbeing. The social gathering sessions are therefore recognized as just as important as the educational ones (see section 6.2). In these sessions, the women engage in informal conversations and share their joys and worries. Here they share experiences of being Muslims in Trondheim as well as experiences they have acquired from their positions as mothers, wives, sisters, students, employees, job seekers, etc. Many of the women have become good friends and have a good deal of contact outside SG's meeting as well.

The participants emphasize the social aspects of the group. One of the Indonesian interviewees regards SG as a medium to establish strong ties between Muslims in Trondheim:

> **Indonesian interviewee X**: Knowledge is not the first thing, or the only thing I can get from the *halaqa* (…). I regard the *halaqa* as a way, or a medium, if I can say that? **E-A**: Yes, you can. **X**: An important medium for Muslim women in Trondheim to create a strong *Ummah*, something we have, we have become very close to each other. **E-A**: Do you mean *Ummah* in Trondheim or? **X**: Trondheim yes, but also sisterhood. That we have a strong sisterhood between us Muslim women in Trondheim. I can seek knowledge from other sources than the *halaqa*, *insha Allah* ["God willing" – E-A]*,* but it is very important for me, I feel that it is very important that we sit together, that we

are in contact with each other and that we communicate with each other through the *halaqa* or the Sister Group. I cannot imagine, if we did not have this type of organization, no medium where we could meet in the mosque with other sisters, I would miss that.

The possibility to meet other Muslim women who have corresponding interests and similar experiences of living as a Muslim minority in Trondheim is highly appreciated. The social capital in the form of strong relationships and friendships the women can generate from SG have implications for their personal lives as well. Guro claims that the meetings in SG where she interacts and mingles with other Muslim women in a "safe space" help her develop her social skills. Julie thinks that her engagement in the group has improved her self-confidence as a Muslim:

> **Julie**: I have become more self-confident. **E-A**: You have? **Julie**: I mean that I have become more self-confident because there are many, I remember that before I met them I was more, a bit more, I was hiding. I did not hide that I was a Muslim, but I was a bit, because I did not have the knowledge that I have today, so I tried to avoid questions from other people, or would just answer that I did not know, or something like that. (…) But from them I have learned that, somewhere in the beginning when I first met them, I believed that the group would probably be too intellectual or hard for me. But they have made it easy. **E-A**: So you have learned **Julie**: Yes, I have learned a lot from them. **E-A**: A lot, and become more self-confident? **Julie**: Self-confidence and knowledge, and sister [name of a member in the group – E-A] has been a good example. (…) I remember in the beginning, I felt that people looked weird at me all the time, and they still do. I know what they are thinking. I feel that I know what they are thinking. But she taught me, even if you know, you should only be proud. Because you know that, what they are thinking is wrong. (…) I have learned how to express myself due to the sisters. (…) How I can explain and show my version of Islam, and how I can show that I believe in this, and that I do it with pride. (…) I owe them this self-confidence, and I thank them for it.

This shows that the participants in SG can generate various forms of cultural and social capital from this Islamic field. The women use their networks and contacts within this field to transmit job opportunities and to help each other apply for various job positions, too. For instance, the

women inform each other about local happenings where it is possible to sell homemade food, for example, but also about vacancies they believe are relevant for some of the other women. They encourage each other to apply for various job positions and assist each other with job applications, such as checking each other's spelling. As mentioned above, some of the women also use their SG network, and their extended network within MST to sell products, such as *hijab*s, clothes, carpets, etc., that are demanded by many (see section 6.1.2). The trade never takes place within the mosque, but they sometimes show each other various products and brochures outside the mosque after SG's meetings. In this way, the women in SG can use their networks and contacts within this field to generate economic capital *indirectly* from it even though they cannot generate any form of economic capital within it.

6.2.3 SG as the women's tactic within MST

When SG holds its meetings in MST's mosque, it is literally using MST's "terrain" to study Islam (de Certeau 1984: 37; see section 3.5.2). However, as an independent study group, it is not only influenced by MST's strategy of gaining knowledge about Islam but is surrounded by various Islamic strategies, due to its members involvement in various local Islamic fields (see sections 4.1.4 and 4.6).

As an Islamic study group driven by and for women, SG's members must come to agreement about what sources and methods to use in their group studies. As a newly established group, the members transferred their individual sources and methods to their group studies. This included various material and social and institutional sources, and the members used these, their previous knowledge and individual reasoning to come up with answers to religious questions. However, as SG evolved to become more organized, its members became more concerned with questions regarding Islamic sources' trustworthiness and status. One of the interviewees describes it as follows:

> **Indonesian interviewee X**: The *halaqa* has changed since we first started it and until now. (…) We have become more, more conscious about that when we talk about a subject, we must have sources. (…) We have become more aware about what we read, that we should read from a specific source, like *tafsir*, a specific book, or a specific, source yeah. Due to this, I have more opportunities to learn something new from the *halaqa*s. Because now I am not just listening to things other people have heard from others, but we have a specific source that we talk about. **E-A**: A more fixed structure?
> **Indonesian interviewee X**: Yes, a better structure and a better program.

Because SG is made up by laypersons only, its members are dependent upon external Islamic authorities, such as scriptures, scholars, *ulama*, and imams to legitimate the knowledge they transmit within the group as "Islamic." To decide upon what sources and methods to use, the women use the Islamic strategies that surrounds them and the Islamic traditions of knowledge as normative systems. Thus, their sources are not randomly picked but carefully chosen in relation to their "soundness" within these systems. The women agree upon the Qur'an's, *hadith's* and *tafsir's* status as the primary sources of Islam, but the secondary sources cause discussions. The women's secondary sources are made up by different material and social and institutional sources due to their various backgrounds. It is allowed and common to use and refer to secondary Islamic sources in SG meetings, but the references should be followed by a description of the sources' trustworthiness and an explanation of why they should be recognized as sound. For instance, one of the women who used to take charge for the *tafsir* sessions built her presentations on notes from her previous Qur'an teacher. Her first *tafsir* session was followed by several questions concerning her sources and previous teacher's background and trustworthiness. The presenter told the rest of the group that her teacher was a learned woman with higher education and that her commentaries on and explanations of the Qur'an were built on various *tafsir* –one among those mentioned was recognized as solid by several of the women. After hearing this, the group recognized the presenter's sources, and thus her previous teacher, as trustworthy (see section 4.5.1). Source clarification in SG makes it possible for the group members to make individual decisions as to whether or not they want to trust these sources. However, questioning each other's secondary sources, or defending one's sources' status as sound, takes time. Because of this, SG's *main tactic* is to concentrate their studies on the Islamic sources that all the surrounding Islamic strategies agree upon and trust, namely the Qur'an, *hadith* and *tafsir.*

In line with MST's strategy, SG uses *tafsir*s to deduce knowledge from the Qur'an. Not interpreting the Qur'an by yourselves but reading scholars' commentaries on and explanations of it is recognized as a proper method of gaining knowledge about Islam by both parties. Still, when the women use *tafsir*s in their group studies, they are not passively consuming and reproducing their content. Instead, they use *tafsir*s in autonomous ways, and in this way they are "putting their mark on the product" (de Certeau 1984: 165-170; see section 3.5.2). In the *tafsir* sessions, the women often translate the English version of Ibn Kathir's *tafsir* directly and literally into Norwegian. None of the women has English as their first language, so they often discuss the meaning of different English words and phrases before they agree upon a proper translation into Norwegian. In order to elaborate on the *tafsir*s' content, the women often refer

to their own experiences and previous knowledge. For instance, in a *tafsir* session about *sura* 104, "The Backbiter," *Al-Humazah,* the woman in charge of the session argued that the term "backbiting" could refer to several things: verbal backbiting, bodily backbiting (where you use your body language to express your feeling) and not caring about others. To illustrate the latter, she referred to "wealthy people whose only concern is to count their own money" as an example of how not to behave. According to her, if you do not use your money to help people in need, there is no use in being wealthy. She underscored her point by referring to a saying from one of her relatives: "It takes a strong back to make it when times are hard. But it takes a stronger back to handle success." According to the presenter, this illustrates that if you have success, wealth and fame, it is easy to forget the most important thing in life, namely faith in God. The rest of the group agreed with her and joined the conversation to expand on the message. Two women argued that, according to the Qur'an, backbiting is just as bad as *fitna*, an Arabic term they translated into "murder" but that is most often used to refer to as "dissension and internal strife" (Meijer 2009: ix)[69]. Furthermore, they compared backbiting with cannibalism and argued that it is just as bad to backbite as it is to eat the flesh from someone's bone. Some members were appalled to hear this. However, they did not question it, and the group agreed that they must teach their children at an early age not to backbite based upon the information that came up during the *tafsir* session.

Another method SG uses to ascribe the *tafsir* text with meaning is to relate it to their present lives and actualize it. For instance, the woman who built her *tafsir* sessions on notes from her previous Qur'an teacher used personal experiences to contextualize and actualize the meaning of the text. In a session where SG studied *sura* 18, The Cave, *al-Kahf,* she emphasized that it is important for Muslims to have the right faith, to fulfill the ritual obligations and to be good role models. To contextualize the message, she used an example from her personal life to illustrate that it can be hard to live as a devoted Muslim in a non-Muslim country. She told the attendees that back in her home country, she did not reflect much on her Muslim identity or her ritual practices. In Norway, on the other hand, the non-Muslim surroundings make her reflect upon it constantly. To illustrate, she referred to a recent episode. On a trip to another Norwegian city, she and her company had looked for a *halal* restaurant but could not find any. Then they found a Kebab House and asked the man who worked there if the meat he sold was *halal*. The man replied that he did not know – it might be *halal,* but it might not. The other women burst into laughter when they heard this because they recognized the situation. The presenter

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[69] According to Meijer, *fitna* is regarded as the main threat to the unity of the community of Muslims, *ummah* (Meijer 2009: ix).

continued the session by stressing that it is usually not that hard to be a Muslim. However, if one is hungry and cannot find a *halal* restaurant, it can be very difficult to turn down the food one is offered.

The examples above show that even though the women in SG use *tafsir*s as explanations for the Qur'an to avoid interpreting the Qur'an on their own, they are not just consumers and passive transmitters of the *tafsir*s' content. The women use *tafsir*s as their main sources to understand the Qur'an. However, they also use their personal experiences and lives as sources to understand and ascribe the *tafsir*s with meaning. When the women elaborate on the content of the *tafsir* by discussing it and seeing it in relation to their own experiences and embodied knowledge, they also modify it. In this way, they are not passive consumers *of tafsir*s but autonomous users who put their mark on it to make it meaningful and relevant for their own lives. Like this, they are interpreting the *tafsir*s in light of their own lives and experiences. Thus, they are not only reproducing knowledge about the various *sura*s but also producing knowledge about the *suras*' meaning and relevance in their own lives in their meetings (de Certeau 1984: 165-170; see section 3.5.2).

Even though SG concentrates its group studies on the Islamic scriptures, they use other sources as well. For instance, when the women literally translate English texts into Norwegian, mistranslations tend to occur. If the mistranslations are of such a degree that they diverge from some of the members' experiences, or "embodied Islamic knowledge," they protest. In the above-mentioned session about the legal values of actions that may be performed during prayer (see section 6.2.1), the English word "fight" was mistranslated into a word that means "kill" (drepe) in Norwegian. Thus, the information the presenter transmitted was that if someone is interrupting your prayer by obstructing your *qibla* direction, you should signal them to move. If they do not move, you can kill them. The other SG members protested loudly at this and told the presenter that she was wrong. The presenter argued that she was right, with reference to the book she was reading from: "this is what the text says." Then, she read the sentence once more and burst into laughter when she realized that the text said "fight" and not "kill." The other women accepted her misreading, modified the new information and laughed with her. Then they gently asked her to be less belligerent.

The point here is not only to show that misreadings and mistranslations occur but that the women's individual experiences and embodied Islamic knowledge are sometimes used as sources within SG. When the women use themselves or their experiences as sources to correct information transmitted within the group, they are not always obligated to legitimate their arguments with references to the Qur'an, *hadith* or *tafsir* – particularly not if most of the women

are of the same opinion. For instance, in the months that followed Ramadan in 2011, two group members tried to make up for what they identified as "lost prayers" from Ramadan. These were prayers they had been prohibited from doing due to menstruation. When the rest of SG became aware of what they were doing, they told them to stop. The other members of SG claimed that it is wrong to make up for "lost prayers" and asked what sources the two women had to this "incorrect" practice. The two women replied that their source was a woman they had met in the mosque during Ramadan, who had told them to do so. In the discussion that followed, the women who opposed this practice did not legitimate their claim with concrete references to the Qur'an and *hadith* but built their arguments on embodied Islamic knowledge about what they regarded as "the rationality and logic" of Islam. For instance, God will not make it hard for Muslims to practice Islam. It would be very difficult for women if they had to make up for prayers they miss due to their period, thus this practice must be wrong. Alternatively, after delivering a baby, a woman will bleed for approximately 40 days. There is no Islamic rule that obliges a woman to make up for the prayers she is prevented from doing in her postnatal period, according these women. Thus, it would be *irrational* if Islamic rules exist that oppose each other: one saying that women are prohibited from praying during bleeding/menstruation and one saying that women must make up for prayers lost for the same reason. Thus, the practice must be wrong, the women argued.

In situations like this, the women who have made changes in their ritual practices must legitimize their choices and "new" knowledge with correct Islamic references. The rest of the women, who continue their regular practices, do not have to. This means that if everyone, or most of the women, perform the same ritual practices in similar ways, no discussions occur, and no sources are required. Thus, knowledge about these practices are recognized as "common Islamic knowledge." However, as soon as someone changes her practices in a way that diverges from the group's practices, trustworthy Islamic sources are required. In this way, SG is an arena where the women negotiate about what is "true" Islam and not and where beliefs and practices must be followed by references to the Islamic scriptures or "common knowledge or practice" among the group members to be recognized as "true."

SG members must orient their quest for knowledge and their choice of sources toward established Islamic methodologies because these are authoritative systems that can legitimate their sources and the knowledge they transmit as "Islamic." This is what de Certeau describes as the "art of the weak" – the women do not have power, knowledge or authority to define what is Islamic or not, so they are dependent upon external Islamic authorities to draw such conclusions. Thus, SG cannot distance itself from, nor overlook, established Islamic traditions

of knowledge in its quest for knowledge since it is *exactly* these traditions that define what makes up Islamic knowledge, that is, makes this knowledge possible and determines its characteristics (de Certeau 1984: xix, 36-37; see section 3.5.2). The women's tactics in SG are to concentrate their studies on the authoritative Islamic scriptural sources that the various Islamic methodologies have in common. Even though they try to deduce "pure" Islamic knowledge from the Qur'an and *hadith* by using authoritative *tafsir*s, the women modify the texts' content just by reading them (de Certeau 1984: 169). Moreover, when they are interpreting the *tafsir* in light of their own lives and experiences, they modify them even further. Even though SG accepts additional sources to Islam other than solely the Islamic scriptures, the women's group studies are scripturally oriented. Thus, the Islamic knowledge reproduced, produced and transmitted within the group builds on fewer sources than the knowledge transmitted within the Islamic institutional fields of MST and DIC. This means that even if SG's primary sources to Islam correspond with those of MST and DIC, the women's autonomous and strict use of these sources diverges from the institutions' strategies (see sections 4.3.3, 4.4.2 and 6.1.3).

6.2.4 SG's influence on the women's knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam

As an Islamic study group established and run by women affiliated with MST, SG influences its members' knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam. By engaging in this group, the women gain social capital in the form of networks and contacts and cultural capital in the form of knowledge about Islam. Even though there are differences between the women when it comes to whether they regard the social or educational aspects of the group as more important than the other, it functions as a source and method to Islam for them (see sections 6.2.2-6.2.3)

The members transfer their individual sources and methods to Islam to SG, and because of this there is much overlap between the women's individual sources and methods and the ones they use in their group studies. Consequently, SG does not influence the women's normative field by providing them with new sources to Islam; it rather *strengthens* their use of the revealed canon and its commentary literature since these are their shared sources (Roald 2001: 88-92; see section 3.6). The lack of access to Islamic knowledge capital within MST triggers individual searches for knowledge among the women (see sections 6.1.2 and 6.1.4). By participating in SG, the women are turning their individual quests for knowledge into a collective project. When they focus their individual studies on the same Islamic topics, and ground their studies on the same sources, they gain a collective understanding and knowledge around these topics. This means that when SG tries to coordinate the members' individual quests for knowledge by

identifying a shared authoritative corpus of sources to use, they are strengthening the individual women's use of and trust in the revealed scriptural sources since these are the sources they have in common. When the women approach each other's individual secondary sources with critical questions considering their authority and soundness within Islam, the women's awareness and knowledge of the various sources' validity increase. In this way, SG influences its members' choices and uses of sources to Islam by pushing them in a scripturally oriented direction.

Even though the women's individual quests for knowledge are made into a collective project through SG, the women still choose differently from the "Islamic basket" in relation to which material and social and institutional sources they use as secondary sources and which rules and regulations to follow and how, such as in relation to handshakes (see section 6.2.2). This is because the women in SG are surrounded by various Islamic methodologies due to their different institutional and non-institutional affiliations and diverse backgrounds, skills and personal preferences, which influence what they choose to activate from the basket and how (Hjärpe 1997,1998; Roald 2001: 88-92; see sections 3.6 and 5.2.3-5.2.6).

6.3 Islam Net (IN)

IN is not a local institution, organization or group the MST women participate in regularly. This distinguishes it from their "other Islamic fields." Instead, it is an Islamic field that some of the interviewees involved in MST engage in individually, or through SG, every now and then. None of them are members of IN, but one is on their mailing list. Some SG participants have attended one or more of IN's annual Peace Conferences held in Oslo, and the whole group was involved when IN and the Muslim Student Association Trondheim arranged an evening lecture with a Salafi Sheikh in Trondheim in 2012 (see section 4.5.1).

6.3.1 IN as a source and method to Islam

IN's wide variety of educational activities, its proclamation of transmitting "authentic" Islamic knowledge and the organization's various levels of social involvement attract members of SG to this Islamic field as do the Western orientation and the non-Muslim backgrounds of many of IN's Salafi preachers (see sections 4.1.4 and 4.5.1). As Julie expresses it:

> **Julie**: I like to listen to people who have converted, or who lives in a European country because they know how to relate to the European circumstances. (…) More than I like to listen to an imam from Saudi-Arabia. **E-A**: Because he is not updated? **Julie**: Because he is not, yes. And I feel that when an imam from here talks, or a woman with a lot of

knowledge talks, they know how to talk, and I understand what they say, more than I would understand, in Arabic societies you do not have the same problems as here. (…) No, so that is why it is important for me to listen to imams who live here, from here. (…) No matter if it is America or England, or wherever. **E-A**: Except an Arab country? **Julie**: Yes. I have also listen to people from Muslim countries, but I prefer those who are not. (….) Because I feel closer to him who has become a Muslim, and who goes through the same things that I do. (…) I like to listen to converts, people who have converted (…) Because, I know that converts have searched for their faith. They have not grown into it. (…) It is something they have chosen a hundred percent. I am not saying that imams from Arabic countries are not good, no way. (…) But, I prefer people who have converted because I know that they have searched the right path, and that they are looking for what is right. **E-A**: So, it not because that it is safer, but you just like the way **Julie**: Yes **E-A**: They are talking **Julie**: Yes, precisely.

IN is not used as a source in SG's regular meetings. This means that SG does not use publications from its websites and seldom refers to it during study sessions. However, when members of SG alone or together attend some of IN's educational events, they use it as a secondary and social and institutional source to Islam.

The members of SG do not use IN as a religious authority but use the field more as a *medium* to get access to live and online lectures about Islam and how to live as Muslims in the West. The TV preachers and sheikhs behind these lectures are, however, used as religious authorities by some of the women, such as Julie (see sections 4.5.1 and 5.2.5). IN's publications and educational activities are recognized as safe sources to Islam. The main reason for this is that IN, as promoters and followers of the Salafi methodology, claims to transmit "authentic" Islamic knowledge deduced from "pure" Islamic sources – the Qur'an and *hadith* – and that its various messages are packed with references to these. Since SG identifies IN's sources and methods as proper and authentic, several of the women regard it as a safe source to Islam. However, among the interviewees from SG, only Julie uses IN as a source and authority in her individual quest for knowledge (see section 5.2.5). The rest of the interviewees are mainly involved in this Islamic field through SG's activities.

6.3.2 The women's capital within IN

Throughout this study, IN did not have a local branch in Trondheim but existed only as a local Facebook group (see section 4.1.4). Thus, none of the women within SG was in possession of,

or had access to, any titles or positions within this Islamic field nor economic capital. Still, they had some influence on the organization. A member of SG had regular contact with some of the leaders in IN and tried to help them establish a local branch in Trondheim. The same woman took initiative to the evening lecture IN arranged in Trondheim and got the whole Sister Group involved in this event early in the process (see section 4.5.1). Thus, some of the women in SG have access to contacts with power and influence within IN. This means that SG possesses some social capital in the form of networks and contacts within IN, which may generate some cultural capital in the form of influence on IN's activities.

Within IN, SG has access to Islamic knowledge capital in the form of online information and lectures about Islam and various forms of Islamic educational activities, such as conferences, seminars, lectures, etc. Even though there are geographical challenges for SG members to participate in events in Oslo, some of them do attend some of the large annual ones. Thus, the Islamic knowledge the women have access to through IN covers the whole range of what can be described as the dimensions of Islam, including practical and ritual and ethical and legal knowledge about *ibadat* and *mu'amalat*; doctrinal knowledge about the Islamic faith and the Islamic creeds, *aqida*; narrative and mythical knowledge about the life of the Prophet Muhammad, his *sunna* and other prophets; social and institutional knowledge about gender roles, the Muslim family and the global Muslim community, the *ummah*; and material knowledge about the Islamic scriptures, clothing, food, etc. in addition to experiential and emotional knowledge in the form of personal stories about how it feels to be a Norwegian Muslim, conversion stories, etc. (Smart 1998: 11-22; see section 3.2). Through its website, IN provides updated information on the Norwegian public debate about Islam and Muslims and offers its views and comments on these. Here the women can also access articles and lectures about how to inform and invite non-Muslims about and to Islam – that is, how to do *da'wa.*

Even though some individual members of SG have contacts with power and influence within IN, the group does not have a large network within the organization. However, when individual members of SG participate in IN's events, they are included in a larger network of fellow Muslims in Norway, which they appreciate. Still, they seldom maintain these networks or contact people within them between events. IN brings the members of SG who participate in its events closer, too, since they nurture and develop their friendships by planning and visiting these events together.

6.3.3 IN as the women's tactic within SG and MST

Some of the members of SG tactically engage in the field of IN to gain access to forms of Islamic knowledge capital that SG itself and MST cannot offer them (see section 4.1.4). The women in SG take responsibility for their own "Islamic education" and recognize learning possibilities when they see them. IN offers several educational events, and some of the women use these tactically as opportunities to increase their Islamic knowledge and to establish relationships with other Muslims (de Certeau 1984: xix, 36-37). For instance, individual members of SG used their contacts and networks within IN to persuade the organization to arrange an evening lecture about Islam in Trondheim. This gave the women an opportunity to learn more about Islam and to bring Muslims from every local Islamic institution to a joint event where they could unite around Islam. The event served both the women and IN. The women got access to a live Islamic lecture and the possibility to introduce SG to other Muslims. IN got the opportunity to spread their Salafi interpretation of "how to practice Islam in a western society under non-Muslim law" (Mårtensson 2014: 16; see section 4.5.1).

SG's textual orientation and its sources and methods have many resemblances to IN's Salafi methodology (see sections 4.5.1 and 6.2.3). In line with the Salafi methodology, the women use the Islamic scriptures to distinguish what they regard as "authentic" or "true" Islam from the un-Islamic. For instance, Guro, who stopped rubbing her palms against her face when she said *amin* during the ritual prayer because she discovered that the act is not mentioned in the Qur'an nor *hadith* and thus recognized as an innovation, *bida'* (see sections 4.5.1 and 5.2.1). SG's orientation around "authentic" Islam reflects how the women organize their study group as well. Many of the members refer to SG as a *halaqa,* which they regard as the oldest and most authentic Islamic pedagogical forum (see section 4.2.3). This means that even though SG has not chosen to follow one named Islamic methodology over another, its members' orientation around "authentic" Islam and their tactical maneuvers of concentrating their studies upon the revealed scriptures push them in IN's Salafi direction.

Nevertheless, why are members of SG tactically using IN, which profiles as a youth organization, as a source to Islam? The short answer is accessibility, on various levels. First, IN's arrangements and website are easily accessible and open to everyone who wants to participate in or use them. It actively promotes itself as an organization and its events and is thus publicly known. Second, as self-proclaimed transmitters of "true" Islam, IN is open about the sources and methods it uses to gain such knowledge. This means that its Islamic methodology is transparent and thus very accessible for the women (see section 4.5.1). Since SG does not have a strategy of its own, its members must turn toward established Islamic

strategies to legitimize the knowledge they transmit within the group and the sources and methods they use as Islamic. This is exactly what de Certeau describes as the "art of the weak." The women cannot overlook the Islamic traditions of knowledge in their quest for knowledge since Islamic strategies or methodologies are what legitimize the knowledge they transmit within the group as "Islamic" (de Certeau 1984: xix, 36-37). Some strategies are, however, more accessible to the women than others due to the Islamic fields that represent them and their resources, objectives and profiles. For instance, where MST cannot provide the women with educational activities, live or online conferences and seminars and articles about Islam, IN can. Moreover, where MST does not spend its resources on increasing its members' knowledge about Islamic sources and methods, IN's image-building as representatives of "true" Islam is oriented around "pure" Islamic sources and methods of using them (see section 4.5.1). Consequently, the women have more access to Islamic knowledge capital, including knowledge about Islamic sources and methods, within IN than they have within MST. Third, since IN's sources and methods correspond with the individual SG members' and MST's primary sources and methods to Islam, the women do not question them (see sections 4.4.2 and 4.5.1). The women's lack of access to knowledge about various Islamic methodologies makes it difficult for them to distinguish one from another. Both IN and MST claim to build their knowledge on "pure" Islamic sources. Thus, some of the members of SG do not distinguish between IN's and MST's interpretations and understandings of Islam but regard both as representatives of "true" Islam. In this way, IN is just one of several Islamic fields some of the interviewees from MST and SG tactically engage in to gain knowledge about Islam and not a field they have chosen explicitly due to its Salafi methodology. Alternatively, IN's scriptural orientation draws some of the women to this field as well since it corresponds with their individual and SG's sources and methods to Islam.

6.3.4 IN's influence on SG's knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam

SG's engagement in IN is not making the women use any new sources in their group studies. It rather strengthens their use of the Qur'an, *hadith* and *tafsir* as their primary sources. When individual members of SG use IN as a source or a medium to gain knowledge about Islam, they do so because IN and its imams, preachers and scholars ground the knowledge they produce in the Islamic scriptures. Thus, IN influences the women's normative field by strengthening their orientation around the scriptural sources. This means that SG's normative field – the sources and methods the members use to gain knowledge about Islam in their study sessions – overlaps with IN's sources and methods (Roald 2001: 88-92; see sections 3.6, 4.5.1 and 6.2.3).

The overlap is not only due to individual SG members' involvement in IN. It is also a result of the study group's progress. SG was tactically established as a response to the women's lack of access to Islamic knowledge capital within MST and to address the women's wish for more Islamic knowledge. At the start, the women transferred and used their individual sources and methods in their group studies. However, as SG evolved, the women started to question each other's sources and the trustworthiness of the Islamic knowledge transmitted. Due to the women's various backgrounds, they used different types of secondary material and social and institutional sources to Islam. Questions and discussions concerning the members' individual secondary sources forced the group to make decisions concerning what sources and methods to use in their group studies and what not to use. Thus, they ended up concentrating their studies on the authoritative scriptures that all of them agreed upon as sound Islamic sources (see section 6.2.3). Instead of bringing more sources to SG's normative field, the women's various backgrounds strengthened SG's use of the authoritative scriptural sources that they all share, use and trust. Thus, the women's various backgrounds and SG's "pan-Islamic" character *push* their religious studies in a scriptural direction.

SG's way of studying Islam corresponds with how young Muslims in "pan-Islamic" student and youth organizations in Oslo are gaining knowledge about Islam. When the young Muslims in Jacobsen's study gather in educational settings to study Islam, they are surrounded by overlapping and competing discourses that all claim to transmit knowledge about Islam. In these learning processes, the boundaries of "Islam" are constantly contested and debated due to the youngsters' various backgrounds and individual reflections. Thus, they must critically consider what sources to follow and respect as authoritative. To differentiate between "true" and "inauthentic" forms of Islam, the young Muslims in Jacobsen's study use the Qur'an and *hadith* as authoritative scriptures, like SG. To legitimize and authorize their views, beliefs and practices, the young Muslims in Jacobsen's study turn toward established Islamic authorities, as SG does (Jacobsen 2006: 212-232, 268-269; see section 2.1.6). Because of their "pan-Islamic" character, the youth organizations in Jacobsen's study and SG turn to authoritative sources that their members and surroundings have in common, namely the Qur'an and *hadith*. This means that even though SG and IN are using the same sources and methods, IN's influence on SG's normative field should not be exaggerated because its scriptural orientation can also be a result of its "pan-Islamic" character. However, SG and its members' individual involvement in IN strengthen the women's use of the scriptural sources since IN promotes these as the "pure sources of Islam" and builds its information, articles and lectures upon these.

6.4 Indonesian Muslim Society in Trondheim (KMIT)

The five Indonesian interviewees from MST are all members of KMIT (see sections 4.1.4 and 4.5.2). Every second week KMIT arranges Islamic educational activities. In the weeks between, its members gather around social activities such as barbeques and beach and park trips, where they speak Indonesian, have fun and hang out with their friends. Four of the interviewees are regular participants of KMIT's meetings, while the fifth woman's attendance is more sporadic due to her busy schedule.

6.4.1 KMIT as a source and method to Islam

The Indonesian interviewees from MST use KMIT as a social and institutional source. In KMIT they have the possibility to study Islam with other Muslims from Indonesia in a language they are fluent in. Like SG, KMIT organizes as a study group where all members must contribute to the group's educational activities. In contrast to SG, KMIT is not only made up by lay persons, but among its participants we also find an imam and his wife, who are used as religious authorities by members of the group (see sections 4.1.4, 4.5.2 and 5.2.5).

The interviewees use the KMIT group, its imam and sometimes his wife as trustworthy sources and authorities to Islam. As an established study group, KMIT has a defined corpus of sources and methods to Islam. The women know that the other members of KMIT use only authoritative material and social and institutional sources, and because of this they trust the information transmitted and exchanged within the group (see section 4.5.2). If the women want to discuss a topic they believe is relevant to the members in KMIT, they turn to the group with questions about it. If they have more specific or personal questions, they turn to the imam for individual guidance. Some of the women, such as Dorthe and Frida, use the imam's wife as a religious authority in questions concerning women and child upbringing, too (see section 5.2.5).

Many of KMIT's discussions are oriented around how to live proper Muslim lives in Trondheim. For this reason, the group also functions as a practical and ritual source for the interviewees. However, they gain most of their knowledge about Islamic rituals and practices from their group studies and discussions and not by observing the other members' performances.

6.4.2 The women's capital within KMIT

The interviewees generate various forms of cultural and social capital from their engagement in KMIT. Since it is an organization driven by volunteers, all members are encouraged to participate in its activities in one way or another. Like within SG, KMIT's members participate

in the field on equal premises more or less. Even though there is an imam among KMIT's members, who functions as such within the organization and within the Islamic fields of MST and DIC, he is not in a paid position but participates voluntarily in the activities like the rest of the members (see sections 4.1.1 and 4.5.2). Because of this, there is no active cultural capital in the form of positions and titles within KMIT that the women can generate from the organization.

All kinds of involvement in and commitment to KMIT's activities are highly valued by the organization since its existence depends on these. For instance, the organization welcomes presentations about Islam but also presentations about secular topics that interest the members and discussions about their diasporic situation in Trondheim (see section 3.8.3). The members' solidarity and respect for each other, and the acknowledged engagement, motivate the interviewees to participate in and contribute to KMIT's activities. This has also inspired some of the women to develop the web resource "Trace Before You Taste," which aims at providing Muslims in Norway with required information about food products sold in Norway (see section 4.5.2).

KMIT can offer the women something MST cannot, namely Islamic educational activities from which they can generate Islamic knowledge capital. The educational activities KMIT offers are regular study groups with a set agenda that includes systematic studies of the Qur'an and *hadith,* presentations and discussions about Islamic topics, online study circles, *halaqa*s, and online Qur'an recitation groups. The women's engagement in these activities give them access to material, doctrinal and narrative knowledge about the Qur'an and the *hadith* and practical knowledge about the rules for Qur'an recitation. Moreover, through the various presentations held by KMIT members and the discussions that follows these, the women have access to knowledge about "all dimensions of Islam" (Smart 1998:11-22; see section 3.2). However, since many of the presentation and discussion topics relate to how to practice Islam in proper ways in Trondheim, much of this knowledge can be categorized as ethical and legal and/or practical and ritual. From the presentations and discussions, the women can generate knowledge about the Islamic jurisprudence, *fiqh*, in general and Sunni Islamic law schools' and different Islamic scholars' rulings and legal opinions in particular because KMIT uses these as secondary authoritative sources to Islam (see section 4.5.2).

Within KMIT, the interviewees have immediate access to various forms of religious authorities, namely KMIT's imam and the imam's wife (see section 5.2.5). The interviewees use KMIT's imam as a local religious authority. Some use his wife as a source to knowledge about Islam as well and the imam couple as role models, and thus practical and ritual sources, of how to raise Muslim children in non-Muslim surroundings. Through KMIT, the women have

access to imams in the local Islamic fields of MST and DIC, too, since KMIT's imam cooperates with these. KMIT has especially close ties to DIC's imams since one of them has taught the group about *hadith* for several years. At the beginning, both women and men had access to the *hadith* lectures that took place within some of the members' homes. Later, the lectures moved to DIC's mosque and were made accessible only to all men who wanted to attend. Since then, the women have had access to the knowledge transmitted within these *hadith* lectures only indirectly through their husbands or other men in the group (see section 5.2.5). Whether direct or indirect access, several of the interviewees regard these lectures as their main source to *hadith* and have learned a lot about *hadith* from them, as Frida explains:

> **Frida**: Earlier we used to have meetings in our Indonesian community, in one of our friends' home, and invited sheikh [name of imam in DIC – E-A]. So, we used to have a *hadith* study group there. In the beginning, it was both men and women. However, when DIC's mosque was established, the imam stopped lecturing the Indonesian community solely because the men from our community moved the lectures to the mosque, where they started to hold their *hadith* studies. And it is difficult for us women to participate there since it is a limited area for women, and because, you know, it is not so common, or good, that women and men, in the same room. Like in our community, they are almost like family. **E-A**: So there were everyone gathered, and you learned together. But how did he teach you? Was it lectures or? **Frida**: Yes, lectures. Systematic lectures. He adopted the form from schools in [city in a Muslim country – E-A], where he studied it, and repeats it with us, but in his own way. However, the syllabus is more or less the same that he used. **E-A**: Did he give you assignments, or did you just show up? **Frida**: Yes, actually, he gave us something, which we should memorize, but we did not (laughs). So yes. **E-A**: But did he teach you about the content in *hadith*, did he tell you *hadith*s, or did he teach you to evaluate *hadith*s, whether they are strong or weak or? **Frida**: In the beginning, it was just telling us about *hadith*, and definitions of *hadith*, and how to distinguish one narrator and others. Then, when we started to understand these concepts, he moved on to more advanced levels. For instance, how to tell each narrator apart. At this level, we had to memorize which person has sometimes told lies for instance. This we had to remember. We had to remember their names and their biographies. (…). Suddenly we found a *hadith*, and it was written by a "whom," and by memorizing their biographies we could remember whether it was a strong or weak *hadith* just by looking at their names. **E-A**: Do you have other sources to *hadith*? Did

you have much knowledge about *hadith* before you moved to Trondheim? **Frida**: No. To be honest, no. Mainly learned about it here. And after they decided to move the study group to the mosque, my husband has participated in the classes and retells it to me when he gets home.

KMIT not only gives the women access to educational activities but also Islamic educational activities in one of their first languages. Most of KMIT's meetings are held in Indonesian, or Bahasa, with the exception of the *hadith* lectures that are held in English. This makes it easier for the women to participate and their studies more effective. This distinguishes KMIT's group studies from SG's studies. SG must study Islam in languages that all its members can understand, Norwegian and English, but that only a few have as their first languages. This makes their studies less effective since they spend a lot of time on translations (see section 6.2.3). It also causes insecurity among the Indonesian interviewees who participate in SG. For instance, they worry about whether they understand the information transmitted within SG correctly or not. Sometimes they also hesitate to share their embodied Islamic knowledge because they are afraid that their Norwegian or English is not accurate enough. In KMIT, they do not have to worry about language because everyone is fluent in Indonesian, and most of the participants use Indonesian material sources in their studies. In this way, KMIT has a form of shared corpus since they mainly use Indonesian translations of the Qur'an, *hadith* and *tafsir*s and articles and websites about Islam written or translated by Indonesian Islamic scholars. This means that women have access to a more established corpus of Islamic sources within KMIT than they have within SG and MST (see sections 5.2.3-5.2.5, 6.1.2 and 6.2.2).

Indonesian interviewee Y, who is involved in KMIT *and* SG, regards her engagement in KMIT as an opportunity to generate religious rewards in addition to Islamic knowledge. She believes that God rewards those who actively seek knowledge about Islam and explains her involvement in KMIT and SG as due to this. Because KMIT and SG can offer her both social and cultural capital, these fields are attractive to her:

Indonesian interviewee Y: When I choose an activity, which is the most benefit for me? **E-A**: Okay, in which way? **Y**: In Islam, we are taught that we have to balance or life here, and in the life after dead, in the hereafter. So, what I choose, is, to balance this. These two things. **E-A**: Okay. **Y**: Now, in Trondheim, I join the activities for my hereafter to get the "big points," like joining the *halaqa*s on Sundays. **E-A**: And this is the Sister Group? **Y**: Yeah, the Sister Group, recently. And in our community,

Indonesian community, we also have this kind of activity. Like every, each two weeks, we have a gathering, mixed men and women, I mean as a family, to learn about Islam. And one brother serves, serves his knowledge to us. And that is every two weeks. (…) This is activity for my religious side. For getting bigger points, to enter the paradise, for example. And every two weeks also, another two weeks, we also have gatherings to visit the good places in Trondheim, like beaches and parks and, with our Indonesian community. To explore the nature, to see what our God creates, the beauty, and we can have a chat, have fun, play games and maybe a barbeque, or something like that. So, it is balancing my social activity with my religious activity. Yeah.

The women are also in possession of and have access to much social capital through KMIT. The members of the organization have strong and close social ties. The interviewees refer to their co-members as "Indonesian sisters and brothers" and regard them as their "family" in Trondheim. They gather weekly through KMIT's meetings but also between these events. Several of the interviewees are in daily contact with other members of the group through visits, phone calls and Skype or social networks, such as Facebook, in addition to online study groups, *halaqa*s, which most of them participate in every now and then if not regularly. The interviewees' KMIT network makes up their main social network in Trondheim, from which they can access all kinds of assistance and help. For instance, the KMIT members help each other with their academic studies and can provide discussion partners for religious questions. In addition, the KMIT network can provide the women with help as to practicalities, such as finding a new apartment, "home transport" from IKEA and babysitting, and it can offer food and care if they are sick. Thus, the social capital the women can generate from KMIT gives them access to unlimited forms of help and resources in their personal lives. This includes economic capital as well. Even though none of the members in KMIT have access to any paid positions and thus direct access to economic capital within this volunteer-driven field, they have the possibility to generate such capital indirectly. For instance, the members transmit job opportunities to each other and encourage each other to seek various positions. They exchange favors, and their network can provide them with personal loans, if necessary.

6.4.3 KMIT as the women's tactic within MST

The large amount of social and cultural capital KMIT's members can generate from the organization attracts the interviewees to this Islamic field. It also distinguishes it from their other Islamic fields in Trondheim, namely MST, SG and DIC. Since all the Indonesian

interviewees are members of MST, it is possible to view their engagement in KMIT as tactical operations they undertake to gain access to the Islamic knowledge capital that MST cannot offer them. However, it is also possible to regard the KMIT members' engagement in MST as a tactic they use to generate social capital in the form of contacts and networks in Trondheim beyond their KMIT network. By engaging in a local Islamic institution such as MST, the women from KMIT establish contacts with more Muslim women and enlarge their personal network in Trondheim, like Hanne emphasized earlier in the chapter when she explained what the MST network meant to her (see section 6.1.2).

The sources and methods the women use in their individual quests for Islamic knowledge and KMIT's sources and methods correspond. Both parties define the Qur'an and *hadith* as Islam's primary sources and use authoritative *tafsir*s, local imams, Indonesian and global Islamic scholars, *ulama*, and the Sunni Islamic law schools as sources and authorities to Islam (see sections 4.5.2 and 5.2.3-5.3). The knowledge about Islam that is (re)produced and transmitted within KMIT builds on the same sources and methods as the Islamic knowledge transmitted within MST and DIC (see section 4.5.2). This means that when the women engage in KMIT, they are not introduced to new or other sources and methods to Islam than those their local Islamic institutional field of MST uses (see sections 4.3.3, 4.4.2 and 4.5.2). However, what distinguishes KMIT from MST is that KMIT is more explicit and precise about its sources and methods and that it has a more defined corpus of Islamic source materials. Some of the reasons for this is that KMIT as a study group must agree upon their sources and consequently the group discusses and communicates its sources during its educational activities. MST's methodology, on the other hand, is not a reflection of its members' individual sources and methods to Islam but is influenced by previous and current members in central positions. Even though the institution has a clear methodology, MST's members have little access to it or knowledge about it due to MST's lack of educational activities (see sections 4.2.3, 4.4.2 and 4.5.2).

Individually, the interviewees from KMIT have neither the knowledge, the power nor the authority to define practices and rules of conduct as "Islamic" or not (de Certeau 1984: xix, 36-37). Nevertheless, as a study group, with defined sources and methods and direct access to an imam who cooperates with other local imams, KMIT does have. This does not mean that KMIT forces its members to think or act in specific ways but that the women believe that the group, through its sources and methods, can deduce trustworthy answers and solutions to religious questions. As a study group, KMIT studies all aspects of Islam, including its own sources and what methods to use to deduce knowledge from these sources. Through group

studies, KMIT's members have developed a common understanding and awareness of Islamic sources and methods as to what to use, how and why. This means that the Islamic knowledge transmitted within the group is followed by references to authoritative Islamic material or social or institutional sources. For this reason, the women trust the information about Islam that they can gain from the group and KMIT as a source. That KMIT's sources and methods correspond with other Islamic methodologies the women are familiar with, or surrounded by locally, such as those of MST and DIC, confirms the women's trust in them. For this reason, the women use KMIT as a supervisor, or discussion partner, when it comes to their individual reading or understanding of Islamic scriptures and regulations. The women believe that KMIT, as a group, possesses more knowledge about Islam than they do as individuals. Thus, they have more trust in the Islamic knowledge the group (re)produces in its collective studies than in the knowledge they individually can deduce from the various Islamic source materials. In this way, they ascribe more knowledge and authority to the collective group of KMIT than to themselves.

The women are tactically using KMIT both as a source *and* as a method to gain knowledge about Islam that they cannot access from their local Islamic institution MST; alternatively, they are tactically using MST to establish a network and contacts outside of KMIT – or both. KMIT makes it possible for the women to structure and merge their individual quests for Islamic knowledge into collective Islamic studies in their first language. This makes their studies more effective and gives them access to a larger amount of source materials and the other members' various approaches and viewpoints on the topics of discussion.

6.4.4 KMIT's influence on the women's knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam
The women's knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam are highly influenced by KMIT. By engaging in KMIT's educational activities, the women have increased their knowledge about Islam and its sources. The members in KMIT have developed a collective knowledge and understanding of Islamic source materials and their status within the Islamic tradition of knowledge. This knowledge is valuable for the women, who orient their group – and individual studies of Islamic rituals and rules of conduct – in relation to it. By providing the women with essential knowledge about Islamic sources and methods, in addition to knowledge about various other Islamic topics, KMIT influences the individual women's "normative field." Thus, the Islamic sources and methods the women use in their individual quests for knowledge and KMIT's sources and methods correspond (Roald 2001: 88-92; see sections 3.6, 4.5.2 and 5.2.3-5.2.6).

Still, even though the women identify more or less the same Islamic sources as authoritative, there are individual differences in relation to what sources and authorities they choose to follow. Because of this, there are differences between how the members in KMIT practice various Islamic regulations, that is, what they choose to activate from the Islamic basket and why (Hjärpe 1997, 1988; see section 2.2.5). The members of KMIT can be divided into three different units according to which religious authorities they follow. The first "unit" follows Indonesian *ulama* in religious questions, the second follows European *ulama* and the third follow legal opinions from both, depending upon the situation. For this reason, the members of KMIT follow different interpretations of Islamic food prescriptions and break the fast at different times, for example. For instance, those who follow Indonesian *ulama*'s legal opinion concerning food prescriptions restrain from eating food that contains E-additives since it is categorized as a disapproved action, while those who follow the European Council of Fatwa and Research in this matter eat such food since it is categorized as a lawful action (see section 5.2.5). Moreover, some fast according to Mecca's schedule, while other fast according to the local schedule. For this reason, KMIT arranged "fast break" meals, *iftar*, at two different times.

Individual preferences influence what Islamic practices the interviewees choose to activate from the "Islamic basket" as well. In line with their local Islamic institution of MST, the interviewees from KMIT are of the opinion that there are many ways to practice Islam and thus many ways to live in accordance with God's will, *sharia* (see section 4.4.2). This is what Emma refers to as "the beauty of Islam" (see section 4.5.2). Since KMIT uses all the Sunni Islamic law schools' jurisprudence, *fiqh*, as sources to Islam in their group studies, the women are introduced to various Islamic methodologies and various ways to live in accordance with *sharia*. Thus, their main task as individuals is to select the way, or interpretation, that is most suitable for them. In relation to this, the interviewees make individual decisions concerning which law school's jurisprudence and solutions to follow, or not, based upon their preferences and feelings – for instance, Frida, who lets her heart or the solution's simplicity guide her choices concerning what law school to follow in specific situations (see section 5.2.6).

Not all theoretical knowledge about ethical, legal, ritual and practical matters the women gain from KMIT influences how they live as Muslims. There are various reasons for this, some more obvious than other. For instance, much of the ritual and practical knowledge the women gain is contextual and situational, and the women may never find themselves in contexts or situations where it is relevant to put it into practice. Moreover, the women have individual opinions and make individual judgments of different actions' ranks that influence what they activate from the "Islamic basket." Hanne, for instance, argues that she personally thinks it is

more important to respect her parents' tradition and wishes when it comes to funeral and post-burial rituals than to put her newly acquired knowledge about Islamic post-burial rituals into practice (see section 5.3.1). This means that, despite KMIT's influence on the women's normative field and embodied Islamic knowledge, the women still make individual choices concerning what practices to activate from the "Islamic basket" and not due to individual preferences, feelings, opinions and evaluations, which cause them practice Islam in different ways.

KMIT provides the Indonesian women systematic studies of Islam. This motivates the interviewees to increase their religious knowledge, and it provides them with "tools" in the form of sources and methods to do so. Like this, KMIT equips the women to practice a well-informed "restricted bricolage" and to make well-considered individual choices concerning how to live as a Muslim (Jacobsen 2006: 212-229; Cesari 2004: 44-53; see sections 2.1.4 and 2.1.6). Through KMIT's educational activities, the women gain knowledge about authoritative Islamic sources and methods – knowledge they use to make individual choices concerning how to practice Islam in Trondheim. This means that KMIT, like MST, triggers what can be labeled individualization processes in the women's knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam, but for other reasons. The sources and methods KMIT use to gain knowledge about Islam correspond more or less with MST's strategy. However, it is not MST's methodology that triggers individualization processes among its female members but the women's *lack of access* to Islamic knowledge capital that forces them to make individual choices concerning Islamic sources and practices (see section 6.1.4). As a study group, KMIT unites its members' individual quests for knowledge and gives them access to Islamic knowledge capital. Within KMIT, the women can study Islam systematically and with direct access to a religious authority, KMIT's imam, and indirect access to other local Islamic authorities. This means that KMIT organizes and structures the women's search for Islamic knowledge. Since KMIT uses the same sources and methods as MST does *and* provides its members with knowledge about Islamic methodologies, it makes it easy for the interviewees to practice a "restricted bricolage" when it comes to choosing material and social and institutional sources. By offering the women knowledge about authoritative Islamic sources, KMIT makes conditions favorable for the women to relate to Islam and Islamic sources in ways that can be categorized as individualized, in line with Jacobsen and Cesari use of the term. In this way, KMIT helps and encourages the Indonesian interviewees to act as autonomous individuals within the Islamic traditions of knowledge (Jacobsen 2006: 212-229; Cesari 2004: 44-53; see sections 2.1.4 and 2.1.6).

6.5 Dar El Eman Islamic Center (DIC)

In Norway, it is not allowed to be a registered member in more than one faith or life-stance community because the communities receive public funding on the basis of membership records (see section 4.1.4, note 28). This is the main reason why none of the women in this study are members of DIC. Still, six of the interviewees from MST are involved in DIC in one way or another. These are Camilla and the Indonesian interviewees Dorthe, Emma, Frida, Hanne and Ida. Most of them became members of MST before DIC was established, and they do not have any reason to change their current membership. The interviewees do not identify any differences between the two local Islamic institutions except for their members. Due to the lack of recognized theological or methodological differences, the women claim their right to use both institutions as places for worship, learning and meeting. They support their claim by referring to the fact that MST and DIC are both representing Islam and Muslims and that it is unproblematic and common for Muslims to be involved in more than one mosque.

6.5.1 DIC as a source and method to Islam

The women use Dar El Eman as a social and institutional source to Islam both directly and indirectly. Camilla is the most frequent user of DIC's mosque. After the internal conflict at MST, she started to use the mosque as place for worship because of personal and practical reasons. Camilla finds DIC's mosque more tranquil than that of MST because it is less crowded. It is also more convenient for her to use this mosque as a prayer site because it is closer to other places she frequents. Camilla uses DIC's mosque as a place for learning as well and attends the Friday prayer and sermon whenever she can. She also uses one of DIC's imams as a local religious authority (see section 5.2.5).

The Indonesian interviewees use DIC's mosque as a meeting place and a place for learning through KMIT's activities in the same ways as they use MST's mosque. None of the imams or leaders in either mosque are, however, involved in these activities, with the exception of KMIT's own imam, who functions as an imam in both. Since KMIT uses the main imam in DIC as a local religious authority, the interviewees use him, too, but mostly indirectly through the association or through their husbands (see sections 4.5.2 and 5.2.5). The Indonesian women have most of their relational bonds to DIC through KMIT. Outside KMIT's meetings, they hardly use it as a place of worship or for learning or gathering but use MST as their "congregational mosque," *masjid jami'*.

6.5.2 The women's capital within DIC

Since none of the interviewees from MST who engage in DIC are members of the institution, their access to cultural capital in the form of positions or titles within the institution is limited, nor can they access any economic capital from the institution (Bourdieu 2006: 5-17; see section 3.4.2). The women regard DIC's mosque as an additional place for worship and meeting. Even though the women have access to DIC's facilities, only a few use them. Because of this, the subsequent presentation will focus on what kind of capital the interviewees *generate* from DIC instead of what they have access to in theory.

The only educational activity DIC offered its adult members during my time in the field were systematic lessons in *hadith*. None of the women participate in these lessons because they are gender segregated and take place within DIC's main prayer hall, which is defined as the men's section. One can argue that since the interviewees have the opportunity to listen to or watch these lectures as they are streamed into the women's section of the mosque, they have access to the knowledge transmitted within them (see section 4.2.3). However, only a few of the interviewees are familiar with this "opportunity." Instead, they know and identify the lectures as a "*hadith* lessons for men." Because of this, it is more accurate to say that the interviewees do not have direct access to them. However, the Indonesian interviewees have *indirect access* to the content of the lectures through their engagement in KMIT. Many of KMIT's men, including the husbands of some of the interviewees, are regular participants in the lectures and share their contents with the women in the association. Dorthe's and Frida's husbands, for instance, usually summarize the lectures for them, while the women who are not married, or who do not have their husband in Trondheim, can generate knowledge about *hadith* from other members in the group through KMIT's activities. In this way, the women have indirect access to knowledge about *hadith* through KMIT. This indirect access should not, however, be under-communicated or neglected because several of the Indonesian women claim to have increased their *hadith* knowledge after they moved to Trondheim for this reason (see section 6.4.2).

The women's main access to Islamic knowledge capital within DIC is therefore to attend the Friday sermon or to seek individual guidance from the imams. The Friday sermons at DIC follow the Shafii school's template of how to conduct a sermon (see section 4.3.3). They also include more content than the sermons at MST. The reason for this is that MST's sermons are translated into different languages due to its members various language backgrounds. Thus, to avoid overly lengthy sermons, MST must limit their content. DIC's imams, on the other hand, seldom spend "sermon time" translating their speeches and usually hold them in Arabic. Among

the interviewees, only Camilla attends the Friday sermons at DIC. She prefers the sermons at DIC to those at MST because of their content and length. Camilla describes the sermons at DIC as interesting and enjoyable because the imams spend time on discussing new topics every week. Thus, she has the possibility to update her knowledge about a topic or to learn something new. The possibility to learn something new distinguishes the sermons at DIC from those at MST, according to Camilla, who experiences the sermons at MST as more oriented around the general principles of Islam. Thus, they confirm her embodied knowledge more than they provide her with new knowledge. For this reason, Camilla believes that she generates more varied knowledge about Islam from DIC's sermons than she does from those at MST.

Among the interviewees from MST who use DIC as a direct or indirect source to knowledge about Islam, it is mainly Camilla who generates social capital from it. Despite her membership at MST, she prefers to use DIC's mosque as a place for worship and learning. By being a regular user of the mosque, she has established relational bonds with members of DIC, and because of this, she is in possession of a social network and contacts within the institution. Even though DIC's mosque functions as a regular place for learning and meeting for the Indonesian interviewees as well, they do not have much contact with DIC's members. Their main use of the mosque is through KMIT's meetings and activities, and because of that, they are mainly interacting with other KMIT members when they use it.

6.5.3 DIC as the women's tactic within MST

Camilla and the Indonesian interviewees who use DIC as a social and institutional source have current or previous ties to the Shafii school of law. Camilla identifies as a follower of this law school, and Frida follows it when she is in Indonesia even though she uses all the Sunni law schools as authoritative sources in Trondheim. As Indonesians, the other interviewees have backgrounds from a Muslim country where the Shafii school of law dominates (see sections 5.2.5-5.2.6 and 5.3.1). None of the women refers to DIC's methodology or describes it as a Shafii mosque in their explanations of why they engage in this field. Camilla refers to personal and practical reasons, while the Indonesian women mainly use it through KMIT (see sections 5.2.5 and 6.5.1). Still, the women's familiarity with this Sunni Islamic law school and its methodology and jurisprudence should not be overlooked as an explanatory factor when it comes to why these women involve themselves in this particular local Islamic field since DIC's Shafii orientation, and its use of Shafii jurisprudence as a regular norm in religious practices, may explain why some of the women feel familiar with and engage in this field (see section 4.3.3). For instance, Camilla's familiarity with the form of DIC's sermons, which follow a

Shafii template, may be an additional explanation as to why she prefers these over MST's sermons in addition to their contents and length and her possibility to learn something new from them and her personal preference for one of DIC's imams (see sections 5.2.5 and 6.5.2). So, even though the women's emic descriptions of why they engage in the Islamic field of DIC lack references to their Shafii backgrounds, there is a connection between their Shafii backgrounds and their involvement in this local Islamic field from an etic perspective.

Even though DIC follows the Shafii law school's jurisprudence as a norm when it comes to everyday religious practices, it does not follow it in all situations. DIC has a pragmatic and practical approach to the Sunni Islamic law schools and uses knowledge and regulations from all of them if the situation requires it (see section 4.3.3). DIC's pragmatic and practical approach to the Sunni Islamic schools of law corresponds with how the Indonesian women operate within KMIT. Here, they gather knowledge from all the law schools if needed and use various law schools' knowledge, regulations and solutions as equal sources to Islam (see section 4.5.2). Similarities in methodologies can explain why KMIT has close ties to DIC and why several of the Indonesian interviewees identify one of the imams at DIC as their main religious authority in Trondheim. The fact that this imam has more traditional imam education, from a Shafii perspective, than the imams at MST can also be an explanatory factor. However, the methodological differences between DIC and MST should not be overestimated as explanatory factors as to why some of the women at MST engage with DIC, either. To questions concerning what the women regard as differences between these two mosques' sources and methods , the women answer "none." This means that the women do not distinguish between these two mosques when it comes to what form of Islam they represent or their methodology but view them as equal representatives of Islam, which they can use as institutional sources to Islam.

For this reason, the MST women's engagement in the local Islamic field of DIC, should be seen as a tactical maneuver they make to increase their knowledge about Islam. Since they cannot generate the Islamic knowledge they seek from MST, they approach other Islamic fields, such as DIC, to gain it. DIC provides the women with some of the things they want – Camilla gets access to the types of sermons she wants and an additional place of worship, while the Indonesian women have access to an additional meeting place for KMIT's meetings, more local religious authorities and indirect access to *hadith* knowledge.

6.5.4 DIC's influence on the women's knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam
The interviewees' engagement with DIC does not lead them to use new or additional sources and methods to gain knowledge about Islam. Still, DIC has some influences on their Islamic

knowledge. Camilla is actively using DIC's sermons as sources to Islam. DIC also influences the Indonesian women's knowledge about Islamic source materials and in particular *hadith*. Even though they do not have direct access to DIC's *hadith* lectures themselves, they generate knowledge from it indirectly through their husbands or KMIT. This knowledge has strengthened their use of *hadith* as one of Islam's primary sources and equipped them with knowledge that makes it easier for them to distinguish between the various *hadith*s' soundness. In this way, DIC influences their "normative fields" and in particular how they view and use *hadith* as a source in their individual quests for knowledge (Roald 2001: 88-92; see section 3.6). This becomes evident when several of the Indonesian women, among them Frida, claim to have gained most of their advanced knowledge about *hadith* in Trondheim (see section 6.4.1).

Even though Camilla, Dorthe, Emma, Frida, Hanne and Ida use one of the imams in DIC as a religious authority, it is difficult to tell how the institution influences their practices. None of the women follow him as their only religious authority but rather use him among several others local, external and global authorities (see section 5.2.5). My analyses do not show that DIC has a direct influence on how the women practice Islam in Trondheim but that it has an influence on *where* some of the women choose to perform their prayers, hold their meetings or celebrate religious holidays. Since DIC, like MST, has located its mosque in the center of Trondheim, it provides the women with an additional place for worship, learning and meeting they can choose to use if they want.

6.6 Trondheim Mevlana Cultural Organization (Mevlana)

The three interviewees from Mevlana, Kathrine, Lene and Mai, are all members of the institution and explain their membership in Mevlana as being due to social and practical reasons. All of them emphasize the social aspects of their membership and the importance of having a place and an institution to which they belong. To my question concerning whether she thinks it is important to be a member of a mosque, Mai answers: "It is very good. (…) You know that you have someone, a place to go to, and that you are a part of something." Lene appreciates the social aspects of her membership as well. Being part of a mosque network makes her feel safe. If anything happens to her, she is sure that Mevlana will take care of her. In addition, Lene explains her membership in Mevlana with references to Mevlana's official languages, Kurdish and Turkish. Since Mevlana uses her first languages as its official language, it is easier for her to understand and follow the activities at this mosque than at other mosques in Trondheim.

6.6.1 Mevlana as a source and method to Islam

Mevlana functions as a social and institutional source and method for the interviewees. They use its mosque as a gathering place, a place for learning and a place for worship, but with varied frequency. During Islamic holidays, they gather in the mosque, and all of them have attended Islamic educational activities arranged by the institution. Lene is a regular participant in Mevlana's Friday activities for women, where she engages in various religious rituals and Islamic educational activities (see section 4.3.2). Kathrine and Mai have previously participated in some of Mevlana's series of lectures about the Qur'an and Islam for girls and young women (see section 4.2.3). The women regard their participation in Mevlana's Islamic educational activities as one of their main methods for gaining knowledge about Islam in Trondheim. They view the activities and the Islamic knowledge transmitted within them as trustworthy since they trust the woman imam and the women teachers who are in charge of them.

In addition to using the woman imam as a source, Lene and Mai use her as an authority on religious questions. For instance, the imam gives Lene lessons in Arabic, teaches her about Islam in general and advises her in regard to her life situation as a single mother in Trondheim. Lene is in a study and job situation where it is inconvenient for her to wear skirts. For this reason, she usually wears trousers. Even though the woman imam recommends that women should wear skirts instead of trousers, she supports Lene's choice of wearing trousers with reference to *how* she wears them and her life situation:

> **Lene**: (…) I do not wear skirts, even though I know that I should. **E-A**: You should?
> **Lene**: Well, I have asked our imam, and she says that since my pants are not that tight, there are (…) when you use long tops that do not expose your figure, it is okay she says. Because, you do not have a husband, you do not have a family to watch over you, or take care of you (…) so because of that it is okay, she says.

Lene follows the woman imam's advice and guidance on religious questions. This is one of her methods of gaining knowledge about proper Islamic conduct in Trondheim. She trusts Mevlana's imams and regards them as the main Islamic authorities in Trondheim. The reason for this is that they function as Diyanet's and thus the Hanafi school of law's representatives in Trondheim, which is the Sunni Islamic law school Lene identifies with (see sections 4.1.4, 4.3.2 and 5.2.5). As mentioned above, Katrine does not approach the woman imam but instead uses her former Islamic teacher in Mevlana for her religious questions and worries. Even though her

teacher has moved from Trondheim, Katrine still uses her as a source and authority to Islam (see section 5.2.5).

A great deal of the Islamic knowledge transmitted within the women's educational activities is practical and ritual oriented. The woman imam observes and directs the women's ritual performances and talks about details concerning religious practices (see section 4.3.2). Lene made some changes in her performance of the ritual prayer after the woman imam lectured and demonstrated how to pray the Hanafi way. From the imam, Lene learned how to pronounce some of the Arabic words correctly and to spend more time on each prayer position, *raka*, that is, to slow down the pace of her prayer. Co-members in the mosque are used as practical and ritual sources for the interviewees as well. Katrine gains knowledge about "what Islam is all about" by observing the other members' practices, ritual performances and behaviors, while Lene considers some of the other women's clothing and appearance as sources in regard to how to dress and behave as a proper Muslim woman.

6.6.2 The women's capital within Mevlana

In Mevlana, women members both have access to and are in *possession* of cultural capital in the form of central positions and titles (Bourdieu 2006: 5-17). Mevlana organizes around a board mainly made up by volunteers. From 2010 to 2013, the board consisted of nine members wherein a *woman* held one of the positions. The woman represented Mevlana's female members in the mosque board's monthly meetings. She was in charge of the coordination of the women's religious and social activities. She did not arrange all the activities herself but cooperated with other women who volunteered at the mosque.

Mevlana benefits from its institutional ties to the Turkish Diyanet. The Diyanet educates, approves and finances the institution's imams, who are usually employed for a three-year period. From 2010 to 2013, the wife of Mevlana's imam served as a prayer leader and teacher for the women and girls in the mosque, who referred to her as their imam (see sections 4.1.4 and 4.3.2). She volunteered to perform the tasks and was not paid by the Diyanet like her husband. The woman imam and the woman board member shared responsibility for the girls' and women's religious activities. Here, the women imam took responsibility for the Islamic educational part of these activities, while the board member was in charge of the ritual and social sessions of these activities in addition to coordinating them. Thus, Mevlana has a woman designated to function as a leader for Mevlana's female members, *and* a woman designated to function as a religious authority for the same members, respectively the woman board member and the woman imam. This distinguishes Mevlana from the other local Islamic institutional

fields, where no women hold such positions[70]. In addition to the mentioned positions, several of Mevlana's members, both men and women, contribute as volunteers so that the mosque can offer a variety of social and religious activities.

Mevlana benefits from its salaried imams. Due to them, Mevlana is the only Islamic institution in Trondheim that can provide various forms of Islamic educational activities to *all* its members in one of their first languages, namely Turkish. Girls and women are offered age- and level-differentiated classes in Qur'an recitation and Islam, including details of *'ibadat* and *mu'amalat* (see section 4.2.3). In addition to lectures about Islam, they also have access to collective rituals, such as Qur'an recitation and various forms of remembrance rituals, *dikhr*, in the Friday activities for women (see section 4.3.2). The woman imam offers the women knowledge about Islam through her lectures but also through guidance and advice on religious and personal questions. Access to a female imam is highly appreciated by the interviewees, who approach her with all kinds of questions related to "women's issues," such as clothing, child rearing, how to live as a young Muslim woman in Trondheim, how to live as a single mother, etc. Some of the women also use her as a role model. As Lene expresses it: "It is much easier for us when we have the imam's wife as a role model to understand the thing about Islam and women." The relationship Mevlana has to the Diyanet, not only provides them with salaried imams but also with a "canon" of Islamic scriptures and texts in Turkish, which are used and sold in the mosque and which are translated, approved and published by the Diyanet's Hanafi scholars (see section 4.3.2). This gives the women easy access to authoritative Islamic source materials that they regard as trustworthy.

The interviewees' access to Islamic educational activities, a woman imam and Islamic source materials in one of their first languages makes it possible for them to generate a good deal of cultural capital in the form of Islamic knowledge capital from Mevlana. Through these social and institutional and material sources, the women can access knowledge about all dimensions of Islam – in particular, knowledge that can be categorized as ethical and juridical and ritual and practical since it is oriented around details in *'ibadat,* and *mu'amalat* (Smart 1998: 11-22; see section 3.2). This means that, in contrast to the women engaged in MST, Mevlana's young women have access to and can generate the Islamic knowledge capital *that they seek* from their local Islamic institution (see sections 5.2.1 and 6.1.2).

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[70] As of 2019, Mevlana was still the local Islamic institution that attributes most institutional capital to its female members. In 2019 Mevlana's board consisted of eight members wherein *three* of the positions were held by women.

The women have access to social capital in the form of networks and contacts within the mosque as well (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992: 119; see section 3.4.2). Due to the financial support from the Diyanet, Mevlana does not spend all its resources on Islamic education but offers its members a variety of social activities that strengthens their institutional ties to the mosque. Girls and women are, for instance, encouraged to participate in swimming activities and parties. Boys and men can participate in Mevlana's soccer and indoor field hockey activities. Mevlana's members have free access to the mosque and are encouraged to use it is a gathering place. Thus, the mosque provides them with facilities to do so, such as TVs, videogames, a kitchen, etc. Most educational activities are usually followed by a social session where the members can get involved in conversations and eat, drink and enjoy themselves. Mevlana has found that it is easier to engage people and to enroll them into educational activities if they are followed by informal social gatherings. Thus, it is possible for the interviewees to involve themselves in various forms of religious and social activities in their mosque.

The interviewees describe their mosque network as having similar importance. None of the interviewees uses the mosque to just hang out but use it as a place for meeting and learning as they engage, or have engaged, in several of its arrangements. Through their involvement in the mosque, the women have developed relational bonds to the other members, which they view as part of their social networks in Trondheim. Lene's social network in Trondheim overlaps more or less with her mosque network. It is therefore of considerable importance for her to attend the Friday activities for the women since this is where she sees her friends and acquaintances. According to Lene, she sees *almost everyone* she knows in Trondheim at these meetings. Even though she has some friends and acquaintances outside the mosque as well, her friends and contacts at Mevlana make up her main personal network. There is much overlap between Mai's mosque friends and her "field of friends" as well. Even though she only visits the mosque sporadically when she is not attending any educational activities, her friends and her family – that is, her personal network – consist mainly of other members of Mevlana. Even Katrine, who frequents the mosque the least among the interviewees, localizes her main network to Mevlana's mosque. She feels solidarity with the other members and safe in their presence even though she interacts more with them outside the mosque than inside. This clearly shows that because of Mevlana's resources and the Islamic education and social activities it offers its members, the young Muslim women can generate a good deal of cultural and social capital from their local Islamic institution.

6.6.3 The women's tactic maneuvers within Mevlana

As an Islamic institution organized around nationality, ethnicity and language and with close institutional affiliations to the Turkish Diyanet and hence the Hanafi school of law, Mevlana has established a "place of its own" in Trondheim (de Certeau 1994: 35-36; see sections 3.5.2 and 4.1.4). Mevlana aims at making conditions favorable for its members to live as Muslims and to practice Islam within non-Muslim surroundings in Trondheim. By having established a place of its own, where it can offer its members religious and social activities, access to Islamic source materials, religious authorities and a gathering place, Mevlana has made itself less dependent upon its surroundings in relation to reaching this aim.

Mevlana's efforts influence the young women's knowledge acquisition of Islam. In contrast to the women engaged in the Islamic field of MST, who must tactically approach other Islamic fields to access Islamic knowledge capital, the interviewees from Mevlana *remain within their institution* because it can provide them with the knowledge they seek (see sections 6.1-6.5 and 6.6.2). Mevlana possesses a great deal of Islamic knowledge capital, and in particular knowledge about the Hanafi school's interpretation and understanding of Islam through its institutional ties to the Turkish Diyanet (see sections 4.1.4 and 4.3.2). Mevlana's institutional affiliations to the Diyanet and the Hanafi school of law are important for the women since they identify as Hanafi (see section 5.2.5). By engaging in Mevlana and its activities, the women gain access to knowledge about Islam and in particular the Hanafi school of law's regulations concerning rituals and rules of conduct. Thus, the women are tactically using Mevlana as a source and method to increase their knowledge about Hanafi Islam.

Since the interviewees and Mevlana are followers of the Hanafi school of law, their sources and methods correspond. The young women and Mevlana's imams use the Diyanet's Turkish translations of the Islamic scriptures as material sources. Both parties use the Diyanet and the Hanafi school of law, and their various publications, as social and institutional sources and religious authorities (see sections 4.3.2 and 5.2.3-5.2.5). Thus, the women's individual sources, and their method of following the Hanafi school of law in terms of religious questions, do not diverge from their local institution's strategy, its "glocal methodology" (de Certeau 1984: 35-36; see sections 3.5.2 and 3.5.4). The young women's use of Mevlana's imams and teachers as sources and religious authorities illustrate this. For instance, the woman imam gives Lene private lectures in Qur'an recitation. Lene attends the Friday activities for women where the imam lectures about various Islamic topics and seeks her guidance on religious questions as well. The imam deduces her knowledge about Islam directly from the Qur'an, *hadith* and *tafsir*, while Lene gains much of her knowledge about Islam from her. Even though Lene studies

the Islamic scriptures herself, she prefers to have someone teach her about them, that is, verbal sources over written (see section 5.2.5). Much of the knowledge Lene gains from the imam can be described as summaries and "highlights" of various topics from the Islamic source materials. The imam builds her lectures on the Islamic scriptures, and her presentations are filled with references to these. In this way, she simplifies the women's access to the scriptures' content by concretizing and retelling it to them. She sometimes demonstrates this knowledge as well. For instance, she performed the various prayer sequences, *raka*s, in front of the women to show them how to perform the ritual prayer correctly according the "Hanafi way" (see sections 4.3.2 and 6.6.1).

Lene is tactically using Mevlana's imams as sources to understand the Islamic scriptures and their relevance for her today.

> **E-A**: Do you read the Qur'an and *hadith* yourself? **Lene**: Yes, I do. But I do not understand the contents since they are in Arabic. (…) Translations, actually I try to read the translations. I have both. **E-A**: Okay. But, what, what do you learn when you read the Qur'an, what do you learn about Islam? **Lene**: Then I feel that I need some interpretation, really. Because it was written 1400 years ago, at that time, but how should I live here and now then? Then I need some help. So I must ask. **E-A**: Then you ask. Because you do not read *tafsir*, or commentaries to the Qur'an or? **Lene**: No, not yet. I do not have such books. **E-A**: But you ask in the mosque, the wife of the imam? **Lene**: Yes.

By using the woman imam as a source and authority, Lene gains knowledge about how to live in accordance with the message of the Qur'an in Trondheim today. She defines the Diyanet as her main social and institutional religious authority, and because she regards Mevlana's imams as Diyanet's representatives in Trondheim, she follows them (see section 5.2.5). Lene regards the Hanafi school of law as a source for detailed knowledge about Islamic rituals and rules of conduct. She is tactically following this law school as a guide to how to practice Islam and uses it as an explanatory model of why she is practicing Islam the way she does. To gain knowledge about Hanafi jurisprudence, *fiqh*, and thus detailed knowledge about *ibadat* and *mu'amalat*, she uses Mevlana's resources in the form of books, imams and fellow members as material and social and institutional sources:

Lene: Those who use this mosque, are all Hanafi. **E-A**: How will you say that you are following the law school, or Hanafi?**Lene**: These books here [the books about Islam she has in her house – E-A], everything is written for the Hanafi really. (…) How a Hanafi should pray, how a Hanafi should dress (…) **E-A**: Will you say that Hanafi influences how you see Islam? **Lene**: They show me the way really. (…) Like, when I see a Shafii who does not touch dogs, I ask the imam why, why can we not? But no. If you follow Hanafi, it means that you should not look to them because we are allowed to touch dogs. It is God, Allah, who created the dog and it does not hurt you, so you can sort of, take it calm. **E-A**: This means that if you belong to different law schools that might imply that you live as Muslims in different ways? **Lene**: Quite simply. **E-A**: You interpret things **Lene**: A bit differently. (…) **E-A**: Do you know what the other law schools say about things or? **Lene**: Not so much. I am interested in Hanafi. **E-A**: And your books are about Hanafi, so you do not search and check what others… **Lene**: No, no. I do not. (….) Well, we had a discussion in the mosque about eyebrows. Women should not pluck hair from their face, because it changes the way you look, your look. So, you should not play with it. But then, it was a question about it, that those who are Shafii are allowed to do so, but she [the woman imam – E-A] said we are not Shafii. If you follow Hanafia, you should do it this way. (….) "I, [quotes the woman imam – E-A] tell you what Hanafi says, but if you want to follow those who allows you to do it, it is your responsibility. If you want, you can jump from here to there, but then you must, if you follow one regulation, you must do what they say, you must change everything." **E-A**: Then you must follow all of it? So, you think that the best thing is to follow just one law school and stick to it? **Lene**: Mm. **E-A**: But do you get knowledge about the law schools from other places than Diyanet's books, do you read about them other places, or Hanafi? **Lene**: The books. (…) And the imams are Hanafi, and when I use Google on my PC I find Hanafi pages.

Lene has made an individual choice to follow the Hanafi school of law's regulations as a general norm in relation to rituals and rules of conduct and to use Mevlana as a source to gain knowledge about these regulations. In this, she uses Mevlana, the Diyanet and the Hanafi school of law as religious authorities and sources to Islam. From these sources, she makes individual choices concerning what regulations and recommendations to follow, or not, due to her personal life situation and what is most suitable for her. This means that Lene practices a restricted

"restricted bricolage" and that her lived Islam is made up by elements she "picks and chooses" from the Hanafi jurisprudence, *fiqh* (see section 5.3.2).

> **E-A**: Do you think that you are free to choose what regulations and duties you want to follow and not? **Lene**: Actually, I do that. Right now. I know that I should wear skirts, not pants, which is not so nice for women. But I choose to wear it because I do not feel ready to wear skirts, since I attend school and aim to work [with children – E-A]. I am going to be an active woman in the future, so I do not wear skirts even though I know that I should.

As shown above, the woman imam supported and justified Lene's choice of wearing pants over skirts, with references to how she dressed and her life situation (see section 6.6.1). Still, Lene regards her choice of wearing pants as a "lack" in her Muslim practices: "Actually, I have a bad conscience when I do that [wear pants – E-A]." This clearly shows that Lene is not only relating her religious practices to one religious authority but several. This means that even though the woman imam justifies Lene's choice of wearing pants, she still feels bad because she is not only relating her choices to local religious authorities but also to external and global ones – the Turkish Diyanet and its Hanafi scholars. Thus, Lene is using the Hanafi school of law as both a local and global religious authority. This means that even though her individual choice of wearing pants can be justified and legitimized due to her life situation in Trondheim, it is not to be regarded as a recommended or ideal practice according to Hanafi jurisprudence, *fiqh*, in general. Lene follows the local imam's guidance, but her choices are also oriented toward the Hanafi school's jurisprudence, its categorization of actions and their ascribed legal value, which she uses as authoritative normative systems to measure her choices and practices in relation to. This shows that Lene is making individual judgments as to which regulations and recommendations are better to follow – the local contextualized ones or the Hanafi school's "general" ones. Mevlana's imams and educational activities give her access to knowledge about both.

The young women's easy access to Islamic knowledge capital within Mevlana makes it less attractive and necessary for them to approach other local Islamic fields in their quest for knowledge. Their choice of engaging in Mevlana, participating in its ritual and educational activities and using its imams as religious authorities and sources to Islam is therefore their main method of gaining knowledge about Islam. Since Mevlana can provide the women with

the knowledge they seek and need to practice Islam in Trondheim, the women's tactic is thus to stay within the institution and use it as a source to Islam.

6.6.4 Mevlana's influence on the women's knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam

There is much overlap between the young women's "normative field" and Mevlana's sources and methods to Islam due to both parts' identification and affiliation with the Hanafi school of law (Roald 2001: 88-92; see section 3.6). Mevlana's bonds and its official institutional affiliation to the Turkish Diyanet and the Hanafi law school make its sources and methods, in other words its strategy, visible to the members of the institution (de Certeau 1984: 36-37: see sections 5.3.2 and 5.3.4). The women know that Mevlana uses the Diyanet and its Hanafi scholars as religious authorities, and because of this they trust the Islamic source materials and knowledge they can access within the mosque. Mevlana functions as the women's main social and institutional source to Islam, and they regard their involvement in its educational activities as one of their main methods of gaining knowledge about Islam. Since the women use Mevlana and its educational activities as sources to Islam, its imams as religious authorities and the Islamic source material distributed within the mosque as their individual sources, Mevlana has much influence on their knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam. Mevlana provides the women with the Islamic knowledge capital they need and want, and because of this the interviewees do not have to approach and engage in any other local Islamic fields like the interviewees from MST do. If they have questions concerning Islam, the women turn to Mevlana's imams or the Islamic source materials distributed within the mosque and published by the Diyanet or the Diyanet's official websites. Thus, Mevlana is not only providing the women with Islamic sources and knowledge but also a method for gaining such knowledge by illuminating its strategy.

As the Diyanet and the Hanafi school of law's local representative in Trondheim, Mevlana influences the women's Islamic knowledge and sources. The women use the Turkish Diyanet and its Hanafi scholars as external and global religious authorities. Consequently, they view Mevlana's imams as their main local religious authorities. Even though the women are familiar with other Sunni Islamic law schools and some of their various interpretations and regulations, they choose to follow Hanafi – both because they regard it as the most proper method to seek knowledge about Islam and because they and their families identify as Hanafi. Thus, it is not only the women's engagement in Mevlana that makes them follow the Hanafi school of law but also their family backgrounds. This means that Mevlana is not influencing the women's normative field by introducing them to Hanafi sources and methods because, as

self-defined Hanafi, they would probably have used these anyway. However, the women's engagement in Mevlana makes it easier for the them to follow the Hanafi school of law's legal interpretations since the institution can provide them with the social and institutional and the material sources they need to do this. When Mevlana provides the women with the Islamic knowledge capital they want and seek, it also influences their religious practices. By strengthening the women's Hanafi identity through knowledge and sources, Mevlana helps and encourages the women to choose and to activate Hanafi regulations concerning rituals and rules of conduct from the Islamic basket (Hjärpe 1997, 1988; see section 2.2.5).

Mevlana's influence on the women's knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam diverges from that of MST. Where MST's "pan-Islamic" profile pushes the MST interviewees into individual quests for Islamic knowledge and thus triggers individualization processes in the women's knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam, Mevlana's affiliation with the Turkish Diyanet provides the women with the Islamic sources and knowledge they need to practice Islam in Trondheim. This causes the young interviewees remain within Mevlana and to use it and its resources as their main sources and methods to gain knowledge about Islam. This does not mean that the women's practices are not individualized, in Fadil's or Cesari's use of the term, because they are. The women *do* make individual choices concerning what sources and regulations to use and follow, but as Hanafis they orient their quest for knowledge toward the Hanafi methodology and choose from among its sources and thus practice a more restricted "restricted bricolage" (Fadil 2005: 143-153; Cesari 2004: 45-46; see sections 2.1.4-2.15 and 5.3.2).

6.7 Ahl O'Bait (AOB)

Nina, Oda and Petra are members of AOB for various reasons. They explain their membership in AOB with reference to their Shiite identities – the institution's affiliations with the Shia branch in general and the Twelver Shia branch in particular. The women emphasize the social aspects of their memberships, too. As Shia Muslims in Trondheim, they make up a minority within the local Muslim minority. It is therefore important for them to have an Islamic institutional field of their own where they can gather with other Shia Muslims and practice Islam. AOB does not have a mosque in Trondheim, but they have a *husayniyya*, which is a Shiite place of worship[71] (Corboz 2016: ix). AOB's *husayniyya* is important for the

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[71] The *husaynyya* is named after Prophet Muhammad's grandson, Imam Husayn ibn Ali, who was killed in the Battle of Karbala. It is a place of worship where Shia Muslims gather to remember and celebrate Imam Husayn and the other Shia Imams (Momen 1985: 240).

interviewees, who regard the institution and its place of worship as the same, that is, the latter as a representation of the former. The women's engagement in the social and religious activities that take place within the *husayniyya* strengthen their social ties to the institution and their Shia Muslims identities.

The women have practical reasons for being members of AOB as well. For instance, they believe it is easier to celebrate Islamic holidays in Trondheim when they are member of an institution that provides facilities to do so. Nina and Oda point to security aspects, too, when they explain their membership:

> **E-A**: Why are you members of Ahl O'Bait? **Nina**: To practice Islam actually, to display that we are Muslim. **Oda**: Instead of just staying in our homes. **Nina**: And to gather for better, for worse actually (…). When we have celebrations, Shia Muslims have *many* celebrations. We follow the Imam's birthdays and the Prophet's, and we remember the day the Prophet passed away. **E-A**: In the *husayniyya*? **Oda**: Many people gather, they come from out of town and such. **Nina**: Iraqis yes. Then we remember that day and talk about our history. And it is knowledge to our kids and such, and it is good for our community. (…) It is very important. Yes, like when you make celebrations in your house and such, then, "what happens here?" It might scare your neighbors, I think. So, it is actually safer for them, and us. **E-A**: That people know what you are doing? **Nina**: It is safest. Because every now and then, we make loud noises when we celebrate, someone is lecturing loudly, and then the police is prepared for this noise, in case the neighbors call them and such, because we tell them [the police – E-A] what is going to happen. (…) It is safer for them and us.

Nina thinks it is better for them and their non-Muslim surroundings that they have a regular meeting place instead gathering at the members' homes. When they gather under the auspices of an Islamic institution, the institution can prepare its surroundings, including the local police, for what is going to happen and explain why. In this way, the women's membership in AOB provides them with an opportunity to practice Islam in safe environments. Thus, the interviewees are members of AOB due to religious, social, practical and security reasons.

6.7.1 AOB as a source and method to Islam

The women use AOB's *husayniyya* as a gathering place and a place of worship where they can meet with other Shia Muslims, celebrate Shia holidays and perform various mourning and

remembrance rituals. In addition, they use it as a place for learning but with varying frequency. Oda participates regularly in the Friday meetings in the mosque, where they read the Qur'an and discuss it and other Islamic topics. Petra never attends the Friday meetings on regular Fridays and participates in rituals and activities in relation to Shiite holidays and festivals only. Nina visits the *husayniyya* every now and then during Friday meetings and celebrations of religious holidays. Through their engagement in the *husayniyya,* the women gain knowledge about Islam from observances of and discussions with other members of the institution and by participating in religious activities, festivals and rituals. For instance, when they celebrate religious holidays, the holiday's history, background and rituals are topics of conversation and discussion among the participants, and when they engage in the collective celebrations and rituals, they learn how to celebrate various holidays in Trondheim. By using the *husayniyya* as a place for worship and gathering, the women gain knowledge about Islamic holidays and rituals through conversations, discussions, celebrations and performances. Thus, AOB functions as a social and institutional and ritual and practical source to Islam for the interviewees.

None of the interviewees use AOB or specific persons within the institution as religious authorities or authoritative sources to Islam. The reason for this is that the institution is made up by laypersons only (see section 4.3.4). Instead, the women orient their religious questions and quests for knowledge toward Twelver Shia authorities from the Jafari school of law, which they use as authorities and social and institutional sources (see section 5.2.5). This means that even though AOB cannot provide the women with local religious authorities, its institutional organization around Shia Islam and affiliations with Twelver Shia push the women's quest for knowledge toward authorized Shia Islamic authorities. In this way, AOB offers the interviewees a *method* to gain Islamic knowledge: they should seek knowledge from Twelver Shia authorities and follow their legal interpretation, *fiqh*. This provides the women with a number of authoritative social and institutional and material sources to Islam in the form of religious authorities and texts.

6.7.2 The women's capital within AOB

None of the interviewees possesses any positions or titles within AOB. The institution organizes around a board that consists of male members only. Except for the board, there are few active positions within the volunteer-driven institution. Some adult members function as teachers in Arabic, Islam, the Qur'an and Qur'an recitations for children, but there are no religious authorities in the form of imams within the institution (see sections 4.1.4, 4.3.2 and 4.3.4).

AOB is a small Islamic institution without "religious personnel." Consequently, it has fewer resources than MST and much *fewer* resources than Mevlana (see sections 4.1.4, 6.1.2 and 6.6.2). AOB lacks the means to arrange Islamic educational activities for all its members. Because of this, the women cannot access Islamic educational activities nor religious authorities within the institution. However, as shown above, the women can generate some cultural capital in the form of knowledge about Islam from their co-members by engaging in AOB's social and ritual activities, such as knowledge about various holidays' and celebrations' backgrounds but also practical knowledge about how to celebrate these and perform Islamic rituals within the context of Trondheim (see section 6.7.1). When the women mingle with other AOB members in the *husayniyya*, they can also gain practical knowledge about how to behave as good Muslims, that is, Islamic rules of conduct. According to Petra, courtesy is a highly respected virtue within AOB. By observing other members as to how they act and treat each other, she learns how to respect other people and how to behave in front of other Muslims. So, despite the interviewees' lack of access to Islamic educational activities and religious authorities within AOB, they can generate some practical knowledge about Islamic holidays and rules of conduct from the institution.

Even though the women's direct access to Islamic knowledge capital within AOB is limited, they know where to turn to get such knowledge. As members of a Twelver Shiite institution, the young women access a corpus of Shiite writings through the Internet. This includes books, texts and responses by the grand *ayatollah*s who are most popular to follow among the ABO members and whom they use as authoritative sources (see sections 4.3.4 and 5.2.5).

All of the interviewees can generate social capital from AOB and regard the other members as part of their local network (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992: 119; Bourdieu 2006: 17; see section 3.4.2). According to Nina, the members of AOB provide conversation and discussion partners for religious and secular topics. The women regard all the other members as part of their network even though they are closer to some than others. The members respect each other as well as the place and the worship rituals that take place within it. Since all the other mosques and Islamic institutions in Trondheim belong to the Sunni branch, it is important for the young women to have an institution that recognizes and respects their Shiite identities and religious practices. In this way, AOB both facilitates and encourages Shia Muslims to socialize and perform religious rituals together in safe surroundings.

AOB has contacts within MST since several of AOB's members were members of this institution before they broke out and established one of their own (see section 4.1.4). Even

though the institutional bonds are far from close, members of AOB have had the opportunity to use some of MST's facilities, such as its imams. Nina's wedding ceremony, *nikah,* for instance, was held within MST's mosque and led by one of its imams since AOB lacked religious personnel. This means that AOB can provide the women with contacts outside the institution as well. This shows that despite varying frequency in the young women's engagement in AOB's activities, they possess and have access to social capital in the form of networks and contacts within and outside their local institution.

6.7.3 The women's tactic maneuvers within AOB

Even though AOB lacks religious personnel, it represents the Twelver Shia methodology in Trondheim by being organized around this law school and by using its sources and methods to gain knowledge about Islam (see section 4.3.4). Since the young women have limited access to Islamic knowledge within AOB, they must seek knowledge outside the institution. Unlike the tactic of the MST women, who due to limited access to Islamic knowledge capital within their institution approach other local Islamic fields, the AOB women do not engage in other local fields. Instead, their tactic is to use their Twelver Shiite identity as an approach to Islamic knowledge and to seek knowledge from authoritative Twelver Shiite material sources and external and global Islamic scholars, whose legal interpretations, writings and lectures are easily accessible through the Internet. This means that the women's tactic is to follow Twelver Shia's methodology and methods. This explains why Nina and Oda use an *ayatollah* situated in Iraq as an external source and authority on Islam, why the three interviewees use the same grand *ayatollah* as their *marja* and thus ultimate authority to Shiite Islam and why they use Shia Islamic scriptures and Shia writings as their primary material sources (see sections 5.2.3-5.2.6).

Since the women use their institutional affiliation to Twelver Shia as a method and a way to gain knowledge about Islam, their sources and methods correspond with AOB's strategy. Both parties identify the Qur'an, Shia *hadith* collections and grand *ayatollah*s as their primary material and social and institutional sources to Islam (see sections 3.4.3 and 5.2.3-5.2.6). This means that even though AOB does not have the means to provide the young women with the Islamic knowledge or sources that they seek and want, its institutional belonging to Shia Islam and the Twelver School of jurisprudence provides the women with a direction and a "package" of sources and methods to use in their quests for knowledge.

6.7.4 AOB's influence on the women's knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam

Like Mevlana, AOB's institutional organization around one specific law school influences the interviewees' knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam in various ways (see section 6.6.4). AOB's institutional affiliation with Twelver Shia provides the women with an established methodology to seek Islamic knowledge from and through. Because of this, there is much overlap between the women's normative field and their local institution's sources and methods to Islam. Like AOB, the young women activate Shia Islamic material and social and institutional sources from the Islamic basket (Roald 2001: 88-92; see sections 3.6, 4.3.4 and 5.2.3-5.2.6).

In contrast to Mevlana, AOB cannot offer its members easy access to social and institutional sources such as local imams, educational activities or source materials in Trondheim. Instead, it first and foremost offers the young women an Islamic methodology to follow and choose their Islamic sources from. The women's lack of access to knowledge about the Islamic methodology and its sources within AOB make it their task and responsibility to approach and use these sources in their quests for knowledge. In this way, AOB triggers individual searches for knowledge and sources among the interviewees. However, unlike MST, which also triggers individualization processes in the young Muslim women's knowledge acquisition due to the same reasons, AOB offers its members a direction and normative framework to seek knowledge through and from, namely the Twelver Shia methodology. Consequently, MST causes the women approach other Islamic fields and to practice a "restricted bricolage" from the Sunni Islamic traditions of knowledge in their individual quests for knowledge, while AOB, like Mevlana, causes them to practice a restricted "restricted bricolage" because they provide the women with specific methodologies to pick and choose their sources and methods from – respectively Twelver Shia and Hanafi methodologies (Jacobsen 2006: 212-229; see sections 2.1.6, 5.3.2, 6.1.4 and 6.6.4).

In relation to the young women's lived Islam, AOB influences their collective practices and rituals by providing a *husayniyya* where they can perform and celebrate Shia rituals and holidays with fellow Shiite Muslims in safe surroundings. By engaging in these rituals and holidays, the women increase their knowledge about them and their backgrounds and practical performances and gain knowledge about Shiite rules of conduct, in particular those concerning behavior within a Shiite place of worship. This means that AOB influences the women's knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam by strengthening their Twelver Shia identity, which again influences them to choose Shia sources, regulations and practices from the Islamic basket (Hjärpe 1997, 1988; see section 2.2.5).

6.8 Summary: The local Islamic fields as the women's sources and methods to Islam

The current and previous chapters show that the young Muslim women's lived religion, what they make out of and do with Islam, encompasses a number of experiences, practices, rituals, beliefs, choices, efforts, actions and reflections (McGuire 2008: 46; see Chapter 5). As "practicing Muslims," several Islamic rituals and practices make up their lived Islam – they pray, fast, read and recite the Qur'an; observe the ritual purification; celebrate Islamic holidays; and search for knowledge about Islam. Moreover, they follow Islamic food and clothing regulations and behave and act in accordance with Islamic rules of conduct (see sections 5.1-5.1.3). All interviewees make individual choices concerning what beliefs, rituals, practices and regulations to follow, or not, and *how to follow* and *perform* these. In these processes, they orient their individual choices toward various types of material and social and institutional sources to legitimize them as Islamic or not. This means that to practice Islam and to improve their Muslim practices, the women need knowledge about Islam. Thus, the women's lived Islam is made up by a number of Islamic beliefs, rituals and practices but also various ways of gaining knowledge about Islam in Trondheim.

6.8.1 Categories of Islamic knowledge

The young Muslim women's quests for Islamic knowledge are mainly oriented around ritual and practical and ethical and legal knowledge in addition to material knowledge about Islamic sources (Smart 1998: 11-22; see section 3.2). Even though all types of knowledge about Islam are regarded as relevant and sought by the women, the three mentioned categories of knowledge have most influence on their knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam. To live proper Muslim lives, the women need knowledge about *sharia* – its two categories of regulations *ibadat* and *mu'amalat* and its categories of action and their legal values (see sections 5.1.1 and 5.2.1). However, since the women live and practice Islam in Trondheim, they also need knowledge about contextual adjustments of *sharia*. This means that the knowledge the women seek is detailed knowledge about Islam's ethical and legal dimension and practical and ritual dimension. Material knowledge about authoritative Islamic sources and methods is important for the young Muslim women because it enables them to legitimize their individual practices and choices as Islamic or in accordance with Islam. With this type of knowledge, the women can trace their beliefs, practices and decisions back to an authoritative Islamic source, which they can use to legitimize them as "Islamic" or "authentic." Consequently, the women need knowledge about Islamic authoritative sources' content and status and knowledge about how to

use and deduce knowledge from these sources in proper ways, that is, in line with established Islamic methodologies.

6.8.2 Elements from the Islamic basket

Even though the young Muslim women want knowledge about the content of the Islamic basket in general, their quests are mainly oriented around the elements that involve/encompass *sharia* in one way or another (see section 5.2.1). The ethical and legal knowledge the women are seeking is mainly theoretical knowledge about *sharia* in terms of its regulations and categories of action and their legal values. This encompasses elements from the basket such as beliefs, rituals, practices, observances, rules of conduct and categorizations in addition to (knowledge about) Islamic source materials. The ritual and practical knowledge the women wish to embody is practical knowledge about how to live in accordance with *sharia* in Trondheim, meaning how to live proper Muslim lives in Trondheim. This means that the young Muslim women are searching for detailed knowledge about Islamic rituals, practices, regulations and their legal values and how to perform and follow these. The material knowledge the women are searching for is knowledge about Islamic source materials and their contents and composition. Since the women are not only seeking knowledge about the sources' content and composition but also their status within the Islamic traditions of knowledge in addition to knowledge about how to use these sources, the knowledge can also be categorized as legal and ethical knowledge. When the women search for knowledge about Islamic source materials and methods, they gain knowledge about elements that belong to the "normative field" and knowledge about elements that may influence what they choose to activate from the Islamic basket. This is because Islamic source materials and methodologies are fundamental elements in the Islamic basket *and* elements that influence the women's understanding of the basket's content and what elements they choose to activate from it (Roald 2001: 88-92; see sections 2.2.5 and 3.6).

6.8.3 Fields and capital

The interviewees use the local Islamic institutional fields of MST, Mevlana and AOB as social and institutional and/or practical and ritual sources to Islam in different ways and with varying frequency. Despite institutional differences when it comes to what activities and facilities they can offer their women members, the women use the institutions' mosques or *husayniyya* as places of worship, meeting and learning. Local Islamic institutional and non-institutional fields, such as DIC, SG, IN and KMIT, function as important social as well as practical and ritual sources to Islam for several of the MST women, too. This means that the Muslim women's

lived Islam, and in particular their quest for knowledge, takes place within various Islamic fields that influence their religious knowledge and practices in different ways.

There are institutional differences when it comes to what cultural capital the women can access from their local Islamic institutional fields. Central positions and titles are unevenly distributed among men and women members within MST, Mevlana and AOB even though all three allow both men and women in central positions. Only in Mevlana is women's cultural capital institutionalized within the mosque since it has a woman positioned in the board and a woman who functions as a religious authority for other female members. None of the other institutions have women in similar positions.

The local Islamic institutions' resources and profiles influence the amount and types of Islamic knowledge capital the women can generate from them. As the local Islamic institution with the most resources, Mevlana distinguishes itself from the others in this respect. Due to its institutional ties with the Turkish Diyanet, which finances its imams and provides books and texts about Islam written by Hanafi scholars, Mevlana can offer level-differentiated Islamic education, local Hanafi authorities and a corpus of Islamic sources to *all* its members. This shows that Mevlana, in line with its objective of making it easy for its members to practice Islam in Trondheim, prioritizes spending its resources *within* the institution and *on* its members' Islamic education and religious and social lives (see section 4.3.2). The Islamic knowledge capital Mevlana offers its young female members corresponds with the Islamic knowledge capital the women seek. Through educational activities, imams and Islamic source materials, Mevlana provides its members with practical and ritual and ethical and legal knowledge about *ibadat* and *mu'amalat*, which is exactly the types of knowledge the women want to improve how they live as Muslims (see sections 5.2.1 and 6.6-6.6.4). Thus, Mevlana and the young women identify the same types of knowledge capital as valuable. The women want detailed knowledge about the ritual obligations and inter-human relationships, and Mevlana does not hesitate to go into detail when it comes to *sharia'*s regulations. By profiling as a Hanafi mosque, Mevlana offers its members knowledge about Hanafi jurisprudence and legitimizes the ritual and practical and ethical and legal knowledge transmitted within the mosque with references to this law school.

As entirely volunteer-driven institutions, AOB and MST have fewer resources than Mevlana. As a small Twelver Shia institution with few resources, AOB prioritizes its children's Arabic and Islamic education. Because of this, AOB cannot offer its adult members Islamic educational activities or access to local religious authorities. Despite the young women's limited access to generate Islamic knowledge capital directly from their local institution, AOB's

institutional affiliation with Twelver Shia provides them with a clear methodology and thus access to a number of authoritative Shia sources and authorities (see sections 6.7-6.7.4).

As one of the largest Islamic institutions in Trondheim, MST has more resources than AOB though fewer than Mevlana. Still, the interviewees have limited access to Islamic knowledge capital within MST. MST provides religious authorities in the form of local imams. However, due to its "pan-Islamic" profile, and its prioritization of resources, it can only provide the women with limited access to detailed knowledge about Islamic rituals and rules of conduct. Because of MST's "pan-Islamic" profile, it avoids getting into details about the Islamic jurisprudence but tries to unite its members around Islamic doctrines and rituals. Consequently, the women cannot access detailed practical and ritual and ethical and legal knowledge, which are the types of knowledge they wish to embody to improve how they live as Muslims. Because MST does not interfere with how the women practice Islam, or what Islamic sources and methods they use either, they cannot access a corpus of Islamic sources nor a clear Islamic methodology from their local Islamic institution (see section 6.1.2).

Like AOB, MST prioritizes spending resources on the children's Islamic education. In addition, MST wants to involve itself in public affairs by being in dialogue with the majority society. MST participates in several interfaith and intercultural dialogues, welcomes hundreds of students and pupils to its mosque every year and teaches non-Muslims about Islam and its members about Trondheim's society (see sections 4.1.4 and 6.1.2). This means that, in contrast to Mevlana, which spends most of its resources *within* the institution and on its members, MST prioritizes spending many resources *outside* the mosque and on both members and non-members (see sections 6.1.2 and 6.6.2). The interviewees' limited access to Islamic knowledge capital within MST can therefore be explained with reference to the institution's limited resources and pan-Islamic profile but also *contradictory interests* between the institution and its young female members. The women want to become better Muslims by improving their Islamic knowledge and thus religious practices, while MST wants to educate its children and involve itself in public affairs by being in dialogue with the majority society. By spending resources on interfaith and intercultural dialogues, and on informing the Muslim minority and the non-Muslim majority about each other, MST aims to create a space for Islam in Trondheim and thus facilitate everyday lived religion for its members. This means that MST, like Mevlana, is also occupied with its members' religious identities and practices; however, in contrast to Mevlana, which focuses on facilitating its members' religious lives and practices *within* the institution, MST aims to make it easier for its members to practice Islam and live Muslim lives *outside* the institution. Even though the interviewees acknowledge MST's relational bonds to

various public institutions, and the effort it expends in the various dialogues, they cannot generate Islamic knowledge capital from it. This means that when MST prioritizes spending its resources on its children and public affairs, it cannot offer the women the Islamic knowledge capital they want. Thus, several of the young women approach other Islamic fields, such as SG, IN, DIC and KMIT, to access such capital.

All interviewees have access to social capital in the form of networks and contacts within their local Islamic fields. The Islamic institutional fields, their mosques or *husayniyya*, function as important social arenas for many of the women, who have small networks of family and relatives in Trondheim. Here they can meet up with family and friends and others with backgrounds and experiences similar to their own. Despite MST's and AOB's lack of educational activities for their adult members, they still offer their members a social network. And even though several of the MST interviewees approach other local Islamic fields to gain Islamic knowledge, some of these MST-independent fields hold their meetings in MST's mosque, such as SG and KMIT. In this way, MST functions as an "umbrella institution," which gathers both members and non-members for various activities, from which the women can generate social capital in the form of networks and contacts.

Since all of the Islamic institutions in Trondheim, except Mevlana, are driven by volunteers, the Muslim women cannot generate much economic capital directly from the institutions in the form of paid work. However, the women's mosque networks sometimes generate other economic capital, such as job opportunities, the possibility to sell products and interest-free loans.

6.8.4 Strategy and tactic

The women who belong to the mosques with institutional ties to Islamic law schools, namely Mevlana and AOB, are tactically choosing to follow their law school's methodologies, that is, their sources and methods, in their quest for Islamic knowledge. Mevlana provides the women with the knowledge, sources and authorities they need locally. AOB does not, but because of its institutional affiliation with the Twelver Shia, it offers the women an Islamic methodology. That AOB's women have less access to educational resources and religious personnel than Mevlana's women is due not only to the institutions' different amount of resources but also to their methodological differences. Within the Hanafi school of law, individuals are not encouraged to select one special Islamic scholar to follow; it is more common to follow one's local religious authorities and law school, such as the interviewees from Mevlana do (see section 5.2.5). Within Twelver Shia methodology, on the other hand, an established

institutionalized method of gaining knowledge about Islam is to follow the legal opinions of *a* religious authority, a *marja al-taqlid*, whose argumentation convinces one and whom one believes it is morally acceptable to follow (Momen 1985: 175-176, 204-206; Roald 2004: 105; see section 4.3.4). Since the Twelver Shia methodology is all about individuals choosing which religious authorities and *marja'* to follow, it is difficult for a small Shia institution in Trondheim to offer religious personnel and Islamic educational activities suitable for all of its members since they follow different *marja'*. It is therefore unclear what effects more educational resources and local religious authorities within AOB would have had on the women's Islamic knowledge acquisition since they would probably seek online guidance from their special *ayatollah* anyhow, as the Twelver Shia methodology compels them to do. This shows that even though the women in Mevlana and AOB have different levels of access to Islamic knowledge within their respective institutions, their tactics for gaining knowledge about Islam within these institutions are the same: they remain within their local Islamic institution and follow their methodologies in the quest for knowledge.

The women engaged in MST tactically approach the Islamic traditions of knowledge, their established authoritative institutions and sources and other Islamic fields in their quest for knowledge. This means that the MST women's main tactic is to seek knowledge about Islam independently from and outside their local Islamic institution. For this reason, the women are tactically using the Islamic scriptures of the Qur'an and *hadith* as primary sources and ultimate norms of what is Islamic or not because they are familiar with these sources and have access them. To compensate for their lack of access to a corpus of Islamic sources within MST, the women use well-known and authoritative *hadith* collections and *tafsir*s. In this way, they are tactically orienting their search for knowledge and choice of sources in relation to the Islamic traditions of knowledge, which they use as a normative system. The young women within MST are also using Sunni Muslim's diversity, institutionalized through the Sunni Islamic law schools, as sources of knowledge about different ways to live in accordance with God's will. In this way, the women are tactically using the Sunni Islamic law schools' jurisprudence as sources of detailed knowledge about ritual obligations, inter-human relationships and *sharia*'s categories of action. In addition to these, they are also tactically engaging in other Islamic fields, such as DIC, SG, IN and KMIT, which can provide them with knowledge about Islam, though in different ways.

The MST women do not seek out Mevlana's educational activities even though they transmit the types of practical and ritual and ethical and legal Islamic knowledge that they seek. There are several reason for this, some more obvious than others. First of all is language. Where

MST is a "pan-Islamic" mosque, Mevlana organizes around the Turkish nationality, Kurdish ethnicity, the Turkish language and the Hanafi law school. This means that Mevlana's educational activities takes place in Turkish, a language none of the interviewees from MST have mastered. Secondly, MST and Mevlana are independent local Islamic institutions, with different profiles, localities and members. For this reason, the young women affiliated with one of the mosques had very little information about the other and its activities. Methodological differences, or the fact that the two mosques use different strategies to gain knowledge about Islam, can also explain why the MST women choose one mosque over another. Where Mevlana and AOB and the women affiliated with them identify with one law school, and regard it as a proper method to seek knowledge from and follow the particular law school's legal opinion, regulations, etc., MST and the interviewees affiliated with it do not. Instead, they use all of the law schools as equal sources in regard to Islam and deem this as a proper method to increase their Islamic knowledge.

When we look at the **women's capital** within their respective Islamic fields at the same time as we look at how they **operate** within these fields, we can see how the various local Islamic fields influence the women's "normative field" and thus their knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam. The figure of the "renewed Islamic basket" below aims to illustrate this.

The renewed Islamic basket:
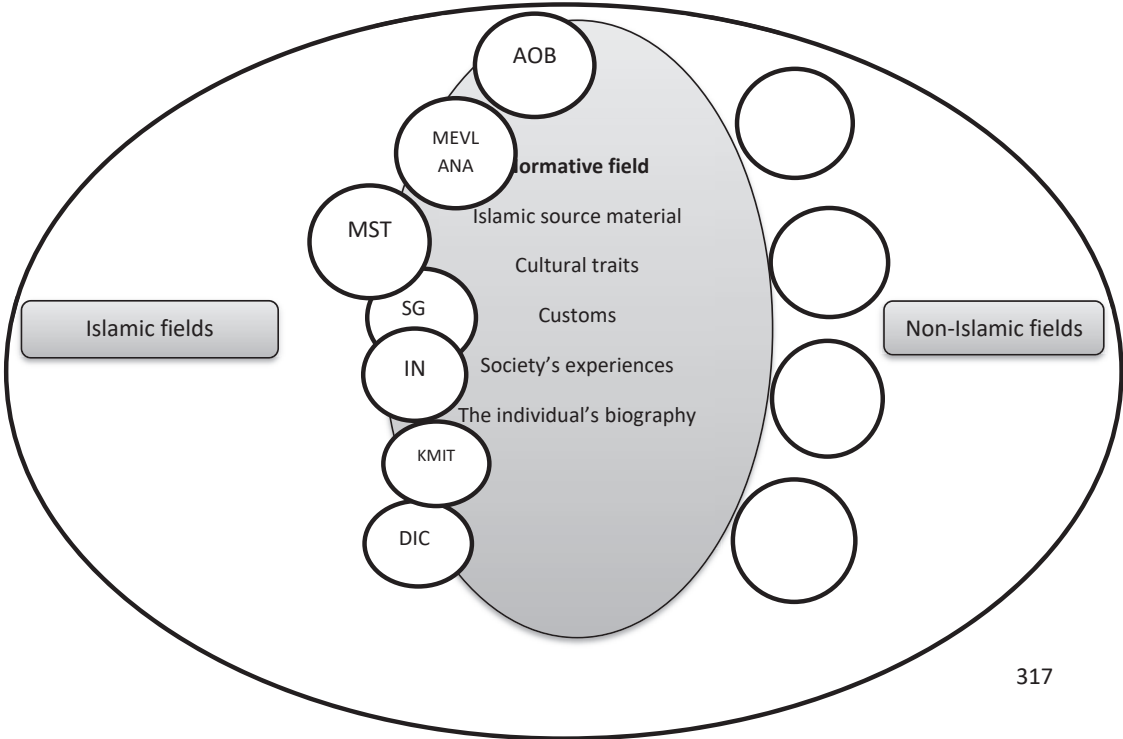
Even though the MST interviewees and the institution have several corresponding sources to Islam, MST has little influence on the women's normative field, meaning the sources and methods they choose to activate from the Islamic basket. The main reason for this is the lack of capital attributed to the women's Islamic knowledge within this field, which compels the women to seek knowledge outside the institution. AOB does not offer its female members much capital in the form of Islamic knowledge, either, but their institutional affiliation and identification with the Twelver Shia provides them with an Islamic methodology. Thus, AOB influences the women's normative field by providing them with a normative framework to choose their sources and methods to Islam through and from. Mevlana provides the young women with an Islamic methodology, too, namely Hanafi. In addition, Mevlana distinguishes itself from the other local Islamic institutions by being the one that attributes the most capital to the women's Islamic knowledge. Here the women access Islamic education, local religious authorities, including a woman imam, and a corpus of Hanafi Islamic scriptures. Since the young women's main tactic within Mevlana is to remain within their institution and use it and its Hanafi sources and methods as their main sources to Islam, it has a great deal of influence on the women's normative field, which is very much overlapping with that of Mevlana.

The MST women's other Islamic fields influence what sources and methods the women choose from the Islamic basket, though in various ways. Since SG is a study group established by and for women, there is much overlap between the women's individual sources and methods to Islam and those of SG. Thus, SG is not influencing the women's normative field by providing them with new Islamic sources but rather strengthening their use of the revealed Islamic canon, and its commentary literature, because these are authoritative sources all the women have common. IN has the same influence on SG's members' normative fields. This field is not causing the women to choose new or other sources but strengthening their use of the Qur'an, *hadith* and *tafsir* as their primary sources to knowledge about Islam. Thus, both SG and IN influence SG's members' normative fields by pushing them in a scripturally oriented direction.

As an independent Islamic field, established by and for women to increase their Islamic knowledge, SG also strengthens the women's cultural and social capital. In contrast to the local Islamic institutional fields that are dominated by men, women only make up SG. By establishing a field for themselves, where they are in charge of all the activities and their contents, the women gain cultural capital in the form of both power and knowledge about Islam. Within Mevlana, the women's cultural capital is institutionalized within the mosque, through a woman member of the board, a woman imam and women teachers. Since no women are in possession of similar capital within MST, some of the women's tactics are therefore to establish

an Islamic field of their own. As an independent Islamic field that offers its members access to Islamic knowledge, sources and methods in addition to various forms of social capital, SG strengthens the MST women's cultural capital – cultural capital they can use in their daily lives as practicing Muslims but also to gain influence in the other local Islamic fields they engage in.

The members of KMIT have developed a collective knowledge and understanding of the Islamic source materials through their group studies. This influences the Indonesian women's normative field since they orient their individual and group studies of Islam in relation to this. By providing the women with knowledge about Islamic sources and methods, in addition to Islamic knowledge in general, KMIT influences what sources and methods the women activate from the Islamic basket. DIC also influences some of the MST's women's sources and methods in regard to Islam – particularly the Indonesian women, who generate knowledge about *hadith* from this local institution. By indirectly providing these women with knowledge about *hadith*, DIC has strengthened these women's use of *hadith* as one of their primary sources. Thus, DIC influences these women's understanding and use of *hadith* as a source to Islam.

The women's access or lack of access to Islamic knowledge within their local Islamic institutional fields triggers different individualization processes in their knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam. Mevlana does not trigger individualization processes in the women's knowledge acquisition because it provides the women with the knowledge, sources and authorities they need. Alternatively, AOB, which offers an Islamic methodology but neither access to educational activities nor local religious personnel, triggers individual searches for Islamic knowledge from Shiite sources and authorities among AOB interviewees. The women's lack of access to Islamic knowledge within MST pushes them into individual searches for knowledge about Islam. In relation to this, several of the women approach and engage in other Islamic fields to increase their Islamic knowledge. When the women engage in "pan-Islamic" fields, such as SG and IN, where Muslims with various backgrounds come together, the women's quests for knowledge are pushed in a scriptural direction since the revealed canon and its commentary literature are sources all the women and their different Islamic fields have in common. This orientation around the Islamic scriptures corresponds with what Christine Jacobsen refers to as "a paradoxical development in which Islam is both increasingly "individualized" and "normativized", as it enters debates and social confrontation about the nature of "true Islam"" (Jacobsen 2006: 268-269; see section 2.1.6). However, whether or not this development should be recognized as "paradoxical" will be further discussed in Chapter 8.

Chapter 7. Non-Islamic fields as the young Muslim women's sources and methods to Islam

The Islamic fields make up only parts of the young Muslim women's "context of Trondheim." They also engage in several non-Islamic fields, where their relational bonds to the other participants build around factors other than Islam (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992: 97-98; see section 3.6). The women spend most of their everyday lives within non-Islamic fields. This means that a great part of their lived Islam, or everyday religion, takes place outside the Islamic fields. Because of this, it is relevant to include the women's non-Islamic fields in this study to explore how the local context might influence individualization processes in the young women's knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam. My intention is not to make a thorough presentation of *all* the local non-Islamic fields the women engage in but to give a general description of some of their main non-Islamic fields and thus some of their non-religious affiliations in Trondheim. The non-Islamic fields that this chapter deals with and structures around are family, study/school, work and friends.

One of the hypotheses of this study, and the basis of the development of the "renewed Islamic basket," is that Muslim women in Trondheim face different levels of knowledge and attitudes about Islam within their various Islamic and non-Islamic fields and that this might influence their knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam (see section 3.6). In Roy's theory of individualization, he emphasizes how the non-Muslim majority may influence individualization processes among Muslims in the West. According to Roy, it is not only the authority crisis within Islam or the lack of external pressure to be a good Muslim from society, culture and law that triggers individualization processes among Muslims in the West. The absence of social authority in the form of *general* social acceptance of religious identity and practices also triggers such processes, he argues (Roy 2004: 148-156; see section 2.1.3).

According to Roy, Islam is not embedded in Western culture(s) and societies. Due to this and the minority situation, Muslims experience a lack of legitimate religious and social authority. Since Islam is not entangled in cultural and social relationships within the West, this influences Muslims, and in particular the individual's relationship to Islam, Roy argues. Western societies do not naturally facilitate Islamic practices or Muslims who want to practice Islam, he claims. Since neither culture nor state supervises the fulfilling of religious commands, nor do individuals experience external pressure to observe such, it becomes solely the individual's responsibility. The lack of Islamic social authority within the West entails an

individualization of religious practices for Muslims, who have to decide what it means and implies to be a Muslim and to facilitate such practices themselves, according to Roy. The lack of social authority also means that Muslims have to explain and elaborate their religious identity and practices for themselves and their non-Muslim surroundings, Roy explains. In Muslim societies, Islam is part of the landscape. This means that they facilitate Islamic practices and that it is socially acceptable to involve oneself in such practices: There are places to pray, the food is *halal* and the calendar is in line with Islamic holidays. This does not mean that all the citizens are Muslims or practicing Muslims but that the social authority supports religious practices and that they do not have to be elaborated or legitimated by the individual Muslim. In Western societies, it is different, Roy observes. Here Muslims face a constant pressure to elaborate on and answer questions about Islam and their religious identities from their non-Muslim surroundings. Because of this, it is difficult to stay "passive" as Muslims, Roy argues, since all actions must be elaborated as choices. As a result, the lack of Islamic social authority in the West entails an encouragement of and commitment to participation in public debates for the Muslim minority (Roy 2004: 148-152).

Roy refers to Eickelman and Piscatori and their "objectification of Islam" to describe Western Muslims' relationship to Islam. The "objectification of Islam" implies that Islam no longer being embedded in culture and society is regarded as one religion among others. For this reason, Islam has become an object that has to be approached as such. The external pressure from non-Muslims, who expect Muslims to answer for and elaborate on Islam, strengthens the objectification of Islam, according to him (Roy 2004: 153-154).

The shift toward an individualization of Islam may lead to various forms of religiosity, ranging from liberal Islam (with an emphasis on values) to neo-fundamentalism (with an emphasis on norms) according to Roy. Roy stresses that an individualization of Islam, placing more responsibility on the individual to define what it means to be Muslim and reconstruct a Muslim community, does not necessarily lead to a secular or liberal way of life. It can also lead to the opposite, which Roy identifies and refers to as neo-fundamentalism. Neo-fundamentalists view Islam as an "all-encompassing religion, but mainly in so far as the daily life of the individual is concerned," he claims (Roy 2004: 245, 148-149). Included in his term neo-fundamentalists we find Salafis, Wahhabis, former Muslim Brothers and participants in other Islamic movements such as Tabligh-i Jama'at and Hizb al-Tahrir (Roy 2004: 234-239; see section 4.5.1). Liberal and neo-fundamentalist forms of Islam offer two different solutions to how Muslim individuals may reconcile the self with religion, Roy explains. The main difference between them is that the first emphasizes Islamic values, while the latter emphasize

Islamic norms in these processes (Roy 2004: 148-149). With Roy's theory of individualization, and in particular the parts that emphasize the majority's influence on individualization processes as a backdrop, I will explore how the non-Islamic fields' knowledge of and attitudes toward Islam might influence the Muslim women's knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam in Trondheim. This will provide me with new material to discuss the theories of individualization in relation to in Chapter 8.

This chapter follows the same structure as Chapter 6. It is structured around the non-Islamic fields the women engage in – family, study/school, work and friends – which each make up a section. Within each section a short description of the women's non-Islamic fields and the variation among the women in terms of these fields' make-up are dealt with first (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992: 97-98; see section 3.4.1). In the second part of each section follows a presentation of whether and how the women use the non-Islamic fields as social and institutional and/or practical and ritual sources to Islam (Smart 1998: 11-12; see sections 3.2-3.2.1 and 5.2). Then follows an analysis of what species of capital the women have access to and are in possession of within each of the non-Islamic fields. In line with Chapter 6, I have paid special attention to what capital is attributed to the women's Islamic knowledge within the various fields (Bourdieu 2006: 5, 8-17; Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992: 98, 118-120; see sections 3.4.2-3.4.4). In relation to this, it is *important* to point out that I have not made independent analyses of the non-Islamic fields' capital nor their active knowledge about Islam. This means that this analysis solely builds on the *women's individual reflections* around how their Muslim identities, Islamic practices and knowledge are encountered and valued and what types of knowledge about Islam they experience as active within these fields. Unlike the local Islamic fields, the women's non-Islamic fields, and particularly the non-Muslim-majority fields, do not have a policy dependent upon Islam. This means that the non-Islamic fields do not have an Islamic strategy, in de Certeau's meaning of the term (de Certeau 1984: xix, 35-37; see sections 3.5.2 and 3.5.4). However, the women's non-Islamic fields still have a dominating picture of Islam that the women must relate to, whether they want it or not, since they are confronted with it through their interaction with participants within these fields. In the fourth part of each section, I therefore explore how the women *tactically relate themselves to the questions, attitudes and opinions* of Islam and Muslim they encounter within their non-Islamic fields. In the fifth part of each section, I use the "renewed Islamic basket" to describe how the different non-Islamic fields influence the women's "normative field" and consequently their knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam. Here I also explore how the non-Islamic fields may trigger different individualization processes or trigger individualization processes

in the women's knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam differently because of their various forms of capital (Roald 2001: 88-92; see section 3.6).

7.1 Family

The women in this study are in different life and family situations. Still, all of them, except one, have family members present in Trondheim. Some have parents and siblings present, others do not. Some have established a family of their own with a husband and children, while others are married but have no children. Some women are single; others are divorced. Some have several relatives and in-laws present; others have none. What makes up the individual woman's field of family in Trondheim depends upon her background and life situation and the reason why she or she and her family came to Norway and Trondheim – as refugees, asylum seekers, work immigrants, students, etc. The women who came as students, or spouses of students, are amongst those with the fewest family members present, while the women who came to Trondheim in the 1980s or 1990s as refugees or asylum seekers or whose families came as such have most family members present. For this reason, there are some institutional differences in the interviewees' family make-up in Trondheim. The interviewees from the Trondheim Mevlana Cultural Organization (Mevlana) and Ahl O'Bait (AOB) came to Trondheim with their families from Turkey or Iraq as work immigrants, refugees or asylum seekers, and, except one, they have several of their closest relatives, such as parents and siblings, present. The Muslim Society Trondheim (MST) interviewees have more varied fields of family due to their diverse backgrounds. One does not have family members present, while others have many (see section 3.8.3).

Independent of its size and composition, the family is for many interviewees the most important social field in Trondheim and one in which they spend a lot of time. As the AOB interviewee Nina describes it:

> **Nina**: First and foremost, family. (…) Number one for me. **E-A**: Why is family important? When you are going to describe yourself? **Nina**: It is what one has. If you lose everything, you only have family. If you are rich or poor, you only have your family to support you, or someone to turn to, if you are in need and such. (…) Like, we have traveled everywhere together. (…) We moved from country to country, so my family has always been the most important (…) for me. And still is, yes.

The women have strong and close ties to family and relatives settled in other countries as well. New technology and modern media make it easy to keep in touch and maintain relational bonds and have shrunk the distance between the women and their close and extended families.

7.1.1 Family as a source and method to Islam

Since the women are from Muslim families, they have more or less been socialized into Islam (see section 5.1.2). For this reason, the families have functioned as social and institutional and practical and ritual sources in regard to all dimensions of Islam for the women throughout their childhood (Smart 1998: 11-12; see section 3.2). The MST interviewees – Dorthe, Frida, Anna and Camilla – and the AOB interviewee, Oda, refer to how they were introduced to Islam by their parents, who taught them the "basics": the five pillars of Islam, the ritual purification, the tenets of faith, stories about the Prophet and his Companions, rules of conduct, ethics and how to live proper Muslim lives. Oda, for instance, was inspired to dress in accordance with Islamic clothing regulations because she wanted to dress like her mother and sisters, who wore *hijab* (see section 5.1.2). Camilla thinks that the parents' influence as practical and ritual sources to Islam for their children cannot be exaggerated:

> **Camilla**: I started to pray when I was seven-eight years old. I think the religion says that you must teach your children to start when it is seven years old. When it passes seven, you have to make it stronger. Then it can sit together and pray together with its parents. (…). When we grow up in a Muslim family, we learn and hear much about what to do when we become adults. What is right and wrong, what is important, which way to follow (…). Parents who do not look after children and who do not talk about it, it becomes hard. (…) If the parents are calm, the child becomes calm. If the parents pray, the children pray as well.

Some of the women's parents have also inspired, motivated and financially supported their daughter's quest for Islamic knowledge. The MST interviewees illustrate this. Guro's father paid for her Islamic vacation camps. Frida's parents hired a private tutor to teach her recite from the Qur'an, while Ida was sent to Islamic classes after her regular school by her parents. Some parents have also tried to motivate their daughters to learn more about Islam by providing videos and books about Islam. It is not only the parents who have served as sources for the women within the field of family but also siblings, grandparents, aunts and uncles – the near and extended family.

Due to different family situations, the women have various experiences and approaches to how family functions as a source and a metod to Islamic knowledge today. The women who live with their parents, Katrine, Mai, Oda and Petra, respectively from Mevlana and AOB (see section 3.8.3), actively use them as sources and authorities. Petra, for instance, identifies her mother as one of her main sources since she prefers social and institutional sources to material ones (see section 5.3.1). Katrine has gained knowledge about Islam just by watching her parents interact with their surroundings. She stresses that Islamic knowledge is not only to be deduced from books or literary knowledge:

Katrine: I say that you can go to many universities and colleges, but you can still be very ignorant. They listen to the politicians, but none of them, either mom or dad, have more than elementary school. Uncle have, but not aunt, but still they know more than, more than the politicians say, through observing, by learning from their parents, who learned from the generation before them. Like, such things, maybe you learn better than just by reading it (…). I will say that those with the highest education are those who listen and watch, rather than just read it from books, because there it is just inflexible things you cannot see beyond. So, it might be that, I have not read the whole Qur'an from top to toe, from the beginning, neither has daddy, but I know a lot about it because my mother has taught me. I have it through my culture. So, it is not, to be a Muslim you do not have to sit down with the Holy Scriptures and grind, grind, grind, right? You just use yourself, use your conscience, use your heart and feel that it is something wrong. You do not have to, "Oh no, that is in the *hadith* and no, then I have to do it." No, that person lacks food, then I must help, right? (…) It is up to you, you learn in a way, like you learn, you just are. You choose to be or not, (laughs), to be or not to be (laughs), like that. (…) Knowledge is transmitted through experience and experiences, what you see and conscience and feelings, rather than books. Because you do not educate to be a Muslim. There are no schools, exams or things like that. You involve yourself. (…) You get your knowledge by watching others. I look at my mom and her friend, like, relationship, how they strengthen each other. Then I try to do the same with my friends, so we can strengthen each other. Then it moves on. Then we have, then I have understood most of the Qur'an just by watching it, rather than by reading it page from page, right? Then I have understood the main message. Of course, I have to read it before I die (…) But I have understood what my religion is all about. I know it.

Katrine gives us a glimpse into how practical and ritual sources may work. She claims to have gained much of her knowledge about Islam from her mother's words and actions. She does not believe that scriptural studies are either the main or the best way to gain knowledge about Islam. Instead, she prefers to use good role models and examples as sources. Katrine uses her inner feelings and conscience as moral compasses and sources as well. She thinks that her feelings can guide her to proper behavior. Katrine's use of and emphasis on practical and ritual sources should be seen in relation to her definition of Muslims: "A Muslim is someone who has God in her thoughts and heart" (see section 5.1) as well as in relation to her emphasis on personal behavior and in particular how she treats people around her in her Muslim self-definition (see section 5.1.2). Katrine's stress on inner qualities shows that she is oriented toward the ethical and legal dimension of Islam. Thus, it is understandable that she prefers living practical and ritual sources to material ones. However, she does not view her parents solely as sources to Islam's ethical and juridical dimension but rather as sources for the Qur'an's main message and Islam in general.

Anna and Nina have parents and siblings present in Trondheim but do not live with them. Still, they use them as sources to knowledge about Islam, however not as often as they used to. Before our second interview, Nina, who is a member of AOB, asked her father about differences between Sunni and Shiite Muslims as part of her preparation. She also uses her mother as a social and institutional source: "I can still ask about things if I am insecure. It can be whether Islam and tradition have intertwined, then I can get insecure. Is it Islam or tradition? Then I ask my mother." The MST interviewee Anna still uses her family as a source, too, but in other ways than she did earlier.

> **Anna**: Sometimes, or often, not sometimes, most of the time one will find many opinions about one topic. (…) Then I go to my dad, or father-in-law, or someone I know have knowledge about that topic, and then I ask which one of the persons who wrote that book is more moderate, does not hold extreme opinions. Because I am definitely against extreme opinions, even if they are right. (…) Do you understand? For instance, sometimes the Prophet has done things in different ways. (…) But each case has its history, so I want to find the one closest to mine. So, daddy tells me that this author or that imam or that, he has good thoughts. Sometimes even those imams that I like have opinions that I do not like, so then I will go to another. Until I, not until I find someone that I want, because then you switch religion after your own taste, but something that make sense. Make sense. To explanations that make sense. So then, I choose.

Anna uses her father and father-in-law to gain knowledge about various Islamic scholars', imams' and authors' backgrounds and positions and thus as "screening tools" (see section 5.2.6). The knowledge they provide makes it possible for Anna to orient herself in the number of opinions and solutions she encounters in her individual studies and to find solutions suitable for her and her situation. She credits her family, particularly her father and father-in-law, with much Islamic knowledge. For this reason, they function as valuable social and institutional sources and discussion partners for her:

> **Anna**: Internet, there you can find the ideology, different ideologies, different opinions about people. What I get from my father and father-in-law, because I trust what they say, trust the persons, often, and then they can give me different opinions about things due to experience. I can ask my father something, and he says "when I was there, I believed that. But then I discovered that it was like this." So, experiences, from trustworthy humans, trustworthy sources. And I believe, because I discuss a lot with them because I have much trust in them (…). Often, I have an opinion, so I read around, and then I go to the root of my calmness. I know that I calm down when I get their opinions, but it does not mean that I agree with them all the time. **E-A**: No, but it is their experience **Anna**: Yes, and their opinions. Often, they are right. Many times, I have been wrong. "No, no, no, that is just nonsense." Then I go back to what they said, and it is true what they said.

This means that Anna uses her family as a source to Islamic knowledge, particularly contextual knowledge about scholars' and imams' backgrounds and as examples of trustworthy opinions and experiences.

The women whose parents live outside Trondheim do not identify them as their main current sources to Islam. Instead, a few of them claim not to use them as sources anymore. Julie, for instance, regards her father as a "Muslim by tradition," and does not use him as a source because she does not ascribe him with much Islamic knowledge. Hanne regards her parents' knowledge about Islam as a mixture between religion and local tradition, and instead of using them as sources she provides them with new knowledge about Islam's practical and ritual dimension, however, with varying results (see section 5.3.1).

Some of the women's' husbands are also used as sources. Dorthe and Frida, for instance, learn about *hadith* from their husbands, who attend *hadith* lectures at the Dar El Eman Islamic Center's (DIC's) mosque (see sections 5.2.5 and 6.4.2). Dorthe and the other MST

interviewees, Julie and Ida, usually turn to their husbands with religious questions or to discuss Islam with them. They also read the Qur'an and study Islam together with their husbands and thus make their quest for knowledge a collective project. For instance, Dorthe and her husband read and study the Qur'an together daily. According to her: "It is one of the most important moments that we share, I think." Ida uses her husband as a source for local prayer and fasting times. She also appreciates his role as her discussion partner; he helps her transform theoretical knowledge about Islam into practical knowledge (see section 5.2.6). Julie believes that she can turn to her husband with all kinds of questions:

> **Julie**: It is like if I am in doubt about something (…) Yes, if I for instance do not know what to do in a specific situation (…) then I will ask someone, how does one act in those situations? (…) Then my husband will, if he knows the answer he will say, "Yes, my mother used to do this and that." (…) Or, we will look it up, because, for instance, it was something, when you have your period, for instance, when you have finished it you should bathe in a certain way. (…) I shall take a bath. **E-A**: *Ghusl,* the large ritual purification? **Julie**: *Ghusl*, for instance, yes. Such practical things.

This means that Julie uses her husband as a source for all different types of knowledge about Islam, including details concerning women's purification rituals. Anna uses her husband as a source as well but in a different way than the other women:

> **Anna**: My husband I pick because his opinions are the opposite of mine. We are very different. Then I take the other side, the other opinions, and sometimes I get good ideas. (…) Our opinions are always different. So, then I learn about the other person's thoughts, in case I get in a discussion, I can be prepared.

Anna uses family members as sources regarding the diversity within Islam. There are a number of different opinions about Islamic topics and questions, and by turning to her family, Anna accesses some of those.

Siblings are also referred to as sources to Islam by some of the women, such as Oda and Barbro. Barbro uses her siblings as sources and discussion partners. One of her siblings also functions as an intermediary to the imam in Oslo, whom she uses as an external religious authority, since she prefers her sibling to call and talk to the imam instead of her (see section 5.2.5). Some turn to family members that are not residing in Trondheim or Norway with their

religious questions, too. For instance, when Guro moved to Trondheim, she was confused about the prayer times because there was no sunset. In this situation, she got advice from one of her in-laws who lives outside Norway about how to deal with the situation.

The interviewees who have children approach the field of family as a source and method to Islam from another angle as well, namely as transmitters of religion. These women regard themselves as their children's main social and institutional and/or practical and ritual sources to Islam together with the children's fathers. Some of the women regard it as a religious and personal duty to introduce their children to Islam at a young age. For instance, Frida tries to be a good teacher and role model for her children. She tells them stories about the Prophet Muhammad and his Companions and teaches them how to recite short *sura*s and their meanings. She performs religious rituals and practices in front of her children and teaches them about Islamic rules of conduct, such as that they should not lie nor hurt other persons' feelings. Frida recognizes this as "normal behavior," but in front of her children, she emphasizes that they are Islamic rules of conduct and the "right way" to live. Camilla and her husband read the Qur'an to their child and pray together in front of him/her. She believes that it is the parents' responsibility to introduce their child to Islam be being good role models and to raise them as Muslims by words and actions. Camilla, amongst other, refers to Islamic guidelines for how to raise children when she describes and explains how she teaches her child about Islam. She will teach her child how to pray when he/she turns seven because, as shown above, she believes it to be a recommended act within Islam (see section 4.3.1). Thus, the interviewees who are mothers emphasize the parents' important role and duty to socialize their children into Islam.

Even though the interviewees find themselves in different family situations, the field of family and its participants function as social and institutional and/or practical and ritual sources to Islam for the women in one way or another.

7.1.2 The women's capital within the field of family

The women relate to the participants within their family field in Trondheim as daughters, sisters, wives, mothers and/or in-laws – some from just one position, such as Dorthe, who only has her husband present, and others from several, such as Anna and Nina, who have several family members present. Some of the positions have more roles and expectations attached to them than others have. For instance, Anna points out that she has been given more responsibility from her parents than her younger siblings have due to her position as "big sister" and that she has earned respect from her parents and siblings by fulfilling that role. The women with children emphasize that their position as mothers entails responsibility for their family's

wellbeing and the upbringing of their children, including introducing them to Islam, and that they earn status and respect due to this. In this way, the women have access to a sort of institutionalized cultural capital through their positions within their families, however not a form that requires educational qualifications (Bourdieu 2006: 15-16).

Within the field of family, the women have access to their family members' embodied Islamic knowledge and material sources, such as books, literature and videos about Islam. How much and what kind of knowledge capital they have access to is influenced by their family situation and who makes up this field for them. For instance, Petra and Oda, who live with their parents and siblings, have much more direct access to Islamic knowledge within their family field than Lene, who lives with her children, has. The women who have few or no family members present in Trondheim still interact with them through social media. Thus, they have access to their family members' knowledge even though there are variations concerning if and how they use them as sources (see section 7.1.1). In addition to family members' embodied Islamic knowledge, the women have access to family members' experiences of living as Muslims and their opinions concerning various Islamic topics, such as scholars, authorities and imams, which some of the women, including Anna, use as sources to Islam (see section 7.1.1). By having access to family members' embodied cultural capital, some of the women also access the skills and qualifications they need to "consume" knowledge about Islam in an objectified state, such as Arabic literature about Islam (Bourdieu 2006: 10-14). Petra, for instance, who struggles with reading Arabic, gains access to the content of Arabic books about Islam through her mother (see section 5.3.1).

The interviewees have access to various types of knowledge within their families. Some have access to material knowledge about Islamic sources and methods, such as Frida and Dorthe, who learn about the *hadith* literature's form, content and soundness from their husbands, or Petra, who learns about Shia Islamic scriptures and commentary literature from her mother. Others have access to social and institutional knowledge, such as Anna, who generates knowledge about various Islamic scholars' or imams' positions and backgrounds from her family. Moreover, the women can access practical and ritual, ethical and legal, mythical, doctrinal and experiential knowledge about Islam from their families by discussing Islamic beliefs, rituals, practices, material sources and rules of conduct with their families or watch them perform religious rituals and practices or follow Islamic rules of conduct. Thus, the women have access to knowledge about all dimensions of Islam, including knowledge about Islamic source materials and basic knowledge about *ibadat* and *mu'amalat* – knowledge they they seek, within their families (Smart 1998: 11-22; see sections 3.1, 5.2.1 and 7.1.1).

Compared to the non-Islamic-majority fields, the women experience the level of active Islamic knowledge within their family field as overall high (see sections 7.2.2 and 7.3.2). This does not mean that their families consist of religious experts or Islamic authorities but that their family members possess embodied knowledge about Islam by virtue of being Muslims and members of a Muslim family. The women ascribe some family members with more Islamic knowledge than others. For instance, Petra and Mai ascribe their parents with more knowledge than their siblings because of their parents' background and upbringing in a Muslim country. Several of the women's parents have a form of educational qualification in Islamic studies because they have had Islamic classes at school or attended other Islamic educational activities (see section 5.3.1). This does not mean that they have a religious education *per se* but that Islamic studies have been a part of their primary or secondary education. However, some of the women have participants within their family field with institutionalized cultural capital in the form of academic qualifications in Islam. Ida, Petra and Anna, amongst others, have grandparents, parents or in-laws with such qualifications (Bourdieu 2006: 15-16; see section 3.4.2).

The field of family functions as a "safe space" for women's religious practices. As members of a Muslim family, no matter its size or composition, the women find acceptance of their faith and religious practices. This means that they can perform the ritual prayer, fast during Ramadan and dress in accordance with Islamic clothing regulations without being encouraged to explain or elaborate on why and how they do it. They have access to places to perform the ritual purification, *wudu*, and to pray. Moreover, they can eat the food they are served without worrying about whether or not it is *halal*. In this way, the women's fields of family facilitate religious practices in various ways. In addition, they provide the women with access to other practicing Muslims and thus collective rituals, practices and celebrations. For instance, Dorthe and Camilla perform the ritual prayer together with their husbands. Barbro breaks the fast and eats the evening meal, *iftar,* together with her siblings, and Oda celebrate Shia holidays together with her parents and siblings. The women find that family members encourage and inspire them to perform religious rituals and practices, too. For instance, Nina's mother still encourages her to fast and reminds her to catch up with fasts she has missed even though she is an adult with a family of her own, while Frida and Camilla aim to be good Muslim role models for their children (see section 7.1.1). Thus, the women find that their families both accept and expect them to be Muslims and that they acknowledge that the religious identity entails different practices.

As Muslims within Muslim families, the women experience that their religious identity and practices are acknowledged and highly valued. In their childhood, the women were introduced to Islam by their parents (see section 5.1.2). At present, some of the women aim to raise their children to become good Muslims. The women who are married have Muslim spouses and feel that they and their husbands share a mutual respect for and appreciation of each other's religious identities. Thus, Islam interweaves within the women's social relationships in their field of family in Trondheim. As members of Muslim families, the women experience that the other participants within this field share their close relationship to Islam. This means that even though there might be differences in how individual family members understand or practice Islam, they have a positive attitude toward the religion. As Mai describes it: "(…) I think my parents, family, have an idyllic view of Islam." Thus, there is much correspondence between the women and their fields of family's pictures of and attitudes toward Islam.

Knowledge about Islam is also appreciated and respected within the field of family. This is reflected in the effort participants within this field put forth to gain such knowledge. Several of the women have family members who have attended Islamic educational activities and/or have been or are engaged in individual quests for knowledge about Islam (see section 5.3.1). Some of the women have also experienced that family members have encouraged them to increase their knowledge about Islam either by providing them with material sources, such as books about Islam, or social or institutional sources, such as Qur'an teachers, etc. (see sections 5.2.4 and 7.1.1). Petra's, Mai's and Anna's parents support their daughters' individual quests for knowledge by functioning as sources to Islam for them. Frida and Dorthe attend Islamic educational activities together with their husbands, and Dorthe and Julie read and study Islamic scriptures and books regularly with their husbands. In this way, they have turned their individual quest for knowledge into a collective study project with family members (see sections 6.4 and 7.1.1). Since the interviewees discuss religious questions and topics, and thus function as discussions partners for family members, they experience an appreciation of their embodied Islamic knowledge. This experience is further strengthened when the women embrace the role as transmitters of Islam for their own children (see section 7.1.1).

Not only religious identity and Islamic knowledge are appreciated within the women's fields of family. Their individual personalities, qualities, behavior and family positions influence the relationship they have to other participants within this field. The women find that their families appreciate them for who they are, how they treat persons around them, what they do, their personal skills and what they achieve. For this reason, the women emphasize non-

religious and human qualities in their reflections concerning how to earn respect and appreciation within their families. For instance, Anna feels that the care, love and compassion she shows participants within this field are highly valued. Education is also highly appreciated within some families. According to Petra, her parents are proud of her academic qualifications, which may provide her with a proper job. Anna's family values education as well but for other reasons:

> **Anna**: Education has always been important in my family. (…) In particular for women. (…) I, for instance, and my sisters, were very focused on taking an education, and he [her father – E-A] is very sad that I have not yet completed my education. (…) That is one of the reasons he feels sorry for me. He says that it is true that you can claim your right through laws, equal opportunities, and religion demands equal opportunities. However, when it comes to the truth, you cannot gain respect if you do not own respect. I know that is sounds silly, but that is life. You can require respect through your personality, your appearance, your education and how you talk. So, education has always been important for my father. He says that the more you accomplish do not make you are a better person, but you are allowed to require more from the people around you, how they treat you. At least in our community. I think that it can be a bit like that in Norway as well.

Education is appreciated within Anna's family because it is regarded as an achievement that may influence a person's relationship to their surroundings. According to Anna's father, one's educational background is one of the things one can expect and demand that those around them respect. If people respect you, you can expect to be treated better than if they disrespect you. Thus, education is regarded as a means to be treated with respect within Anna's family.

That children respect their parents and siblings and that family members help, support, care about and treat each other with respect are also highly appreciated within the fields of family. Some women point out that it is of special importance to respect one's parents. Even though the women regard it as "common good behavior," some believe that Islam has influenced how they treat their parents as well, as is the case with Katrine.

> **E-A**: So, your view of your mother is shaped by Islam? **Katrine**: Yes, yes. She emphasizes that as well. If she says no, she adds like: "You know that God has said that heaven is placed under the feet of women?" and reminds me of that all the time. (…)

(Laughs). She does. It is true. Not matter how old you are, if you are 40 years, you must bow for your mother. Dad cannot do anything without your mother. So, it is not like the culture here, "No, when you turn 18 I decide over my own body." We cannot, we are not allowed to be that selfish. I have to listen to my mother and father, is it okay, before I tattoo my whole body or put 20 piercings in my face. (…) I feel that they have earned that role, that I should discuss things with them. In particular, the large decisions, and I believe that I need it myself as well.

Even though Katrine believes that Islam has influenced how she views and treats her parents, she also thinks that they have earned the respect she shows them by being her parents. According to Katrine, the role of parents is highly respected within Islam. Because of this, she must treat her parents in a more respectful manner than she believes is expected by her non-Muslim surroundings. Katrine believes that she needs someone to discuss individual choices with and for this reason benefits form involving her parents in her life. Nina, on the other hand, refers directly to *hadith* to explain why it is important for Muslims to respect their parents and in particular their mother.

Nina: In Islam, women are most taken care of I think because we have a *hadith* that says: "Paradise is below the ground of mothers." No, "Paradise is below the mother, the feet of the mothers," if you understand what I mean? **E-A**: Yes, I have heard that how you treat your mother and **Nina**: Yes, and we have, the Prophet, we have a *hadith* that says that a man asked the Prophet about what is most important, my mother or my father? Then the Prophet said: "Your mother first." Then he asked again, and he said: "Your mother, your mother and then your father." (…) So, it is like **E-A**: What do you think this mean, that the mother **Nina**: That you shall respect your mother three times more than you respect your father, like. (…) Because she is the one who has the kids. It is often war in Islamic countries you know, so, yes, she is the one that raises the kids.

All the women have access to social capital within their field of family. However, due to various backgrounds and life situations, there are variations in what forms of, and how much, social capital they possess and have access to in Trondheim (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992: 119; see section 7.1). One of the Indonesian interviewees from MST does not have any family members present in Trondheim. However, she has managed to maintain close bonds to her family due to new technology and social media and can still generate social capital from it but

not in the form of family networks and contacts in Trondheim. The rest of the women have different numbers of family members present (see sections 3.8.3, 7.1 and 7.1.1). Because of this, there are individual differences among the women's volume of social capital – meaning the family networks and connections they can mobilize in Trondheim and what help and support they can generate from these (Bourdieu 2006: 17; see section 3.4.2). All women with family members in Trondheim have close relational bonds to them. Barbro, for instance, spends a lot of time with the siblings she has present. They live together, provide each other with company and support and help each other as best as they can. The women with more family members present have access to more social capital within their family networks. Oda, for instance, always has a sibling, a parent or a relative to ask for help with her studies, or to turn to with personal problems. Nina's and Anna's family networks can provide them with all kinds of support and help, such as babysitting, housework, transport, paper work, studies, etc. Through their family members, the women establish contacts outside their families as well and in this way expand their social networks and contacts in Trondheim.

Some of the women with small family networks in Trondheim recognize non-relatives as part of their families. Some of the Indonesian women, such as Emma, regard their Indonesian Muslim friends in Trondheim as family members, while the persons Katrine refers to as her "aunt and uncle" are not really her relatives but close friends of her parents (see section 7.1.1). These women's extensive use of the term family can be seen as a response to their small family networks present in Trondheim. Even though it is possible to argue that Emma relates to her Indonesian Muslim friends as a "sister in Islam" and that Katrine relates to her parents' friends from the position of a "niece," the non-relatives are not included in this analysis of how the field of family functions as a source and method to Islam for the women. Instead, they are included in the women's fields of friends, which is dealt with in section 7.4.

Within the field of family, the women possess and have access to economic capital. The women who live with their parents are financially supported by them and provided with a place to live, food, clothes, money, etc. For instance, one of women received a car as a gift from her parents when she turned 18. The married women share their finances in the form of incomes and outcomes with their husbands. The participants within the family field help each other economically in other ways as well. According to Anna, she does not have to borrow money from family members because they simply give it to her if she asks about financial help. In return, she will do the same with them. Anna and her siblings can buy each other things such as clothes, accessories or plane tickets instead of lending each other money. If Anna's sister asks her to buy her a purse, she will do it because she knows that her sister will return the favor

later. Thus, even though most of the interviewees have small family networks in Trondheim, they have close relational bonds to the participants within these networks from which they can generate cultural, social and economic capital.

7.1.3 The women's tactical maneuvers within the field of family

The participants within the fields of family are primarily bound together by familiar relationships and positions, not religion. This means that even though the women engage in religious activities within this field, their families are not established by or organized around such activities nor Islam but rather the participants' family bonds. However, since all the women come from Muslim families and identify their family members in Trondheim as Muslim, Islam influences this non-Islamic field. I have not made a thorough study of all the participants within the women's fields of family's sources and methods to Islam. Because of this, I cannot determine whether or not all participants within one field of family are oriented around *one* or the *same* Islamic methodology or strategy (de Certeau 1984: xix, 35-37; see section 3.5.4), nor is it my intent to do so. However, it is possible to draw the contours of what Islamic methodologies surround the women's quest for knowledge within their families by looking at what local Islamic fields the women and some of their family members engage in.

Some of the methodologies are more obvious and clearer than others are. Nina, Oda, Petra and their family members identify as Twelver Shiites and are engaged in the local Islamic institutional field of AOB. This means that it is the Twelver Shia methodology and thus Twelver Shia sources and methods that dominate their fields of family (see sections 4.3.4 and 5.3.1). Katrine's, Mai's and Lene's fields of family are surrounded by the Hanafi methodology. They and their family members identify as Hanafi Muslims, are members of the local Islamic institutional field Mevlana and use Hanafi sources and methods (see sections 4.3.2 and 5.3.1). It is a more complex task to identify what Islamic methodologies surround the MST women's fields of family since they and their family members may be involved in one, or several, local Islamic field(s) (see sections 4.6 and 6.1.3). For instance, Anna and her mother engage only in the local Islamic institutional field of MST. They use all the Sunni Islamic law schools and international Islamic scholars that represent the Muslim Brotherhood's (MB's) methodology as sources and authorities (see section 5.3.1). The Indonesian women's fields of family in Trondheim are influenced by MST's and DIC's glocal methodologies, and thus the MB and the Shafii methodologies, due to their and some of the women's husbands' engagement in the local Islamic field of KMIT (see section 4.5.2). Moreover, two of the Indonesian women are engaged in the Sister Group (SG), whose sources and methods are similar to Islam Net's (IN's)

Salafi methodology (see sections 3.8.7 and 4.5.1). Several of the MST women study Islam with family members, so we may expect that they mutually influence, and are influenced by, their family field's sources and to Islam. Consequently, various Sunni Islamic law schools and Sunni Islamic movements influence the MST women's fields of family. The contours show that where the AOB and Mevlana women's fields of family are mainly surrounded by *one* Islamic methodology, hence the Twelver Shia and the Hanafi methodologies, the MST women's fields of family are surrounded by *several*. This can be seen as a result of the MST women's more varied backgrounds and their and their family members' involvement in more, sometimes overlapping, local Islamic fields (see sections 4.5.1, 4.5.2 and 4.6).

Oda, Petra, Mai and Katrine, who all live with their parents, tactically use them as immediate sources. Petra, who has trouble with reading Arabic, uses her mother tactically to gain knowledge about the Islamic scriptures' contents. She asks her mother to search the Islamic scriptures for answers to her questions and to provide her with different interpretations from the Shia commentary literature, *tafsir* (see sections 5.3.1 and 7.1.1). In this way, she uses her mother's Arabic skills and material sources to increase her Islamic knowledge. Katrine's tactic is to use her mother as a role model of how to be a Muslim. This means that she uses her mother's words, actions and behavior as sources to Islam (see section 7.1.1). Anna tactically uses her father and her father-in-law as "screening tools" in regard to Sunni Islamic scholars' and imams' backgrounds whose opinions she encounters on various Islamic websites. Instead of running online checks on these persons on her own, she prefers to gain this type of information from sources she regards as trustworthy (see sections 5.2.6 and 7.1.1). Anna also uses family members as sources to knowledge about Muslims' different perspectives and opinions on religious topics and questions, and thus as sources regarding the diversity within Islam (see section 7.1.1). Some of the married women use their husbands as immediate sources as well. Ida, for instance, turns to her husband if she wants a quick answer. If he cannot answer her, she will ask the imam at KMIT. Ida's tactic is also to use her husband as a discussion partner in order to transform the theoretical content of her material sources into practical and ritual knowledge she can use in her everyday life (see section 5.2.6). This means that the interviewees' tactics are to operate within, and in relation to, the Islamic methodologies that surround their fields of family. They are tactically using participants within this field and their embodied Islamic knowledge, language skills and Islamic source materials to increase their own individual knowledge about Islam.

Even though the women have access to Islamic knowledge within their families, they search for knowledge outside this field, too. Their reflections around differences between the

types of knowledge they gain from their families and from their self-studies reveal some of the reasons why they do this. For instance, according to Nina and Oda, they can access knowledge about fundamental Islamic beliefs and practices from their families. Their self-studies, on the other hand, can provide them with additional knowledge. By involving themselves in individual searches for knowledge, they have the possibility to elaborate the knowledge they gain from their families and to expand it to include elements that are not recognized as fundamentals, such as knowledge about recommended actions that might entail religious rewards that they can choose to implement in their life or not. In line with this, we have Anna, who argues that her self-studies can provide her with "aha moments," which her family cannot. According to Anna, her family can provide her with much useful Islamic knowledge. However, the knowledge she is offered is a result of her parents "picking and choosing" from the Islamic basket and their individual judgments of what is important and relevant to know and not (Hjärpe 1997, 1998; see section 2.2.5). Through her self-studies, she encounters a broader specter of Muslim voices and opinions than her parents represent, which may provide her with new ideas, perspectives and thoughts and thus "aha moments." Other interviewees regard their involvement in self-studies as a natural part of growing up. Petra points out that as a child she learned everything she needed to know about Islam from her parents. As she grew older, she wanted to learn more and increase her knowledge through self-studies. Thus, she thinks it is necessary to gain knowledge about Islam from parents and self-studies to maximize one's total amount of Islamic knowledge. In line with Petra, Frida and Ida regard the knowledge about Islam that they gain from their families and their self-studies as complementary. According to Frida, it is also important for her wellbeing to involve herself in individual studies: she feels proud of herself when she studies Islam on her own because it requires more effort from her.

Lene's and Julie's reasons for involving themselves in self-studies diverge a bit from the rest. Neither of them uses their parents as sources to Islam at present because they do not ascribe them with much Islamic knowledge (see section 5.3.1). For this reason, they regard it as necessary to be involved in self-studies to gain proper and sound knowledge about Islam. Lene argues that it is important to gain knowledge about Islam from several sources to avoid incorrect beliefs and practices because one's parents do not necessarily embody a high level of Islamic knowledge. To exemplify this, she points to how her mother wears *hijab*. Lene's mother covers only parts of her hair with the *hijab*, a practice Lene identifies and classifies as inferior to covering all the hair. Lene argues that if she had not got involved in self-studies, she would probably have dressed like her mother and pursued an incorrect understanding of the

Islamic clothing regulations. Julie emphasizes the individual's responsibility for one's own life and actions in her explanation of why she engages in self-studies:

> **Julie**: (…) as one says, at the Day of Judgment, if I have done something wrong, then I will just, then I can just say: "Well, but I learned it from him." (…) Then God will tell me, "I gave you eyes and ears. You can read for yourself." **E-A**: So, it is not enough to blame others? You owe it to yourself to study? **Julie**: Yes, exactly. You can never blame another person.

7.1.4 Family's influence on the women's knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam

The women's fields of family have functioned as their primary source to Islam throughout their childhood. Today, the women still use participants within this field as social and institutional and/or practical and ritual sources (see sections 5.3.1 and 7.1.1). Because of this, the women's families influence their knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam in various ways. The women are both in possession of, and have access to, social, cultural and economic capital within their families. There are, however, individual differences between them when it comes to how much, and what forms of, social, cultural and economic capital they can generate from their families in Trondheim. The women with the largest family networks in Trondheim are the ones that can generate the most capital from their field of family (see section 7.1.2).

Even though parents do not function as vital sources for all the women today, the family is still a field where the women can make their individual quests for Islamic knowledge into collective projects by including parents, siblings, spouses, relatives, in-laws or children in their studies. The women regard the family as an important transmitter of religion. This is reflected in how some of the women, who have children of their own, view it as an obligatory duty for parents to introduce their children to Islam and to put forth effort to raise their children to become Muslims (see section 7.1.1).

As shown in Chapter 5, even though there are some exceptions, there is much correspondence between the women's and their parents' sources and methods to Islam. Both sides more or less follow the same Islamic methodologies even though there are some differences between what material and social and institutional sources they have access to, and prefer to use, in their individual quests for knowledge (see section 5.3.1). The women with backgrounds from Twelver Shia or Hanafi families use, respectively, Twelver Shia or Hanafi sources and methods to increase their knowledge about Islam. This means that these women's fields of family have much influence on their normative field and the sources and methods they

choose to activate from the Islamic basket (Roald 2001: 88-92; Hjärpe 1997, 1998; see sections 2.2.5 and 3.6). There is much overlap between the MST women's and their families' sources and methods as well. The MST women use family members as sources to Islam, and they study Islam and discuss religious questions with participants within this field. However, due to the MST women's various backgrounds, and some of the women's and their family members' involvement in more than one local Islamic field, their fields of family are surrounded by different Sunni Islamic methodologies that influence what sources and methods the women choose from the Islamic basket (Hjärpe 1997, 1998; see sections 2.2.5 and 7.1.3).

The women's fields of family inspire and support their quest for knowledge by providing them with social and institutional and/or practical and ritual and material sources to Islam. This does not mean that all the participants within this field choose the same sources and methods or rituals or religious practices from the Islamic basket since individual differences are both expected and accepted (Hjärpe 1997, 1998; see section 2.2.5). For instance, Mai's and Petra's mothers prefer material sources such as Islamic scriptures and books, while Mai and Petra prefer verbal and thus social and institutional sources to Islam. Mai's mother regards it as normal that Mai spends less time on Islamic studies than she does since Mai is busy with her discipline studies and is just a "child" in her mother's eyes. Anna, on the other hand, spends more time on Islamic studies and performs more additional rituals than her mother does since she is insecure regarding what "Islamic path" to follow, while her mother has found a "path" suitable for her (see section 5.3.1). This means that even though the women's families influence their normative field, it is possible for the women to make individual choices of what to activate from the Islamic basket.

Moreover, Islam has social authority within the women's fields of family. The women encounter acceptance and appreciation of their religious identity, religious practices and religious knowledge from their families. This means that even though Islam is not enmeshed in the cultural and social relationships within the non-Muslim majority in Trondheim, it is intrinsic to the women's relationships within their fields of family (Roy 2004: 148-156). Because of this, the women do not have to elaborate on or legitimize their religious identity or practices for their family members since it is socially accepted to practice Islam within their families (Roy 2004: 148-152). The women can also use family members and relatives as sources to Islam and as discussion partners. In this way, the field of family influences their knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam by encouraging and facilitating it.

The field of family's support can also contribute to individualization processes in the women's knowledge acquisition of Islam. For instance, when Anna's father and father-in-law

provide her with knowledge about various Sunni Islamic scholars' and imams' positions, opinions and backgrounds, they make it easier for her to make individual decisions concerning whom and what to follow (see section 7.1.1). By having access to her family members' embodied Islamic knowledge and experiences of living as Muslims, it becomes easier for Anna to orient herself in relation to the number of Islamic authorities, opinions and solutions she comes across in her individual studies. In this way, her family both inspires and equips her with relevant knowledge to make individual choices concerning whom and what to follow in different situations and thus to practice a "restricted bricolage" (Jacobsen 2006: 212-229; see section 2.1.6). On the other hand, since both Anna and her field of family are surrounded by MST's "glocal" methodology, and thus MB's global methodology, it is also possible to argue that Anna's actions of picking and choosing from among various social and institutional Islamic authorities and sources are completely in line with this methodology. Because MB's methodology allows one to use all the Sunni Islamic law schools and their legal regulations as sources to Islamic knowledge (see section 4.4.2). In this way, Anna's choices and actions should not be regarded as individualized in the form of being disconnected from Islamic authorities or institutions (Roy 2004: 17-29, 148-149, 156-164; Jacobsen 2006: 267-270). Rather, the methodology she follows allows her to choose from among a greater variety of Sunni Islamic authorities and sources than the traditional law schools' methodologies do and thus relate to Islamic sources in ways that can be categorized as individualized by Jacobsen and McGuire (Jacobsen 2006: 212-229; McGuire 2002: 292-294; see sections 2.1.1 and 2.1.6). Thus, it is possible to argue that Anna's field of family and the support it shows her individual quest for knowledge strengthen her use and thus her field of family's use of MB's methodology. In this way, her field of family has much influence on her knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam.

7.2 Study/school

Through their studies, the women engage in various school and study fields. In the following presentation, I will not treat each school or study program as separate "fields" but will include all the women's schools and study programs under the category "field of study." Katrine, Oda and Lene undertake upper secondary education at different upper secondary schools in Trondheim. Mai, Petra, Dorthe, Ida and Guro undertake higher education and/or Norwegian courses at the local university college or the local university and are thus involved in various educational programs and studies. Frida is actively engaged in the field of study through her children's school attendance. In addition, several of the women, such as Anna, Barbro, Nina,

Camilla and Emma, have experiences as students at upper secondary schools or higher educational programs in Trondheim through previous studies though they were no longer students during the interviews. As a part of their studies, some of the women hold apprentice positions within local public institutions. For this reason, they are involved in two different non-Islamic fields through their studies: study and work. Even though these fields intertwine through the women's studies, they are treated as separate non-Islamic fields because the women hold different positions and interact with different persons within these fields. At study/school, they are just one of the students and relate to their fellow students and teacher as students. At work, they are both students and employees and interact with their colleagues from this double position.

7.2.1 Studies as a source and method to Islam

The "school" has been an important social and institutional and practical and ritual source to Islam for several of the women who grew up or spent most of their childhood outside Trondheim. At school, the Indonesian women both learned *about* Islam and were taught how to *practice* Islam. Dorthe, for instance, learned about the Five Pillars of Islam and was trained in how to perform the ritual purification, *wudu*, and the ritual prayer, *salat*, at school. Anna, Nina, Camilla and Petra, who had spent most of or parts of their childhood within Muslim-majority countries, have similar experiences with the school as an important source to Islam during their childhood.

The women describe the level of Islamic knowledge that they experience as active or dominant within their fields of study to be low and/or lacking among both their teachers and fellow students. Thus, they neither regard nor use it as a social and institutional source to Islam in Trondheim. Muslims as a group constitute only a small religious minority within the women's fields of study. Some women, such as Mai, find themselves to be the only, at least outspoken and visible, Muslim within their study program. Others, such as Petra, are the only openly practicing Muslim within their class and the only person with *hijab*. Since a non-Muslim majority makes up the fields of study, the women have few, if any, living practical and ritual sources to Islam to learn from within this field.

7.2.2 The women's capital within the field of study

It is the women's individual choice to engage in the field of study as students at upper secondary school or higher education. According to the Education Act § 3-1, upper secondary education is not obligatory but an individual right in Norway, while the right to enter higher

education is based upon having achieved upper secondary education or comparable experiences (Forskrift om opptak til høgre utdanning 2017: §§ 2-1 to 2-4, §§ 3-1 to 3-10). With the exception of Frida, who engages in the field as a parent and interacts with teachers and other parents from this position, the women relate to their fellow students and teachers/lecturers from a student position. Cultural capital in the form of positions and titles are hierarchically distributed among the participants based upon achieved academic qualifications. The students are at one end of the hierarchy, while the teachers, due to their embodied cultural capital, are at the other end and have the power to grade the students and to grant them with the educational certificate that they seek (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992: 98; Bourdieu 2006: 15-16; see section 3.4.2). Thus, the participants are not engaging in the field of study on equal premises.

The interviewees have access to various forms of knowledge dependent upon the educational program they enroll in. The educational programs influence what access they have to Islamic knowledge capital within this field, too. Katrine and Oda, being enrolled in regular upper secondary school, have access to knowledge about Islam within the compulsory subject Religion and Ethics (RE) (Utdanningsdirektoratet 2006/Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training 2006). Lene, being enrolled in vocational upper secondary educational programs, does not have access to a similar subject, nor do the women who take part in higher education since religious studies are not a subject within their study programs. Even though only Katrine and Oda have access to a subject that aims to transmit knowledge about religions, including Islam, the other interviewees face different types of "knowledge about Islam" through their interactions with participants in their fields of study.

The women experience various forms of knowledge about Islam as active within the field of study. Overall, they describe the level of knowledge as low. Katrine describes her classmates' knowledge about Islam as lacking and is critical in regard to how Islam is presented within the RE subject at her school:

> **Katrine**: They know too little (...). (…) all the time people have said: "how do you have the energy to take over classes, can you not just let the teacher deal with it?" No, because then it becomes, the religion becomes like: "Yes, Muhammad is the Prophet of the Muslims, he lived many years ago." It does not provide them with understanding; it does not answer their questions (…).

According to Katrine, the knowledge about Islam transmitted within her RE lessons is neither relevant nor enough. She is critical toward her teacher's systematic, historical and theoretical

outsider approach to Islam, which, according to her, does not provide the students with a deeper understanding of Islam nor challenge her classmates' opinions about the religion. When her teachers provide her class with a systematic outsider perspective to Islam, she feels compelled to elaborate on the presentations by providing her fellow students with an insider approach and explanation to some of the topics of discussion. By sharing her embodied Islamic knowledge and her personal experiences of being a Muslim with her classmates, she aims to broaden their knowledge and understanding of Islam and Muslims. In this way, Katrine feels that she functions as a self-appointed source to Islam for her classmates and teachers, not the other way around.

In contrast to Katrine, Oda does not directly criticize her present and former schools' teaching of religious subjects. However, as a Shiite Muslim, she experiences her school's lessons about Islam as not adapted to her confessional affiliation and background but as oriented around a Sunni norm. Thus, the school does not function as a source to knowledge about Shia beliefs and practices for Oda, who turns to her family and AOB to gain such knowledge. On my question concerning what knowledge about Islam Oda experiences that her classmates possess, she replies:

> **Oda**: Well, we have not precisely discussed it, but I feel that they respect that I wear *hijab* and such, but they do not ask much really. The only questions I get is whether it [the *hijab* – E-A] is cold or warm in the winter (laughs). Such things (laughs). **Nina**: No, but once you got a friend that did not know that you were a Muslim? **Oda**: Oh yes, yes. It was someone in my class that (laughs) **Nina**: Not everybody knows that it is Islamic. **Oda**: Who: "What? Are *you* Muslim?" (laughs). That shocked me. But he was a believer himself but like in another religion. So then, then we like laughed, we did not regard it as negative. **Nina**: No. **Oda**: I do not like to take things negatively.

Even though Oda avoids accurate descriptions of her classmates' level of knowledge about Islam, the example she refers to above does not give the impression that they have much knowledge. The boy who did not recognize Oda's Muslim identity despite the fact that she wears *hijab* cannot serve as a representative for the rest of the students' level of knowledge about Islam. However, he illustrates that some of her classmates lack knowledge about Islamic regulations and rules of conduct and the more "visible" sides of Islam.

The other interviewees' experiences of what Islamic knowledge is active within their fields of study build upon reflections upon questions, utterances and opinions about Islam that

they face from participants within the field. Lene, for instance, gets attention because of her *hijab* and receives many questions about it. For instance, "Why do you have to wear it?," "How does God benefit from your *hijab*?" and "Are you a bad person if you do not wear *hijab*?" Lene has also experienced that some of the participants within the field, including her teachers, base their knowledge about Islam and Muslims on prejudices and generalizations. For instance, once she had a teacher who uttered that all Muslims believe that Norwegian women are whores because they party, drink alcohol and do not look after their children. Even though some of the questions Lene faces about Islam can be regarded as critical, and despite the fact that she has been confronted with prejudices, she ascribes some of her fellow students with an openness and wish to learn more about Islam. For instance, inspired by the "Teatime"[72] campaign on Facebook, some of her fellow students encouraged her to invite them home and talk about Islam and how she lives as a Muslim.

Petra, Mai and Dorthe experience varying degrees of knowledge about Islam as active within their fields of study. Petra has learned that her fellow students' backgrounds influence their knowledge about Islam:

> **E-A**: At, your fellow students, or at [the name of her educational institution – E-A] **Petra**: Mm **E-A**: What do they know about Islam? **Petra**: Well, they know what they have been taught at school. **E-A**: Yes. **Petra**: And, it is differences because some of them took upper secondary school years ago and do not remember, and someone… It is also depended upon what city they have lived in, if there are many Muslims there (…). Well, someone knows more than others (…). But, I do not, how much people know really. (…) I believe it depends upon who their friends, or what kind of friends you have had, for instance, or (…) they are Muslims, they have friends who, Muslim friends, and how practicing the Muslim friends are. I remember when I was in [a European city – E-A], it was a boy who asked me, no, who told me that he has a friend who drinks [alcohol – E-A], and then I said: "Yes, yes it is normal." There are many Muslims who drink and, and he said his name and, he lives in Oslo, because he is originally from Oslo, so I believe that people from Oslo understand a bit more or (…).understand, know a bit more than people who has lived **E-A**: Because there are

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[72] The Norwegian Center against Racism (Antirasistisk Senter) launched the Teatime campaign as their annual public awareness campaign in 2011 (Antirasistisk Senter 2012: 5). The campaign was expected to last for a week, but due to enormous public interest it went on for two years, during which 3,500 tea parties were arranged (Det Norske Kongehus 2013).

more [Muslims – E-A] there or? **Petra**: Yes. (…) Because there are more practicing Muslims there, for instance, than a person who has lived in a small city with few Muslims.

Petra sees an interconnection between her fellow students' backgrounds, particularly their place of origin and age, and their knowledge about Islam. Those who have grown up in cities with a large number of Muslims, and have Muslims friends, have more knowledge about Islam and the Muslim diversity, according to her. Petra is not the only Muslim in her class but the only one with *hijab*. For this reason, Petra and one of her classmates, a Muslim woman who does not wear *hijab*, face many questions concerning their different ways of practicing Islam. To answer these types of questions, they must sometimes refer to their individual opinions, understandings and choices and thus private matters. For instance, Petra's friend who does not wear *hijab* but does observes fasting must explain and legitimate why she chooses to follow one Islamic regulation over another. Although there are exceptions, many of Petra's classmates have little knowledge about the diversity within Islam or among Muslims. Because of this, Petra is encouraged to answer her classmates' questions about general Islamic rituals and regulations and to share her personal decisions and explanations with her fellow students.

Mai and Dorthe encounter many questions about Islam from their fellow students as well. Mai is sometimes impressed by her classmates' knowledge about *sharia*'s regulations, and particularly those they view as unfair, communicated to her through questions such as "Why do women have lesser right to inheritance than men within Islam?" However, even though they have some knowledge about specific Islamic rules and regulations, they lack knowledge about the contextual background or the legal explanation of the rule or regulation. This means that they may know a rule but not the reason behind the rule or its contextual frame, according to Mai. Dorthe, on the other hand, describes the level of Islamic knowledge among her fellow students as overall low:

> **E-A**: Your classmates, do you believe that they know much about Islam? **Dorthe**: No. **E-A**: No? **Dorthe**: No, because I have asked many times, when I have the opportunity to speak with them, and we start to speak about Islam, I always ask what they know about Islam. Almost every time they reply to know nothing, just that Muslims pray five times a day, and that they have Ramadan, and that is it.

Thus, they confirm Dorthe's impression of their level of knowledge about Islam.

The interviewees have different experiences of what kinds of attitude and impressions the participants within the field of study have of Islam and Muslims. Lene describes the participants in her field of study as positive toward Islam. However, as shown above, they also approach her with critical questions and prejudices about Islam. Katrine, Mai, Petra and Frida experience negative attitudes and biased pictures of Islam and Muslims as active within their respective fields. Even though Mai has not directly confronted prejudices, she has the impression that her classmates hold a stereotypic preconception of Islam and Muslims. For instance, she can see that they are surprised when they hear that she speaks the local dialect. And she has a feeling that one day they will ask her why she has signed up for a five-year-long study program when she will be unemployed anyhow. No one has ever asked her that question, and she will not ascribe those thoughts to anyone, either, but she *still* feels that this is how they think. Based upon my material, it is impossible to confirm or reject whether Mai's feelings are rooted in reality or just a product of her own mind. Still, this is what she feels, and she has to deal with these feelings when she interacts with her fellow students. In the field of study, Mai faces attitudes and opinions about Islam different from those she encounters at home:

> **Mai**: The thing is that I think my parents, family, have an idyllic view of Islam. (…) While my fellow students have the complete opposite. I believe that they regard it in a way, indeed, Islam is a strict religion and, there is no freedom at all (…) Such negative words really, I think. (…) They have a completely different view than my family.

Several of the questions Mai receives from her classmates are oriented around Islamic rules and regulations. For this reason, she thinks they view Islam as a strict religion with a minimum of individual freedom. This is very different from her family's view of Islam that she describes as idyllic. Consequently, Mai's engagement with the fields of study and family cause her to be surrounded by opposite views and attitudes toward Islam.

Katrine's field of study's attitudes and images of Islam and Muslims are, according to her, much influenced by the public debate and particularly the political public debate.

> **Katrine**: Recently at my school, it has become so cool the be Høyre [The Right-Wing Party] and FRP [The Progress Party], you have no idea. (…) It is very cool in a way. So (…), so it is like, "Siv Jensen[73] is just so cool," and "immigrants they are like this,

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[73] Siv Jensen has held the position as the leader of the Progress Party since 2006.

bla, bla, bla," and "Oh my God, you are terrorists." After the attack in the USA, I have been called so many things. "You demonstrate just because of a cartoon – you are drama queens," and we hear so many weird things because they do not, the teachers have not managed to provide them with a deeper understanding of religion.

Minor and major national or international events that involve Muslims influence Katrine's classmates' attitudes against Islam and Muslims, too, who face them through critical questions.

Katrine: It is, all the time it is such things that FRP [The Progress Party] constantly brings to the table. I just heard about a case of snikislamisering[74] [Sneak Islamification – E-A] since the Id-thing [the *id al-fitr* holiday – E-A] fell on the same day as a meeting in the election campaign, so no one could show up, and they had to cancel and find another date because of our holiday. Then it was just, from now on religion has started to control the Norwegian society, and that is like snikislamisering. And every time it is brought up, it is Tybring Gjedde[75] who says something, (…) and then people come to me and say: "Why have Muslims blah blah?," "Why you blah blah?" Then they turn against me and forget that I am still Katrine, I am a student and your best friend. If it is something, burning of flags or what should I say, something Muslims have done, then they come to me and say like: "Do you think what they did is right?" Or: "What do you feel, are you like that?" This is the way it is. **E-A**: You have to answer for Islam or? **Katrine**: Yes, then I have to answer for it. All the time. Every time I have to answer for it. (…) But I do not feel that they have to answer if they do us wrong. If they say that all Muslims and immigrants are stabbing Norwegians in their back, then nobody say, then it is like okay, then it was just Tybring Gjedde and FRP who said that. However, when a Muslim does something, then I have to answer for Muslims. Then it is not just Ahmed from Pakistan who did it. No, no, then Katrine from Trondheim upper secondary school must say it. I find that very stupid. Because it is individuals, somebody says something, what do I care? He said it. Do you think it was me? I am not the one who did it.

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[74] Siv Jensen, the leader of the Progress Party, warned against what she referred to as a "Sneak Islamification of Norway" during the election campaign in 2009. A public debate about whether or not it should be allowed to wear hijab as a part of the official police uniform in Norway was one of the cases her statement was based upon (Dagbladet 2009; Haldammen 2009).
[75] An active and public member of the Progress Party.

Katrine experiences that her classmates' lacking knowledge and understanding of Islam make them uphold stereotypic and static views of Muslims. She is often asked to answer for or defend other Muslims' actions or statements because of her Muslim identity. Her study field's generalized view of Islam as a static religion and Muslims as a homogenous group of people, and its limited knowledge about Islam and Muslims, make it difficult for her to nuance or oppose prevailing views as well. For instance, Katrine's classmates expect Muslims to dress and behave in certain ways, and when Katrine breaks the stereotypes, they do not manage to recognize her actions nor behavior as "Muslim."

> **E-A**: Do you think that the people around you regard you as a Muslim? **Katrine**: No, I do not believe that. Actually, my friends always say that: "You are the worst Muslim I have ever seen, and blah blah blah." "You fool around and make jokes" and, they have never seen anything like it, because they are used to Somali girls in the classroom who is a bit more like that, while I run around, jump, dance on the tables, and act like a fool, so they, they do not see it. They, they do not see that the choices I make, what they regard as nice, is actually because of my religion. (…) You, you can see it, but is very hard and too deep for those who are 16-17 years to see that what she does, sharing her only slice of bread, and all the others have food, and even if I just have half a roll I will still share it because my mom taught me to do that. Then they think, well, she is just kind, and then I am not a good Muslim because I do not wear a scarf, but it is through what I did just now. Was I not a good Muslim I would not have done it, right? So, they do not see it, and then I become very upset, and you cannot say that I am a bad Muslim because, you must, if everyone had become a good Muslim just be covering themselves, it would not have been any problems. Since people are doing, what I call sentence other to death because they believe that they are better than them, that is really not about having a piece of cloth on your head and claiming to be a good Muslim. You can backbite your neighbors, and you can do so many things to your husband and split siblings as a daughter-in-law. What shall I say, even though you have it technically, a good Muslim, why should people, the West promote the symbol that a good Muslim shall just be like that? Like, they do not see, like you could also be a Muslim, it is not a race, it is an ideology in a way, how you live your life. It is a way of living, kind of, it can be anyone. There are no recipes of being Muslim. So, they think: "No, you do not have it," and "she is not a good Muslim." **E-A**: But is it because they know so little about Islam or? **Katrine**: Yes, that is what I mean. They do not have enough knowledge.

Within her field of study, it is not only participants Katrine has more distant relationships with that fail to recognize her conduct as Muslim but also her friends. Katrine aims to be a practicing Muslim by following what she regards as Islamic rules of conduct, but her classmates do not recognize it because they lack knowledge about the ethical and legal dimension of Islam (Smart 1998: 11-22). The dominating picture of Muslims within Katrine's field of study seems to focus on *outer* and *visible* characteristics, such as clothing and specific behaviors, while Katrine emphasizes a person's inner qualities, faith and behavior in her definition of Muslims (see section 5.1). Through her deeds and behavior, Katrine has achieved a status as a nice and funny person among her classmates. However, since they base their normative evaluation of whether she is a good or bad Muslim upon their own static and stereotypic picture of Muslims, she "fails" in being acknowledged as a good Muslim because she neither wears *hijab* nor behaves as they expect Muslims to.

Within Petra's and Frida's fields of study, people's attitudes and opinions about Islam and Muslims are not as direct and outspoken as in Katrine's field. However, they experience that some of the participants' impressions of Muslims are influenced by various stereotypes and prejudices. For instance, Petra has the impression that her classmates view her as a flawless person due to her *hijab*. She believes that they ascribe a woman with *hijab* with certain qualities that go against her self-understanding and view of women with *hijab* because everyone makes mistakes, according to Petra, even those who cover their hair. Frida, who engages in the study field through her children, is often met with questions about what she is doing in Trondheim. She experiences that some of the persons she interacts with in this field are of the opinion that Muslim women do not participate in public activities but spend all their time inside the house with their family. These prejudices are not only felt by Frida but have also been reported to her from her children's school.

Even though Barbro was not a student when I conducted the interviews, she had had recent experiences from being a student at two different vocational upper secondary schools in Trondheim. In one of the schools, she felt respected and accepted as a Muslim and seldom faced negative opinions or attitudes toward Islam. At the other school, she experienced more hostility toward Islam and Muslims from her surroundings. Daily, she and the other Muslims in her class were confronted with their non-Muslims classmates' thoughts and questions about Islam:

> **Barbro**: The students really, I felt that they just wanted to speak badly about Islam. **E-A**: They said wrong things? **Barbro**: Yes, bad things. **E-A**: What for instance? **Barbro**:

"Why are you Islamic?" "You say God, God, how does God help you? All of your countries are in war, are poor. In Norway, we have good lives and we do what we want, but we do not believe in God. How does your God help you, if it is a God?" It was a person from Afghanistan present, okay; "Speak with God so He can help you in Afghanistan with the war" and such.

According to Barbro, her classmates were more hostile to Islam and Muslims than her teachers were. Still, she found that some of her teachers based their view of Muslim women upon stereotypes about what Muslim women with *hijab* can and cannot do. For instance, Barbro surprised her teachers in physical education (PE) class with her skills in basketball and soccer. She impressed one of her teachers in PE so much that he asked some of her other teachers to come and watch her play. She appreciated the attention and praise she earned from her skills even though she was aware that they were partly a result of her breaking with her teachers' stereotypes of Muslim women.

Local, national and international media's presentations of Islam and Muslims influence the study field's knowledge, attitudes and opinions about Islam and Muslims, according to Petra, Oda, Lene and Katrine. Petra has experienced an interconnection between national media's presentation of Muslims and questions she faces from her classmates:

Petra: (…) I remember once I wrote my assignment together with another student, it was an article in Dagbladet[76] who said that Muslims could not eat a number of various types of food because they contain E-additives or something. (…) And she was very shocked! She just, "You cannot eat anything?" So, I tried to explain, how to live, how my life is, that, well, it is not like that all over, you do not need to read everything, and that one knows what one cannot eat, and yes. Some do read, so it depends from each person. **E-A**: So, you can receive questions from **Petra**: Yes **E-A**: They have read something **Petra**: Yes.

Islam and Muslims get a lot of publicity within Norwegian national media (Ishaq 2017: 11-15). A survey carried out by Integrerings- og mangfoldsdirektoratet (The Directorate of Integration and Diversity, IMDi) in 2009 concerning immigrants in Norwegian media showed that one-third of all articles about immigration and integration was oriented around religion and in

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[76] Dagbladet is national and daily newspaper that is published on paper and online.

particular Islam. The survey further showed that these articles are often problem or sensation oriented or written in a way that draws negative attention to Islam or Muslims (Integrerings- og mangfoldsdirektoratet 2010: 9-12). Thus, Petra's experience of the newspaper article as problem oriented is not unique but rather common within the Norwegian context. Lene and Katrine believe that *whom* and *what* the media chooses as representatives for Islam and Muslims influence their fields' opinions about Islam and often negatively. As Lene describes it:

> **Lene**: It can be, media plays a huge role actually. (…) What media shows is yes, I do not know what to say really. What media shows is, it is about Saddam Hussein. He is a Muslim, right. **E-A**: Yes. **Lene**: He was. However, at the same time he was a dictator. Gaddafi, for instance, he was also a Muslim, but he was a dictator. (…) And bin Laden, he was also a Muslim, but he killed numbers of people. (…) Maybe approximately 3,000 persons. But, I do not get it since our religion says that you should be a good human, and you should not hurt other, so what may be the reason for that?

Lene questions whom the media chooses to represent Muslims and argues that even though Hussein, Gaddafi and bin Laden were Muslims, they were also responsible for serious crimes that, according to her, contradict Islamic teachings and rules of conduct. Thus, they should not be seen as representative neither of Islam nor of Muslims, she argues. Katrine questions the national and local media's coverage of Islam and Muslims as well, particularly what cases the local media chooses to cover and not:

> **Katrine**: Generally, it is negative stuff. Like, I have never heard that, I hear so many strange things. Like today, a moose [or elk – E-A] was found downtown and as I say, I am so disappointed that trivialities like that are in the paper. We have, for instance, our month of fasting and we send and gather a lot of money, maybe from the whole of Norway so that they in Pakistan can have three tons of meat to distribute to the poor. "Norwegian Muslims did blah blah blah." Or, "Happy holiday," do you understand what I mean? I never find things like that. There is always someone who has done something wrong somewhere, and we are 1.4 billon Muslims in the world. Some of them will of course make some mistakes, right? They are just humans, so then it becomes someone with a Muslim background, and I get so sad because only the negative stuff is covered.

Katrine is disappointed over what cases the local media chooses to cover and not and the lack of positive publicity of Islam and Muslims. When the media does not recognize or draw attention to Islamic holidays, good deeds or achievements made by Muslims, a bias presentation influences her study field's knowledge and attitude against Islam and Muslims.

The various schools and campuses facilitate the women's religious practices differently. None of them have access to a prayer room at their schools/campuses and so are left on their own to find a suitable room or place to pray. The women face different attitudes toward performing religious rituals and practices at school. Even though it is up to Dorthe and Ida to find a suitable place to perform *salat*, they experience that their classmates and teachers respect that they do it. Lene on the other hand, does not feel that her school facilitates her religious practices. She believes that her school regards religious identity and practices as private matters and not something you should be involved in at school. For this reason, she and other Muslim students are seldom offered a place to pray and are not allowed to leave class to do so.

The women have different experiences when it comes to whether religion, religious identity and religious knowledge are recognized as important, relevant or valued among their fellow students and teachers – in other words, whether their affiliation with Islam enables them to generate any species of capital, particularly cultural or social, within their fields of study (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992: 98; see section 3.4.2). None of the women possesses any capital just because of their religion or religious identity within their study fields. Mai, for instance, does not believe that her fellow students regard religion, or belonging to one, as important. Instead, they appreciate that people have disciplinary knowledge and that they are sociable. Oda has similar experiences. At her school, they seldom discuss religion but respect individual differences and that people belongs to different religions or have chosen not to have a religion. To earn credibility at Oda's school, you must be a good student and work hard in addition to respecting your classmates, she claims. Petra does not believe that religion is ascribed much importance in her field of study either because it is recognized as something private. Religion in general is seldom talked about, and she does not know whether her fellow students have a Christian or secular background. She knows who the Muslims are and who belongs to other minority religions such as Buddhism or Hinduism because these stand out, but she is unfamiliar with the majority's relationship to Christianity. The women find that their teachers acknowledge their religious identity and practices differently as well. As mentioned above, Lene experiences that her teachers do not care much about her religious practices, ascribing them to her private life. Oda, on the other hand, is on friendly terms with her teachers concerning her religious practices. Her teachers respect that she wears *hijab* and fasts during

Ramadan and also make friendly jokes about it, such as "The sun is never here, so you can just eat." Katrine and Dorthe feel that their religious identity is recognized and respected among their teachers as well. Katrine gains both support and praise from her teachers when she fasts during Ramadan, and Dorthe's teachers have complimented her on her colorful *hijab*s. Still, the women cannot use their religion, religious identity or religious knowledge itself, to generate capital from the field of study.

The volume of social capital the women are in possession of, and the forms of social capital each woman can generate from the study field, varies (Bourdieu 2006: 17; Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992: 119; see section 3.4.2). The networks and contacts Mai, Lene, Dorthe and Frida possess within their fields of study are mainly professional in terms of being limited to this field. This means that they only interact and communicate with participants within this field at campus/school and/or as part of their studies and that they do not socialize or meet up with any of them in other settings. The size of the women's professional network and its importance differ as well. Mai, for instance, has many contacts and classmates that she interacts with around study-related assignments and topics and that she can ask for help and offer help. However, when her classmates discuss non-disciplinary activities, such as parties, festivals, etc. during their breaks, she resigns from the conversations because she cannot contribute due to her lack of experience with such arrangements. Dorthe, on the other hand, does not talk or interact much with her fellow students. She finds it difficult to get to know or strike up a friendship with her classmates and explains this with reference to Norwegian culture and that it is hard to familiarize oneself with Norwegians. Even though Dorthe struggles with establishing close relational bonds to her classmates, they can provide help with her studies if she asks. Dorthe participates in conferences and study-relevant activities outside study hours, but never in the formal or informal social gatherings that usually follow these.

Some of the interviewees have access to both professional and personal networks and contacts within their study fields. Oda, Petra, Katrine and Ida regard many of their fellow students as their friends and include them in their personal networks. Petra, for instance, recognizes classmates from her current study program as well as former classmates from upper secondary and high school as part of her present-day personal network. Petra's current study network can provide her with much help with her studies. She and her classmates interact over assignments both on and off campus through face-to-face contact, telephone, text messages, etc. Petra has also developed friendships with several of her classmates and is invited to social gatherings, such as parties, dinners, and activities like bowling, just like other participants within this field. She attends most of these gatherings and activities and regards them as pure

enjoyment and a way to learn more about how Norwegians live. Even if her classmates consume alcoholic drinks at these events, Petra thinks it is unproblematic for her to attend them as long as she refrains from drinking. Katrine has a large network of friends and contacts at her school. Included in this network we find students from different classes as well as some of her teachers. Unlike the other interviewees, Katrine feels very close to some of her teachers and has much trust in them. She feels that they respect and acknowledge her religious identity, for instance, by giving her encouraging remarks when she fasts during Ramadan. Katrine's teachers also function as mature conversation partners for her. She feels that her teachers, due to their age and experiences, manage to understand her and to see things from different angles than her friends. For instance, when her friends or classmates recommend that she move out of her parents' home to solve a dispute or end a contentious discussion she has with them, Katrine's teachers understand that this is not what she wants or needs and can offer other kinds of advice. Thus, Katrine can generate various forms of social capital and resources from her field of study. The social capital Barbro could access at one of the schools she was enrolled in diverged a bit from the rest. Because of a rather hostile relationship between Barbro and a handful of other Muslim girls and a group of non-Muslim girls, she only recognized the Muslim girls as part of her network at school. She interacted with them outside school as well and viewed them as both a professional and personal network.

There are individual differences when it comes to what help and support the interviewees can generate from their study networks and contacts. Those who have a solely professional relationship with their fellow students can mainly generate help with their studies from their network, while those who have developed more personal relationships with participants within this field can generate various and more forms of capital, such as friendship and sense of belonging as well. As students within a field of study, the women cannot generate economic capital directly from it. However, they have chosen to engage in this field to be able to gain access to paid jobs and thus economic capital later.

7.2.3 The women's tactical maneuvers within the field of study

As a non-Muslim-majority field, the field of study's policy is completely independent from Islam. This means that it does not have, nor does it represent, any Islamic methodologies or strategies in de Certeau's meaning of the term. However, this does not make it "neutral" in regard to Islam since as a non-Muslim-majority field it has a dominating picture of and attitude toward Islam that women must relate to, voluntarily or not, just by engaging in it. For this reason, I find it relevant to look at how the women tactically relate themselves to their study

fields' attitudes and active knowledge about Islam in addition to the questions about Islam and Muslims, including their individual religious identities and practices, that they encounter within this field.

As a religious minority in Trondheim and Norway, the Muslim women are used to questions about their religion and religious practices from the non-Muslim majority. Lene describes it as follows:

> **E-A**: As a Muslim in Norway, do you think it is more important to have knowledge about Islam here? **Lene**: Aha, yep. **E-A**: Why? **Lene**: Why, because there are many prejudices about Islam, you know. So, one has to know quite much and be a good role model. And there are many who ask questions like: "Why do you have to dress like that?" Like: "Why this?" To be able to answer correctly you must have much knowledge. **E-A**: So, it is important to provide correct answers and to be a good role model. Is it a larger need to have more knowledge here than in Turkey? **Lene**: Aha. Yes, there everyone are Muslims you know, no one asks why you dress the way you do, you know.

The women aim to answer the questions about Islam and Muslims they encounter within this field, and to be able to do that, they need knowledge about Islam. Since the field of study cannot provide them with such knowledge, they must turn to their individual sources and methods to Islam. Faced with questions about Islam and Muslims, the women's tactics are thus to return to their individual material and social and institutional sources and methods to gain knowledge and answers that they can use and transmit within their fields of study (see sections 5.2.2-5.2.6 and Chapter 6). Mai explains:

> **Mai**: They have good arguments really. (…) Like, why does women have less right to inheritance than men (…) Things like that. (…) They know such things. It is not wrong, really. However, it is a reason behind it that they do not know, and sometimes I cannot answer it either, because I lack knowledge about it myself, and then I just stand there: "Yes, but it is probably a reason or explanation to it." And, and then I go home and ask: "Well, what is this?" "Yes, it is because the man shall spend his half on the man as well, but the women can.." No! Opposite: "The man shall spend his half on the woman, while the woman can use her part of the heritage on herself." (….) Well, that was logical I

think, and why did I not say that? Now they got a bad impression of Islam because of me.

When Mai faces a question about Islam she cannot answer, she turns to her parents, or other social and institutional sources of her preference to increase her knowledge about the topic at hand (see sections 5.3.1 and 7.1.1). In this way, she can provide the participants within her field of study with an answer the next time they meet or be better prepared to answer a similar question the next time she gets one.

Another tactic the women use is to share their individual embodied Islamic knowledge and personal experiences as Muslims with their fellow students. Petra, for instance, aims to nuance her classmates' view of Islamic food regulations as strict and almost impossible to follow with references to how she practices them. She emphasizes that she has embodied knowledge about what she is allowed to eat and not and that she does not have to scrutinize what ingredients and additives food contain before she can eat it (see quotation from Petra in section 7.2.2). Katrine tries to broaden her classmates' understanding of Islam by offering them her embodied knowledge, personal opinions and perspectives about Islam as a supplement to the systematic outsider approach their RE teacher can provide (see section 7.2.2). She believes that the media's presentation of Islam and Muslims influences her classmates' view of Islam. To nuance it, she shares her personal opinions to challenge the generalized notion that Muslims think and act as a group, which she experiences as active within her field of study (see section 7.2.2).

By using themselves as sources to Islam and examples of how to live Muslims lives, the women aim to provide their field of study with more knowledge about Islam and to answer questions therein. However, the interviewees' Islamic knowledge is limited, and sometimes they do not possess a good answer to or explanation for the questions and topics they encounter. In these situations, they try to answer the questions the best they can. As Petra says: "Fast for instance. (…) Why we do it. I do not have a good explanation all the time or manage to explain it but (…). I try the best I can, though. (…) Or based upon what I have been taught." If the women fail to answer a question about Islam, or to provide the field with a deeper understanding of Islam, it may influence their wellbeing. Some feel bad, and some are afraid that their lack of knowledge may hurt Islam or the field's impression of Islam and Muslims, as Mai's quotation above illustrates.

Faced with their study field's lacking knowledge of and stereotypical view of Islam and Muslims, another of the women's tactics is to serve as good examples, role models and

representatives of Islam and Muslims themselves. Frida, for instance, engages in activities arranged by her children's school to give another impression of Muslim women than the one she experiences as active. Frida has experienced that participants within the field of study ascribe Muslim women with a passivity in relation to public activities and wants to prove them wrong by tactically engaging in such activities at her children's school (see section 7.2.2). The interviewees want to embody knowledge about Islam, to answer questions, to provide the field with correct information about Islam and to give good impressions of Islam and Muslims by being good examples or just themselves. As Oda describes it:

> **Oda**: Like, people should see how Muslims really are. (…) Like how I am as a Muslim, and my personality. I like to mess with people and like, laugh and such. Not all are like that right. (…) Recently, it has happened so much in media, like Islam is negative and such. Therefore, I may try to show that I am a happy person, show my personality and such, so that they should know that there are other sides of Islam and not just judge after media.

This shows that within the field of study, the women tactically embrace the role as representatives of Islam and Muslims, ascribed to them by the other field participants, to oppose the prevailing picture of Islam and Muslim.

As self-proclaimed and ascribed representatives of Islam and Muslims within a non-Muslim-majority field, the women believe that they have to watch what they say and do. If they give incorrect information about Islam or do something wrong, they are afraid that this can influence their field's view of Islam and Muslims. Dorthe illustrates:

> **Dorthe**: The person that I speak with, for instance, I tell you something. It is a huge possibility that you will not hear about it from others (…) about the same topic. So, I am your only source. Due to this, I have to watch what I talk about (…) because it becomes stronger. So, I have more responsibility.

Since the majority of the participants within the field of study are non-Muslims, the women feel a greater responsibility to provide them with the "right" knowledge and impression of Islam. However, their tactics do not always succeed. Katrine aims to give her classmates a good impression of Islam and Muslims by being a good fellow human and student. Still, she fails because they judge her actions in relation to their own stereotypical view of Muslims and

Muslims' practices and not Islamic rules of conduct. Her classmates' characterization of Katrine as a bad Muslim upsets her. Even though she tries to oppose it, she is not in possession of enough capital to change it due to her minority situation and the field's lack of knowledge about diversity within Islam and among Muslims and Islam's ethical and juridical dimensions (see section 7.2.2).

Not all of the women are trying to oppose the dominating picture of Islam just by being good Muslims. Some confront it more directly, such as Barbro. Confronted with some of her non-Muslim classmates' negative attitudes against Islam as well as challenging and sometimes theodicy-like questions (see section 7.2.2), Barbro and some of her Muslims friends became annoyed and started to speak back. This escalated rather than calmed the turmoil, and after a period of fierce discussions, their teacher prohibited them from discussing religion further at school. Barbro confronted what she regarded as her teacher's negative attitude toward her observance of the fast as well. For instance, once Barbro got angry with some of her classmates and spoke out loudly. According to Barbro, her teacher assumed that her anger was a consequence of her fast and told her to drink something. When Barbro rejected, her teacher asked her why she bothered her life with such things as fasting, to which Barbro responded that she was not bothering her life and that she was fully aware of her own choices and what she was doing. For a time Barbro had been allowed to leave class for five minutes to pray. After some of her non-Muslim classmates objected to the permission that they regarded as unfair, her teacher asked her to pray at home instead. Barbro did not accept the rejection. Instead, she met with the school counselor and talked to several of her other teachers. Some of these told her to stop asking for permission to pray and instead start asking for permission to go to the toilet since none of her classmates would object that. The advice put Barbro in a dilemma: "Okay, right. The students say no, why, so maybe I should say that I am off to the toilet. (…) Even though I have many limits, I have to find a solution." Her solution was to follow the advice, and to start telling a lie to get the possibility to pray on time at school.

The women use various tactics to deal with their study field's active knowledge and dominating attitude toward Islam. Even though most of their study fields do not facilitate Islamic practices, Barbro is the only one who feels that she has to lie to practice Islam at school. The other women's tactics are to make individual adjustments to combine studies with religious practices. The women enrolled in higher educational programs, such as Dorthe and Ida, do not leave their lectures to pray but pray during breaks. Individually they also find a place for prayer, like a vacant classroom, since they do not have access to a prayer room at their campuses. Oda adjusts her religious practices such as fasting to her school days as well. She postpones fasts

that fall on days where she has PE, exams or tests because she finds it too difficult to combine fasting with these activities but fasts as normal on other days. Lene is a bit more offensive in her adjustments. She introduces the majority fields she engages in, study and work, immediately about her religious identity and her "needs" in relation to this. One of the first things she tells other participants within these fields is that she is a Muslim and needs to pray. Her experience is that not all participants within these fields take religious needs or practices into consideration and aims to prevent this be being open and immediate about her Muslim identity. The women are also making individual judgments concerning what social activities they engage in within this field and not. Petra and Ida do not hesitate to attend activities where alcohol is served and consumed, while Mai prefers not to attend such activities (see section 7.2.2).

7.2.4 Study/school's influence on the women's knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam

The field of study does not influence the women's normative field directly by functioning as a source or method to Islam for them (Roald 2001: 88-92; see section 3.6). Only Katrine and Oda have access to a subject that aims to provide them with knowledge about Islam. Still, neither of them regards it or uses it as an individual source to Islam. According to Katrine, the knowledge about Islam transmitted within this subject is neither relevant or enough to provide her or her classmates with a deeper understanding of Islam, and Oda, as a Shiite Muslim, experiences the Islamic knowledge transmitted within her school as very Sunni oriented and thus irrelevant for her lived Islam (see section 7.2.2). The other women's access to knowledge about Islam is solely through interactions and discussions with other participants within this field. They experience the active knowledge about Islam within this field as limited or lacking, and consequently it does not function as a social or institutional nor practical or ritual source for any of them, neither can it provide them with such (see sections 7.2.1-7.2.2).

The study field's influence on the normative field, and what sources and methods the women choose from the Islamic basket and their interpretation of these, is rather small. Still, to some degree it influences what elements from the Islamic basket the women choose to increase their knowledge about. Since Islamic practices lack social authority within the field, the women must legitimate and elaborate their religious practices for the non-Muslim majority (Roy 2004: 148-152). For instance, the women face many questions concerning their lived Islam and the ritual obligations they perform at school, such as fasting and the ritual prayer. To explain, legitimate and elaborate on these practices, they need knowledge about *sharia*'s ritual obligations, *ibadat*. The women's religious identity, and particularly their *hijab*s, draw

attention to other Islamic rules of conduct as well, such as clothing and food regulations. To be able to answer questions concerning this, they need knowledge about *sharia*'s inter-human relationships, *mu'amalat* (Hjärpe 1992: 8-10; Vogt 2005: 80-84; Wains 2003: 65; see section 4.1.1). Consequently, the questions the women face within the field of study *strengthen* their individual quests for knowledge about *ibadat* and *mu'amalat*. This means that the women want knowledge about *ibadat* and *mu'amalat* to legitimate and elaborate their religious practices for the non-Muslim participants within their field of study *and* to live "good Muslims lives" or to "become better Muslims", which are some of their overall aims (see section 5.2.1).

The study field's lack of knowledge about Islam, encourages the women to speak for Islam and Muslims and to legitimate and elaborate on their individual religious practices. In this way, they function as sources to Islam for participants within this field. The study field's participants ascribe the women with the role of representatives for Islam and Muslims, a role they seem to embrace. This role *triggers further individual quests* for knowledge among the women, who need knowledge about Islam to answer the questions, to practice Islam properly and to answer for, and sometimes defend, Islam and Muslims. Furthermore, the women want to be acknowledged as well-informed and reflecting individuals, who have made autonomous choices concerning their religious identity and practices. They are afraid of giving wrong, incorrect or insufficient answers, of giving a bad impression of Islam or of being a bad example for Islam and Muslims. Thus, they are very self-aware of their own behavior and appearance in the field. For instance, even though Petra tries her best to answer her fellow students' questions on Islam, she sometimes worries about her answers' insufficiency (see section 7.2.3). Mai is afraid that her partial knowledge about specific Islamic regulations will give her fellow students a bad or worse impression of Islam when she cannot answer their questions properly (see section 7.2.3). Dorthe, on the other hand, feels the pressure and responsibility of providing the field with correct information about Islam because she worries that she might be some of the participants' only source to Islam (see section 7.2.3). In this way, Islamic knowledge becomes important for the women's wellbeing within this field.

The lack of social acceptance of Muslim identities and Islamic practices, and the lacking Islamic knowledge and often negative attitudes toward Islam the women experience within this field, *trigger individualization processes* in the form of individual quests for knowledge among them. To handle the questions and attitudes toward Islam they encounter, and to be able to function as representatives or defenders of Islam and Muslims, the women turn to their individual sources to Islam. In this way, they to equip themselves with Islamic knowledge that they can use and transmit when they interact with the other participants within this field.

The lack of social acceptance leads to an individualization of the women's religious practices as well (Roy 2004: 148-152). When the women experience a lack of external pressure to practice Islam from their field of study or that the field fails to accommodate their religious practices, they must make individual choices and find individual solutions as to how, where and when observe Islamic practices and regulations. In these situations, the women choose differently from the Islamic basket (Hjärpe 1997, 1998; see section 2.2.5). For instance, Dorthe and Ida adjust their ritual prayers to their studies' time schedules and pray during breaks. Barbro, however, did not want to postpone the ritual prayers until her breaks but instead tried to get permission to leave class to pray on time. When she did not get the permission to do so, she chose to tell a lie, and thus break with Islamic rules of conduct, to observe the ritual obligation (see section 7.2.3). As a religious minority within a non-Muslim-majority field, the women must take complete control and responsibility over their religious practices if they want to live in accordance with Islamic rules and regulations. In this way, the field of study *enforces individualization processes* upon the women's religious practices.

7.3 Work

Nine of the women worked or had recent experiences from the field of work. Emma, Hanne, Lene, Petra, Camilla, Guro and Nina worked full-time or part-time or held apprentice positions as part of their studies when the interviews were conducted. Anna and Barbro were "between jobs" and had recent experiences from different workplaces. The women's fields of work covers various workplaces and includes public institutions, such as kindergartens, schools, institutions of higher education, health institutions and a department store. Despite differences between the workplaces, they are all included under the category field of work. Common to the various fields of work are that they are non-Muslim-majority fields.

7.3.1 Work as a source and method to Islam

Like the field of study, the field of work does not function as a source and method to Islam for any of the women mentioned above (see section 7.2.1). The women experience the level of active Islamic knowledge within this field as very fluctuating and do not regard nor use it or any of its participants as social and institutional and/or practical and ritual sources (Smart 1998: 11-12; see section 3.2). It is mainly non-Muslim participants that make up the women's fields of work. Guro is the only Muslim at her workplace, while the other women have one or a few Muslims among their colleagues. For instance, there are some Muslims who work at the same institutions as Emma and Petra, but there are no Muslims within their specific departments.

Thus, there are few available social and institutional and/or practical and ritual sources to Islam within the women's work fields.

7.3.2 The women's capital within the field of work

The women have access to cultural and economic capital within the field of work in the form of work positions that generate money (Bourdieu 2006: 5, 8, 15-16; see section 3.4.2). Their various academic and educational qualifications or study programs give them access to different work positions, such as kindergarten assistant, teacher assistant, researcher, cleaner or salesperson, from which they relate to other participants within this field. The women have one or more executives above them in the work hierarchy in addition to other equal colleagues.

The women do not have access to cultural capital in the form of social and institutional and/or practical and ritual or material sources to Islam at work. This means that they cannot generate Islamic knowledge capital directly from this field. However, as practicing Muslims with *hijab* within a non-Muslim-majority field, the women face many questions, utterances and opinions about Islam. The women define the knowledge level about Islam they encounter and experience as active within their fields of work as "low," "lacking" or "fluctuating" due to responses regarding their Muslim identities. Petra, for instance, ascribes her non-Muslim colleagues with little knowledge about Islam because they ask her many questions about basic Islamic rituals, such as the fast: "Why do you fast?", "Are you not allowed to drink water neither?" or "Do you not get hungry?" She also receives many questions about her *hijab* and why, where and among whom she wears it. The other women have similar experiences. "Do you feel strange when you wear this?" is an example of a *hijab* question Guro has gotten from a colleague. It is not only colleagues that are curious about the women's *hijab*. Lene, for instance, gets much attention for her *hijab* from the children she works with, who wonder why she wears "such a hat" or wish to see her hair. The women who describe their colleagues' knowledge about Islam as fluctuating have experienced huge differences in the level of knowledge. Anna, for instance, ascribes to some of her older colleagues good knowledge about Islam and a type of knowledge that she can identify with. The most learned ones are those who have knowledge about Islam as a religion *and* as a tradition, according to Anna. They do not hold static pictures of Islam and Muslims but have some knowledge about diversity within Islam and among Muslims, she explains. The interviewees who ascribe to their colleagues limited knowledge about Islam assume that they base their knowledge on media representations of Islam. Colleagues ascribed with good knowledge about Islam are assumed to base their knowledge on more varied sources. For instance, according to Anna, some of her colleagues

have learned about Islam from interacting with Muslims in different work situations. The colleague Nina ascribes the most knowledge about Islam to is annually on holiday in a Muslim country.

Children's and youth's questions about Islam are regarded as unproblematic by the interviewees. The same is true for questions from colleagues asked out of curiosity or interest. However, the women experience many of the questions they encounter at work as biased. They are based on preconceived, stereotypical images of Islam as oppressive of women and often contain critical or negative undertones. Some of Nina's colleagues have, for instance, asked her if her husband *forces* her to wear *hijab* or fast, while some of Emma's colleagues encourage her to participate in discussions about the role of women within Islam and in Muslim countries:

> **Emma**: I have a friend, we are discussing like a woman in Arabic countries: "Why do they not allow them to leave home? Have Islam told you so?" No, Islam did not teach us that. Women are free. (…) We can do anything as long as we, we follow the Qur'an, what to do and not to do. (…) It is like my friends at the office, they do not really know what Islam is. What they know is just based on the media, and it is usually the bad sides (laughs). (…) Yes, but sometimes I really hate that: they expose the things, which are really not the rights ones. That is what I feel.

Even though there are exceptions, the women mostly experience negative attitudes toward Islam as dominating within the field of work. Nina, for instance, has experienced that some of her colleagues view Muslim women as oppressed by their husbands or Islam itself, while others, such as Guro, has found that her colleagues' unfamiliarity with Islam makes them view Islamic rituals and regulations, for instance the fast and dress codes, as "strange." However, not all of the women's colleagues are critical to Islam. Barbro and Nina, for instance, experience an interest and willingness among some of their colleagues to learn more about Islam, and thus to develop their current picture of it, after interacting with them.

The women's fields of work have different ways of facilitating their Islamic practices. Most of them are familiar with Islamic food regulations, particularly that pork and alcoholic beverages are categorized as unlawful, *haram*, and make some adjustments in relation to this. For instance, Nina's, Emma's and Anna's colleagues take into consideration and respect Islamic diet regulations on special occasions such as the annual Christmas and summer parties. Here they are offered vegetarian or lawful, *halal,* meat dishes and non-alcoholic drinks. At one Christmas party, Anna's workplace had Islamic diet regulations in mind when they arranged

the tables as well and gathered the persons who abstain from alcohol at the same table. In regular meetings or less formal social gatherings, less facilitation occurs. In these situations, it becomes the women's individual task and responsibility to make sure that the food they are eating is *halal*. Nina's workplace provides an example:

> **Nina**: At my workplace for instance, they make special orders for me. Vegetarian or regular, and such. Then she calls me, the manager: "We are going to eat hot dogs today. What are you going to do?" And I just, "I will take care of myself. I will eat before the meeting or something." You gain respect when you believe in yourself. They respect that. (…). So, you are glad; I am pleased when she calls me and asks.

Nina's field of work's way of accommodating Islamic food regulations is to order "special" food for Nina or to alert her in advance when they are going to serve food categorized as *haram* so that she can make her own arrangements. Since Nina's workplace has not made it a routine always to arrange for food Nina can eat, she has less access to benefits such as free meals at her work than her non-Muslim colleagues.

The women's fields of work facilitate the daily Islamic prayer differently as well. Emma and Hanne each have access to a prayer room within their fields of work but seldom use them because they are located at a distance from their actual workplaces. Instead, they usually pray in their offices. None of the other women's work fields offer them a specific room for prayer but leave it to them find a suitable place for this. None of the women have formal permission from their employers to leave work to pray when it is time for prayer; instead, they usually pray during breaks. Lene, for instance, has never experienced any problem with performing prayer at her workplace. She is not the first nor the only Muslim at her workplace and found that her Muslim colleagues had paved the way for her to perform the ritual prayer during her breaks by informing and introducing their non-Muslim colleagues to it. Guro, on the other hand, is the only Muslim at her workplace. When she started to work, she was afraid that her Muslim identity would cause her problems. She did not want attention drawn to her ritual obligations, so she used to sneak out during her breaks to perform prayer at a place where she thought she would be alone. One day someone noticed her, and her ritual prayer became a topic of discussion at her workplace. One of her executives offered her the use of a workroom for prayer, but Guro did not want any special treatment and facilitation for what she recognized as her "private matter." Instead, she continued to pray at the spot she had picked by herself but now with her colleagues' awareness and acceptance.

As within the field of study, the women cannot generate much cultural capital solely from Islam or their Muslim identities within their fields of work (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992: 98; see sections 3.4.2 and 7.2.2). The women feel that their colleagues usually respect and tolerate their Muslim identities but that they seldom acknowledge or value it or religion in general as important. Petra, for instance, finds that even though her Muslim identity and *hijab* draw attention to her within the non-Muslim-majority fields, having a Muslim identity alone does not provide her with any benefits (see section 7.2.2). Anna has had similar experiences. She has experienced various types of responses or attitudes from her colleagues to her Muslim identity, practices and Islamic knowledge. One type of response entails those who look down on her Muslim identity and "feel sorry for her" because of it. People who respond in this way usually have predetermined and mostly negative opinions about Islam, according to Anna. There is no use in trying to explain or elaborate about Islam for these people, Anna argues, because they usually dislike religion in general due to negative personal experiences with religion. A second type of response comes from curious colleagues that ask her questions about Islam all the time. These persons are only interested in talking about Islam with her because they believe this is the only topic of interest to her. People who hold stereotypical and static pictures of Islam and Muslims, and due to this ascribe to Anna opinions and meanings she does not hold, make up a third type of response. These persons view themselves as very knowledgeable on Islam. When Anna opposes their fixed opinions or contradicts their expectations of her, they are often very surprised and may reply to her with a comment such as "I wish that all Muslims were like you." This type of response annoys Anna because those who hold it will seldom admit their lack of knowledge but instead view all Muslims that diverge from or contradict their fixed and wrong pictures of Islam as "unique" and "special." As a fourth type of response, Anna identifies those who do not pay much attention to their colleagues' religious or non-religious backgrounds. This group of colleagues do not interfere with other peoples' faiths or religious practices but leave them alone as long as they do not contradict Norwegian state law. The various responses to Anna's Muslim identity show that it draws attention from her colleagues but that they do not necessarily recognize or value it as important in a way that may provide Anna with recognition or a heightened position within the field. There are, however, some exceptions. Anna has found that some of the colleagues she identifies with good knowledge about Islam, and in particular her superior, appreciate her background and regard it as relevant for parts of her work. Anna interacts with children with various backgrounds within her field of work. Her superior thinks that it is important that these children have access to adult conversation partners, or role models, with backgrounds similar

to their own that they may identify with. However, it is not only Anna's religious background and identity that are appreciated by her superior but her whole "package," including her Arabic skills, her cultural background from a Muslim country and her background and experience of being an immigrant in addition to her Muslim identity, knowledge about Islam and experiences of living as a Muslim minority within a non-Muslim community. Nina believes that some of her colleagues appreciate her Muslim identity as well because they use her as a source to Islam and in this way acknowledge her Islamic knowledge and experiences from being a Muslim. Nina is one of few interviewees who thinks it is exciting to be identified as "different" by the other participants within this field due to her Muslim identity and thus to encounter many questions about Islam.

The women's Muslim identities and Islamic knowledge are not active cultural capital within their fields of work. They do not allow the women to wield power in or have an influence on the field but should rather be considered a "negligible quantity" (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992: 98-99; see sections 3.4.2-3.4.3). As within the field of study, it is the participant's educational qualifications, disciplinary knowledge, skills and experiences in addition to their social skills that are valued within the field of work (see section 7.2.2). The women feel that professionalism and sociability are highly appreciated at their workplaces. Emma, who works in an international environment, claims that her colleagues' national or religious backgrounds seldom are topics of conversations. What is important within the field are disciplinary qualifications and social skills, that is, to do good work and to socialize with and treat one's colleagues well. Anna has had similar experiences. She thinks that her colleagues appreciate that she manages her work assignments well and that she is an independent and self-confident person with an outgoing personality. Some of the women experience a divergence between their personal and the other field participants' interests, values and norms. Some differences are mainly due to individual preferences and interests. For instance, Guro is unfamiliar with her colleagues' openness about private matters, their way of mixing work and personal lifestyle and the emphasis they put on work as an important aspect of their lives. For her, work is just work and not very significant for her identity. When her colleagues want to socialize during lunch breaks, Guro wants to relax and pray. However, to fit in, she joins her colleagues for lunch. Other divergences between the women's and their colleagues' norms, values and interests may be explained with reference to religion. Barbro, for instance, refers to Islamic theology and ethics to explain and legitimate differences between her and her colleagues' work ethics. She enjoyed their company and found some of them very amusing even though she did not share their work ethic:

E-A: At work, did you and you colleagues have the same moral? **Barbro**: No, completely different! (…) Sometimes when I worked, for instance, my leader did not see me, one of my colleagues told me, "Come on, it is allowed to cheat a little bit." I said: "No! No cheating" (…). Or they say Barbro, come out, or the boss, there is no one to watch you. "I do not care about the leader," I answered. "I believe that God is the leader. So no, it is not allowed." It was a person that I worked with, he was funny. He told me "It is a bit allowed to cheat." (…) I said "No! It is NOT allowed to cheat. Any time." (…) I was not afraid of my leader or any other persons. No, I am there, work and get paid. So, when I get money, I know that they will be *halal*. Even when I am alone (…). God sees me.

This shows that even though the women's colleagues do not value their Muslim identities and faith as important within the field of work, it *still* matters to them. As practicing Muslims, Barbro and the other women use Islam as a normative system to orient their actions and behavior in relation to in all aspects of life, including work.

The women get along well with their colleagues, but they seldom meet together with them outside their work. This means that the social capital in the form of networks and connections the women have access to within this field is mainly professional and limited to the workplace and work hours (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992: 119; see section 3.4.2). Hanne, for instance, only interacts with her colleagues in work-related situations, and the same goes for Petra and Guro even though participants within their work field invite them to social gatherings outside work. Petra often turns these sorts of invitations down because she does not feel very close to her colleagues. She only works a few days a month and is often occupied with her studies. Guro prefers to separate her work and her private life and prioritizes family when she is not working. Emma and Barbro are the ones who feel closest to their colleagues and who regard some of them as friends. Despite differences in work ethics, Barbro and her colleagues enjoyed each other's company:

Barbro: When I worked, I was very social. They like me, and I like them. We sit together like a family really. (…) All of us were positive, and we help each other and such. "Barbro can you help us?," "Yes, if I finish before you." They helped me, and we really enjoyed our lunch breaks and coffee. Very amazing. (…) All of us were friends.

Barbro and her colleagues occasionally met outside work as well, at cafes and such. Even when she quit her work, she kept in touch with several of them. They called her and asked here to come visit them at work, and they kept meeting up with each other sporadically. Even though Barbro and Emma had access to friends and friendships within their fields of work, it is primarily work-related help and support that the other women can generate from this field. If they need help with work assignments or work-related questions, the women have someone to ask at their workplace. The women's professional networks can also provide them with rides to or from work, if they need it, but also other things. For instance, one of the women was offered a bicycle in addition to "lessons" on how to ride a bike from her colleagues. This shows that some of the women may generate various species of capital, which might be proven useful outside their workplaces as well, through their professional networks and connections (Bourdieu 2006: 17).

7.3.3 The women's tactical maneuvers within the field of work

The women's field of work does not have a policy dependent upon Islam because it is a non-Muslim-majority field. However, as within the field of study, the women face different opinions and attitudes toward Islam that they have to relate to in one way or another (see section 7.2.2). Some of the women's tactics within the field of work are similar to the ones used within the study field, while others diverge a bit from them (see section 7.2.3). When the women encounter questions about Islam, Islamic rituals and practices at their workplace, they do their best to answer. Some of the women's tactics in this regard are to prepare for such questions and how to answer them. Emma explains:

> **Emma**: Yeah. I think there is a difference, I was living in Indonesia and no one will ask me: "Why do you not eat pork?" No! But now, in Norway, I have to prepare it. (…) The answer, what should I say if someone ask me? Because it is, for us, for me it is like, I do not eat pork because… There is a reason recently that, there is, what to say, the effect of consuming pork, (…) for the health. There are, they concluded that it is not good. (…) But for me, I do not eat pork because of that. No (laughs). It is just one of the worships to Allah, so sometimes it is really difficult to mention it to other people. (…) There are things like, yeah, the difference between if I was living in Indonesia and if I, now I am in Norway. So, I have to be prepared of such, this kind of questions. "Why do you have to do prayer?" And, "Why do you do prayer like that?," so, this type of questions is not easy.

Many of the questions Emma encounters at work are about basic Islamic rituals and regulations. Still, sometimes she finds them difficult to answer because she is insecure as to whether non-Muslims will understand or acknowledge her religious explanations for observing them – as she states above, "It is just one of the worships to Allah." To cope with her non-Muslim colleagues' questions and lack of knowledge about Islam, one of Emma's tactics is prepare understandable answers. She describes: "I feel like that I have to answer the things that can be understood by other, the one who asks the questions. (…) That is the challenging thing." This means that Emma's tactics are not only to answer her colleagues' questions but also to provide them with answers that make sense to them, that is, to give them more information about Islam than they ask for that may put her answer into a larger context and thus serve as a backdrop.

Like the women engaged in the field of study, the women have various ways of relating to their work field's critical questions about Islam (see section 7.2.3). Barbro, for instance, tries to nuance her colleagues' often preconceived and stereotypical images of Islam and Muslims by sharing her own embodied Islamic knowledge and personal experiences with the diversity in Islam and among Muslims. Nina, on the other hand, has her own tactic of dealing with such questions:

> **Nina**: Once a girl at work asked me about it. She believed that my husband decided that I should wear this [*hijab* – E-A]. In addition, that my husband decided that I should fast. (…) Then I said, well, I am here with you for eight hours. How can my husband tell whether I have eaten or not? And how can my husband tell whether I have taken it [the *hijab* – E-A] off or not?

Nina's tactic is to answer critical questions with new questions that cause the questioner to reflect upon the question she/he just asked. In this way, she hopes to reveal inconsistency in the critical questions or to make the questioners aware that their questions build upon prejudices about Muslims and Islam and not the reality than unfolds in front of them.

Another of the women's tactics is to be good role models and representatives for Islam. As Muslims within a non-Muslim field, the women feel that they have to represent Islam and Muslims, and like the women engaged in the field of study, they embrace this position (see section 7.2.3). Anna states: "As I told you, generally I try to think of myself as an example. (…) That I am an embassy of my religion. And an embassy for my country. (…) In addition, am I proud of being a daughter of my family, so I try to be an embassy of my family as well." Guro has a similar approach. She has decided that if the only thing people want to see from her

is the negative sides of being a Muslim, she will make them see the positive sides. The ascribed and embraced position as representatives of Islam within a non-Muslim majority inspires the women to increase their knowledge about Islam. Hanne, for instance, thinks it is important for Muslims in Norway to be knowledgeable about Islam since many non-Muslims regard Islam as a "strange" religion. When the majority society has little knowledge about Islam, her attention toward Islam and Islamic knowledge becomes stronger. Thus, to be able to face prejudices about Islam, and to practice Islam correctly in non-Muslim surroundings, Hanne thinks that she must increase her individual knowledge about Islam.

The women's positions and volume of capital within the work field influence how they relate themselves to the field's questions and dominating attitudes toward Islam (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992: 98-99; see section 3.4.3). Lene is an example of this. Within the field of study, Lene interacts with fellow students and teachers. Here she aims at being a good role model and answer the field's questions about Islam (see section 7.2.3). At work, on the other hand, Lene has more types of participants to relate to: her executives, her colleagues, the children that she works with and the children's parents. Lene does not hesitate to talk about Islam with her colleagues or superiors or to answer their questions. With the children, her tactic is different. She does not speak about Islam with the children as long as no one asks her direct questions. She also considers thoroughly how to answer the children when they ask about her *hijab*. In these situations, Lene never explains her use of *hijab* by referring to her Muslim identity. She is afraid that this will draw the children's attention to religion in general and Islam in particular and result in the children starting to ask their parents about religion. Lene worries that her *hijab* might strengthen the children's attention toward Islam, and because of this, she tries to draw their attention away from her Muslim identity by not speaking of it. Lene believes that if the children start to ask questions about Islam to their parents, this will have consequences for her in the form of parents who start asking her colleagues or executives questions about her role and position at work, which she, in the end, must answer for. This shows that Lene varies her tactics in relation to what positions she holds within a field. Within her field of work, she finds herself in a power position with the children and tries to minimize the influence her religious identity may have on them. For this reason, she refrains from talking about her religious identity or Islam because she is afraid that if she does this, it may backfire on her and negatively influence her work conditions. Within the field of study, she feels freer to talk about her Muslim identity and Islam because she does not hold any power positions but relates to her fellow students on equal terms and is in a subordinated position toward her teachers.

To combine work and religious practices, the women make individual adjustments to the latter, similar to the tactics used in the field of study (see section 7.2.3). The women's tactics are to be both flexible and pragmatic when it comes to adjusting their religious practices to their non-Muslim surroundings at work. As within the field of study, the women postpone or merge ritual prayers and/or their fast to adjust them to their work assignments. For instance, Anna, Lene and Guro use their breaks to find a space and place to pray. Hanne and Emma adjust the ritual prayer to their work schedule and merge prayers if needed. Petra does not pray at work but postpones the ones she misses until she gets home, while Nina chooses to pray the last of the five daily prayers, *salat al-isha*, in advance or to postpone them until the next day if they come late at night during workdays. The women are also making individual adjustments when it comes to fasting. Some choose to fast during work hours during Ramadan, while others postpone it. Some of the women, among them Nina, regard it as very difficult, if not impossible, to combine 20 hours of fasting with work when Ramadan falls in the summer months. Because of this, Nina's tactic is to orient toward Shia Islamic jurisprudence and its various regulations concerning fasting and choosing from among them. According to Nina, she has several options. She can choose to follow the fasting times in Trondheim. She can choose to go for a drive in her car and thus define herself as "on travel." This means that she can eat that day and postpone the fast she misses until later. Or, she can choose to deliver herself from fasting days during Ramadan by donating money to people who are in need. This means that she buys an opportunity to postpone fasting during Ramadan to other times of the year when she thinks it is more convenient or easy for her to fast. Nina chooses the last alternative because it suits her.

Some of the women have also tactically changed the way they dress at work to wear clothes that are more practical and convenient for their work assignments. Lene, for instance, wear pants at work instead of skirts even though she believes that it is more proper for Muslim women to wear the latter (see section 6.6.1). Guro has renewed the way she dresses at work as well. Wide pants and a long tunic have replaced her skirt, and she has replaced her long *hijab* with a shorter model because she thinks it is more practical to work in these clothes. Guro is also tactically involving herself in "practices" at work that she believes go against Islamic rules of conduct because it the most suitable for the work situation.

> **E-A**: Last time you told me that you have changed the way you dress, to adapt to work. That you have got some wide pants and a shorter *hijab*. Do you think that you have changed other parts of your religious practices after moving to Trondheim? **Guro**: No. **E-A**: No. That is the only thing? **Guro**: Yeah. Maybe shaking hand with men? (…)

shaking hands with men **E-A**: You do that here? **Guro**: No, not to everyone. But at work I do that. Because I was trying to think about it at work. (…) Why do people shake hands, shake hands in Norway? Why do they do that? (…) It is a *hadith* that says that it is better for you to touch a very live coal, coal, hot coal, than to touch the opposite sex that is not a husband, yeah. So, but here, they give handshakes to greet you and to show respect (…) and that you are welcome. Something like that, so, at work, I give handshakes. (…) Maybe with time we can educate people that not giving handshakes do not mean that we are saying that we are not respecting you, we are not. (…) Maybe they soon will get to know. I do not know how that will happen, because, I do not give handshakes to Muslim men, because that is no. **E-A**: You do not have to explain yourself? **Guro**: No. So, that is the thing. But if I do not give handshakes to people that are not Muslim, then I have to give explanation, and the first handshake is sometimes very difficult (…) Because, it has not been more difficult for me here in Norway. That has also been difficult for me in [her home country – E-A]. (…) I have only known that [a type of colleague – E-A] for, know about, since I have this new practice, I have a new department (…). Maybe one time when I get to know him more, I will tell him that, really, a Muslim woman should not handshake (laughs). (…) One day he will learn it, because we learn together. **E-A**: But when you say you are safe with another person **Guro**: Yeah **E-A**: It is easier of course to tell **Guro**: When they know you already, okay, it is not because of these other reasons, so, okay. Then, okay, then, maybe one day at lunch or, one might take up that kind of issues. (…) It is possible, but it needs time.

To adapt to her work field's norms and its lack of knowledge about Islamic rules of conduct, Guro has chosen to shake hands with men. This means that her tactic is to adapt Islamic rules of conduct to the field and situation she finds herself in – to *contextualize* it – and to make individual judgments concerning what Islamic recommendations to follow or not based upon this. Guro refers to *hadith*, one of her primary material sources, to ascribe and establish the legal value of the act "shaking hands with men" as disapproved or unlawful. Still, she chooses not to follow the regulation at work to adapt to and be in line with the field of work's norms and values. She wants to greet and respect her colleagues and chooses to follow their norms to do that since Islamic rules of conduct lack validity at her workplace. Her future tactic, though, is to enlighten her colleagues about this specific Islamic regulation, its background and meaning, but before she can do that, she must establish closer ties to her colleagues and

strengthen her position and increase her volume of capital (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992: 98-99; see section 3.4.3).

7.3.4 Work's influence on the women's knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam

The women do not have access to any material, social and institutional and/or practical and ritual sources to Islam within their field of work. Their only access to knowledge about Islam is through interactions and discussions with other participants within this field, whose knowledge they experience as low or lacking or varying (see sections 7.3.1-7.3.2). Since the field of work does not function as a source or a method of gaining knowledge about Islam for the women, nor can it provide them with such, it has little influence on their normative field and the sources and methods they choose to activate from the Islamic basket. Instead, it strengthens the women's use of their individual sources and that cause them to choose differently from the Islamic basket (Roald 2001: 88-92; Hjärpe 1998: 34-36; see sections 2.2.5, 3.6, 5.2.5 and 5.2.4).

The field of work influences the interviewees' knowledge acquisition in various ways. It *strengthens* their wish and need for more knowledge about Islam and *triggers* individual searches for knowledge among them. Emma describes:

> **Emma**: For example, yes, I told you before, in Norway, sometimes I see something because of other asking me questions. (…) So then, it just comes up and I, okay then I have to search. (…) But in Indonesia it is a different way. The trigger is not people asking something, but sometimes it is based on what I watch on news (laughs). (…) So, it is different triggers.

Emma's quest for knowledge itself is not new, however it is triggered by different factors due to her surroundings. In Norway, her field of work's questions about Islam trigger some of her searches for knowledge, while in Indonesia there are other things. As practicing Muslims with *hijab*s within a non-Muslim-majority field, the women face numbers of questions, "knowledge" and biased attitudes and opinions about Islam that they wish to answer, contradict or nuance. To be able to do that, they must increase their embodied Islamic knowledge.

The lack of social acceptance of Muslim identities and Islamic practices within the field of work makes it important for the women to be able to explain, elaborate and legitimize their religious identities and practices for their non-Muslim surroundings and themselves (Roy 2004: 148-152). As a Muslim minority, the women are often encouraged to speak for Islam and

Muslims by their non-Muslim surroundings. In this way, they are ascribed a role as representatives of Islam and Muslims. The women's role as representatives of Islam and Muslims further strengthens their already-experienced need for more Islamic knowledge and provokes individual quests for knowledge among them.

The field of work influences what types of Islamic knowledge the women are seeking as well. Many of the questions the women encounter are about Islamic rituals, practices and regulations and their relationship to these. The women also need knowledge about how to adjust their religious practices to their non-Muslim surroundings, which do not much accommodate for such. Because of this, the women must make individual choices concerning how to practice Islam at work and how to facilitate such practices, which contributes to strengthening their wish for more Islamic knowledge. To equip themselves to encounter the field's questions and lack of accommodation for Islam and Islamic practices, the women must increase their knowledge about *ibadat, mu'amalat* and established Islamic authorities' legal interpretations of these, which are types of knowledge they are already seeking (see sections 5.2.1 and 7.2.4). To acquire these types of knowledge, the women turn to their individual sources and methods of gaining knowledge about Islam. This is why Nina turns to Shia Islamic sources and authorities when she needs knowledge about alternative ways to observe the fast to adjust it to her work situation and the Norwegian summer months (see section 7.3.3). In this way, her field of work influences her normative field by strengthening her already-established use of Shia Islamic sources, which again influence what regulations and practices she activates from the Islamic basket (Hjärpe 1997, 1998; see section 2.2.5).

As a strengthener of the women's experienced need for more Islamic knowledge, and as a trigger of individual quests for knowledge, the field of work triggers individualization processes in the women's knowledge acquisition. Within the field of work, it is solely the individual women's responsibility to acquire such knowledge, and to decide what sources and methods to use to gain this knowledge, because there is no active Islamic knowledge capital within the field (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992: 98-99; see sections 3.4.2-3.4.3 and 7.3.2).

The field of work influences the women's religious practices by making them solely responsible for these. This leads to an individualization of their religious practices, where they must make individual choices concerning whether or not to practice Islam at work, what to practice, how to practice and when to practice and find individual solutions regarding how to facilitate such practices. In relation to this, Petra, for instance, chooses not to perform ritual prayers at work but prefers to make up for the ones she misses after working hours. Other women, such as Anna, Lene, Guro, Emma and Hanne, prefer to pray during their breaks or to

adjust the ritual prayer to their working schedule (see section 7.3.3). As another example, we have Guro, who chooses not to follow specific Islamic regulations within the field of work to adjust to the field's norm and values. At work, Guro shakes hands with men even though she thinks it goes against Islamic rules of conduct. This does not imply a total abandonment of this rule by Guro because she observes it outside her field of work and particularly among other Muslims. It rather shows that she chooses to contextualize the practice of "shaking hands with men" to her work situation and the meaning it has within the field of work and that she takes these factors into consideration when she chooses not to follow the regulation at work and when she legitimizes her individual choice for herself (see section 7.3.3). This shows that the women's religious practices at work are individualized in Cesari and Fadil's use of the term because it is the women who *choose* to perform them and *how* to perform them due to the lack of social authority for Islam within this field (Cesari 2004: 44-53; Fadil 2005: 142-153; see sections 2.1.4-2.1.5). Their religious practices are also individualized according to Roy's theory of individualization since the women must individually decide what it means to be a Muslim within their field of work and thus decide how they want to practice Islam and facilitate their religious practices (Roy 2004: 148-152). In relation to this, the women choose differently from the Islamic basket based upon their work situation, their position and their individual volume of capital within this field (Hjärpe 1997, 1998; Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992: 98-99; see sections 2.2.5 and 7.3.3).

7.4 Friends

All the women have friends in Trondheim. How many they include in their field of friends and whom they identify as friends differ among the women and are influenced by various factors, such as nationality, engagement in local Islamic and non-Islamic fields and their "history" in Trondheim, amongst others. For instance, the Indonesian interviewees from MST's fields of friends are mainly made up by other Indonesians. All of Hanne's friends are from Indonesia, but not all of them are Muslim. Some of them are Christians or Hindus. Emma's, Ida's, Dorthe's and Frida's fields of friends are also mainly made up by Indonesians but include people of other nationalities, too. Nationality influences the Mevlana interviewees Lene's and Mai's fields of friends as well since they mainly consist of participants with the same Turkish and Kurdish background as they. Other interviewees may have friends who share their national backgrounds, but their fields of friends are much less influenced by nationality than the above-mentioned fields.

Since all the women have access to social capital within their local Islamic fields (see Chapter 6), they influence their fields of friends in one way or another. Some of the women's fields of friends totally overlap with their local Islamic field(s). Only women from SG make up Julie's field of friends, for instance. One of the reasons for this is that Julie was among the interviewees who had the least experience in Trondheim. Some of the Indonesian women's fields of friends mainly include participants from KMIT or SG *and* KMIT (see section 6.4.2). Mai's and Lene's Turkish and Kurdish friends are, like them, engaged in the local Islamic institutional field of Mevlana. Thus, their fields of friends and their local Islamic field overlap as well (see section 6.6.2).

Even though the local Islamic fields influence the other interviewees' fields of friends, too, they do not overlap. These women regard persons outside their local Islamic fields as friends as well, such as colleagues, previous or current classmates, neighbors, etc. For instance, members of SG make up some of Guro's friends in Trondheim but not all. She has friends that are not involved in any of her local Islamic or non-Islamic fields but whom she holds other relational bonds to, such as nationality. Katrine, on the other hand, identifies as her friends more or less the same persons she interacts with in her field of study. In addition, she includes her former teacher in Islam, and some of her parents' friends, whom she refers to as her "aunt and uncle," among her friends (see sections 5.2.5 and 7.1.1-7.1.2). This means that the fields of friends are made up by a variety of participants due to the women's various backgrounds and include both Muslims and non-Muslims.

7.4.1 Friends as a source and method to Islam

Even though the women have Muslim friends, they do not necessarily use or view these as sources to Islam. Some women use several friends as social and institutional and/or practical and ritual sources, others just a few (Smart 1998: 11-12; see section 3.2). Still, friends function as important sources and methods to Islam for several of the women, particularly those whose fields of friends overlap with one or more of the local Islamic fields. Julie, for instance, uses her friends in SG as sources and her involvement in the group as a method to gain knowledge about Islam and what it means to be a Muslim in Trondheim since she both learns from them and together with them in group studies (see sections 6.6.1-6.6.2). The same is the case for some of the Indonesian interviewees whose fields of friends have much overlap with SG and KMIT or just the latter (see sections 6.2.1 and 6.4.1). However, even though Lene's and Mai's fields of friends overlap with the local Islamic field of Mevlana, mainly Lene uses friends as sources and methods to Islam. Lene's field of friends is established around Mevlana's

activities, where she meets and interacts with other Muslims. Thus, her friends function as a source and method to Islam for her (see sections 6.6.1-6.6.2). Mai, on the other hand, usually sees her friends outside the mosque, where they gather around secular activities. Even though Mai talks about and discusses Islam with her friends, her relationship to them is not merely built around Islam but also nationality, ethnicity and friendship. Mai and her friends choose differently from the Islamic basket when it comes to Islamic practices. Where Mai regularly practices the ritual prayer and the fast and wears *hijab*, her friends perform these rituals more sporadically and do not wear *hijab*. For this reason, usually Mai functions as a source to Islam for her friends and not the other way around.

The interviewees whose fields of friends do not overlap with local Islamic fields are to varying degrees using their friends as sources and methods to Islam. Barbro, for instance, turns to Muslim friends with questions about Islam and searches for answers and solutions to religious questions and challenges together with them. Katrine, whose field of friends more or less overlaps with her field of study, does not use classmates as sources to Islam due their lack of Islamic knowledge (see sections 7.2.1-7.2.2). Still, she has some Muslim friends, such as her former Islamic teacher and family friends that function as sources to Islam for her (see sections 5.2.5, 7.1.1-7.1.2 and 7.4).

7.4.2 The women's capital within the field of friends

The women and their friends participate in the field of friends on equal premises due to their positions as friends. The women cannot choose their family members, classmates or colleagues. Their friends, on the other hand, they are freer to choose. They may not be able to "hand pick" all participants within their fields of friends, but they can choose whom they want to spend their time with and not. Since the women's friends must choose to spend time on and with them as well, their friendships can be seen as mutually desired relationships.

The women can access various forms of Islamic knowledge capital within their fields of friends. The women whose fields of friends overlap with participants within the local Islamic fields of SG and KMIT can access their friends embodied Islamic knowledge in addition to the knowledge they (re)produce within the fields' educational activities (see sections 6.2.2 and 6.3.2). This means that the women with friends in SG have access to practical and ritual, ethical and legal, narrative and mythical and doctrinal knowledge about Islam in addition to contextual and practical knowledge about how to live and practice Islam in Trondheim within their fields of friends (Smart 1998: 11-22; see sections 3.2 and 6.2.2). The women with friends in KMIT have access to these types of knowledge and more in addition to a religious authority in the

form of an imam (see section 6.3.2). Lene accesses knowledge about Islam that covers all of Smart's dimensions of religion, including a religious authority in the form of a woman imam, within her field of friends as well because it is made up by participants in Mevlana's activities (Smart 1998: 11-22; see sections 3.2 and 6.6.2).

The women, who do not merely interact with their friends around Islamic educational activities, also have access to their friends' varying levels of embodied Islamic knowledge. Muslim friends are naturally ascribed with more knowledge about Islam than non-Muslim friends are. However, some of the women ascribe their non-Muslim friends with good knowledge about Islam as well. Hanne, for instance, ascribes her non-Muslim friends with much knowledge about Islamic beliefs and practices due to their backgrounds from Indonesia. Petra ascribes some of her non-Muslim friends with a bit knowledge about Islam, too, since they have learned about it at school, from her and from other Muslim friends. Katrine, on the other hand, who finds that several of her non-Muslim friends hold static and stereotypical pictures of Islam and Muslims, thinks that they lack proper knowledge about Islam (see section 7.2.2).

The attitudes and opinions of Islam the women experience as active among their Muslim friends correspond more or less with their own. Some of the women's non-Muslim friends hold prejudices toward Islam and Muslims, which may be uttered through questions or comments. However, since the interviewees relate to them as friends, they do not necessarily ascribe them with bad attitudes toward Islam. Instead, they often regard the friends' prejudices as a result of their lack of knowledge about or proper sources to Islam. The women's Muslim friends are ascribed with more sources to Islam than their non-Muslim friends. Where non-Muslim friends are assumed to build their knowledge upon media representations, Muslim friends have learned about Islam from their families, friends, local Islamic fields, etc. Because of this, they understand and view Islam differently. Several of the women, such as Petra, experience that their non-Muslim friends are willing to listen to and learn about Islam from them and in this way nuance or evolve their attitudes toward Islam. Because of this, most of the women experience that dominating picture of Islam within their field of friends as overall good.

The fields of friends facilitate the women's religious practices in different ways. When they interact with Muslim friends around Islamic educational activities, it is accepted and sometimes expected that they perform Islamic rituals, observe Islamic clothing- and food regulations and follow Islamic rules of conduct (see Chapter 6). Some of their non-Muslim

friends facilitate their religious practices as well, such as by supporting their observance of these. Anna's friend provides an example:

> **Anna**: I have experienced many nice things from my friends, sometimes without knowing it. For instance, when we graduated from junior high school, they handed out Coca Cola, and I was just about to drink it when my friend stopped me because it contained alcohol. They (…) had added alcohol you know (laughs). (…) She really did not have to care right, but because she knows who I am, it is simpler. We look after each other.

Non-Muslim friends may facilitate the women's religious practices in different ways – either by stopping them from breaking Islamic diet rules, such as Anna's friend above, or by serving them *halal* food and non-alcoholic beverages at dinner parties. How their non-Muslim friends facilitate their religious practices is not that relevant, according the women; the most important thing is that they respect and acknowledge their wish to observe them.

Most of the women find that their non-Muslim friends respect and acknowledge their Muslim identities, religious practices and knowledge. They may not value it as much as their Muslim friends do but recognize the importance Islam plays in their lives. As friends they respect and acknowledge each other's backgrounds and choices in ways other than persons with less close ties do. Take Oda and her friends, for example:

> **Oda**: I have friends that want to come with me to Iraq to visit Najaf and such. Because they have heard about my experiences (…) "I have been there, and I have visited them," and they just: "Wow." They want to wear a long *abaya*. [Friend's name – E-A] wants to wear one when she visits Iraq and such. She wants to try it. (…) She is like, she has faith in Jesus and such, and pray like a Christian, but she also wants to see… And since I respect her religion and such, she respects…(…) We buy Christmas presents to each other when it is Christmas and such (laughs).

There are, however, some exceptions. As shown above, several of the participants within Katrine's field of friends do not appreciate Islam or her Muslim identity and can be very critical in regard to both Islam and Muslims (see section 7.2.2). In relation to this, Katrine makes a distinction between whom she regards as her few, but very close, friends and the rest of her friends. The persons she hangs out with the most are her closest friends. These tend to be more

sympathetic toward Islam and her Muslim identity and respect it even though they may not deem it as important.

Among Muslim friends, Muslim identities, Islamic practices and knowledge are valued and regarded as important. It is their shared religious identities and quest for Islamic knowledge that gather some of the women and their friends around Islamic educational activities within the local Islamic fields. Moreover, it is their Muslim identities and religious practices that gather them and their friends around Islamic rituals and celebrations in the local Islamic institutional fields' mosques. The Muslim friends that the women mainly interact with outside the Islamic fields value their religious identities and practices as well. As Muslims in Trondheim, the women and their friends are familiar with diversity within Islam and among Muslims. For this reason, it is both accepted and expected that friends choose differently from the Islamic basket when it comes to what Islamic practices and regulations to follow and how (Hjärpe 1997, 1998; see section 2.2.5). For instance, Mai and Petra relate differently to Islamic rituals and regulations than their friends do. They wear *hijab*, pray and fast regularly, while most of their friends do not, or only sporadically. Since Mai and Petra choose differently from the Islamic basket than their friends, they are often encouraged to legitimize their observance of some of the Islamic practices and particularly those that diverge from the rest. Despite this, their friends do not criticize or look down on their religious practices. Instead, Mai and Petra experience that their friends support and respect their steady religious observances and that they gain some credibility from it. Mai's friends, for instance, regard her as brave since she wears *hijab* in Trondheim and claim to be proud of her steady religious observances. This shows that even though Mai, Petra and their friends relate differently to the Islamic basket, they all acknowledge Islam as a system of meaning and norm (Hjärpe 1997, 1998; see section 2.2.5). This corresponds with Fadil's findings. She shows that among her informants, the authority of Islam as a system of meaning and norm remained undisputed even though the entry into Islam and engagement with Islam – *whether or not to practice Islam and how* – have become a matter of individual choice and thus *individualized* (Fadil 2005: 143-153; see section 2.1.5).

Not only religious identities and practices are appreciated within the women's fields of friends but also backgrounds, skills, behavior and qualities are pointed out when the women describe what is valued within the field. Within Hanne's field of friends, it is valued that all of them share Indonesian as one of their first languages. This makes communication between them much easier and relaxed. In addition to language, Hanne thinks her friends appreciate that she knows how to make a joke and how to choose good conversations topics, which means that she manages to talk about things other than herself and her situation. Some women, such as

Barbro, believe that their friends value the support, care and respect they show them. While others, such as Anna, have experienced that honesty is appreciated among their friends. Several of the women, among them Mai, emphasize that the most appreciated among their friends is the ability to be a good friend. According to Mai, a good friend is a good listener, good at keeping secrets, trustworthy, respectful and willing to share one's personal thoughts and experiences. Even though the women hold various characterizations of a good friend, they appreciate friends that accept and respect them for who they are.

Participants from their fields of family and friends make up the women's personal networks in Trondheim. Just by having friends, the women have access to social capital in the form of networks, contacts and friendships in Trondheim, from which they can generate various resources (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992: 119; see section 3.4.3). How much, and what type of resources the women can generate from their fields of friends depends, however, upon the size of their friend networks and who their friends are. The women who identify the participants within KMIT as their friends can, for instance, generate all kinds of help and assistance from their friend networks, spanning from help with their Islamic and/or disciplinary studies to transport and childcare (see section 6.4.2). Barbro, on the other hand, with a smaller network of friends, must sometimes seek help outside her personal network to get the help that she needs. For instance, she uses public services to get help with Norwegian translations or to fill out forms, which are types of help other interviewees have access to within their fields of friends or family. Thus, the women possess different volumes of social capital within their fields of friends (Bourdieu 2006: 17; see section 3.4.2). The women have close relational bonds to their friends in Trondheim. The Indonesian women, for instance, view their Indonesian friends in Trondheim as family and interact with them as such in the absence of their own family members (see section 6.4.2). Nina describes her friends as "those who know her best," and those who will support her "through sorrow and happiness." Similar to the women's relational bonds within their other local fields, they feel closer to some of the participants than others even though they define all of them as friends. Through the field of friends, the women have access to expand their personal networks in Trondheim, too, by establishing contact or friendship with their friends' friends.

Some of the women's fields of friends can also provide economic capital (Bourdieu 2006: 5, 8; see section 3.4.2). As shown above, the women with friends in SG and KMIT have indirect access to economic capital because they use their friend networks and contacts to transmit job opportunities, to get assistance with job applications, to sell products, to exchange favors and to get personal loans (see sections 6.2.2 and 6.4.2). The women who do not engage

in these two Islamic fields use their friends and friend networks and contacts in similar ways. Barbro and her friends have, for instance, established a private savings scheme:

> **E-A**: (…) You have a form of savings scheme you and your friends? **Barbro**: Yes, a *hagbad*. **E-A**: So, if you need to borrow some money, will you go to your friends? **Barbro**: Yes, if I need 10 000, my friends from Iraq, Arabic countries and Somalia, I say I need 10 000 and they will bring it without thinking. (…) If they have money, they will give it to me. If they do not have, they will say sorry, we do not have **E-A**: What is a *hagbad*? **Barbro**: *Hagbad*, for instance 500 kroner a month. 10 persons or 20 persons, we collect it. (…) At the moment, we are 10 persons. It will not be that much money. 500 will be 5000. **E-A**: So, it is a way to help each other save money. **Barbro**: Save. For instance, if I need to travel somewhere this month, they can give me the money first. Alternatively, when we are going to write our names, you will be the first one, I will be the second, third and so on. However, suddenly, someone needs help, and then we can change the numbering.

Thus, the women may generate economic capital both directly and indirectly from their fields of friends.

7.4.3 The women's tactical maneuvers within the field of friends

Muslims and non-Muslims make up the women's fields of friends. All have Muslim friends, and some include non-Muslims within their fields of friends as well. Because of this, Islam, or the women's Muslim identities, influence(s) their fields of friends in one way or another. In this study, I have gathered material about the main informants' sources and methods to Islam, not their Muslim friends' sources and methods. Because of this, it is not possible with this study's material to stipulate what Islamic methodologies, or strategies, might surround *all* of their Muslim friends. However, since some of the women have overlapping fields of friends with local Islamic fields, it is possible to say what Islamic methodologies surround their fields of friends and how the interviewees relate to these (de Certeau 1984: xix, 35-37; see section 3.5.4).

The women whose fields of friends overlap with the participants within SG, such as Julie and Indonesian interviewees X and Y, are surrounded by IN's Salafi methodology that influences SG's sources and methods to Islam (see section 4.5.1). The women whose fields of friends have much overlap with participants in KMIT – Emma, Ida, Dorthe, Hanne and Frida

– are surrounded by MST's and DIC's glocal Islamic methodologies, which are inspired by the Muslim Brotherhood and the Shafii Islamic methodologies (see section 4.5.2). This means that the Indonesian interviewees X's and Y's fields of friends, made up by participants from SG and KMIT, are surrounded by IN's Salafi methodology *and* MST's and DIC's "glocal" methodologies. Moreover, Mai's and Lene's fields of friends overlap with members in Mevlana. This means that their fields of friends are surrounded by Mevlana's Hanafi methodology (see section 4.3.2). It is not possible to stipulate what Islamic methodologies the other women's fields of friends may be surrounded by since I do not know if all of their Muslim friends have affiliations to Islamic fields in Trondheim nor whom they may identify with. Still, since all of the women have some friends within the local Islamic fields they engage in, it is possible to assume that these fields influence their friends' sources and methods to Islam in one way or another. For instance, Petra, Oda and Nina have friends with institutional ties to AOB. Still, their fields of friends cannot be said to be surrounded by the Twelver Shia methodology since they have Muslim friends who are not members of AOB as well. Nina, for instance, has friends that are members in other local Islamic institutions.

The women with overlapping fields of friends with participants in SG and/or KMIT tactically use their friends as sources and methods to Islam when they gather around Islamic educational activities where they learn *from* and *together with* them (see sections 6.2 and 6.4). This means that these women's tactics are to operate within, and in relation to, the Islamic methodologies that surround their fields of friends. They tactically use their friends' embodied Islamic knowledge and quests for knowledge to increase their individual knowledge about Islam. Indonesian interviewees X and Y, who have friends within both Islamic fields, adjust their use of Islamic sources to the field in which they engage. This means that when they study Islam with SG, their study is oriented around the revealed Islamic scriptures. However, when they study Islam together with the participants at KMIT, they include other authoritative sources, such as the Sunni Islamic law schools' and Islamic scholars', *ulama*'s, legal interpretations in the quest for knowledge as well (see sections 4.5.1-4.5.2, 6.2 and 6.4).

Lene tactically relates to her field of friends' Hanafi methodology and orients her quest for knowledge around Hanafi sources and methods. This means that Lene's tactics are to use her friends in Mevlana as sources and methods to Islam like the women with friends in SG and/or KMIT do (see sections 4.3.2 and 6.6). Mai's field of friends is surrounded by the Hanafi methodology, too, since all of her friends have institutional ties to Mevlana. Still, Mai and her friends choose differently from the Islamic basket when it comes to what Hanafi regulations concerning *ibadat* and *mu'amalat* to follow and how (Hjärpe 1997, 1998; see sections 2.2.5

and 7.4.1-7.4.2). Mai explains differences in her and her friends' religious practices with reference to some of her friends' lack of knowledge about authoritative Islamic sources or that they embody correct knowledge about Islamic regulations but do not take initiative to implement them their lives. For instance, some of her friends argue that the use of *hijab* is a result of tradition and local culture and not religion, and to legitimize their views they refer to the fact that it is not mentioned in the Qur'an, Mai claims. She, on the other hand, thinks that they are wrong. She knows that a small part of the Qur'an deals with regulations concerning women's clothing, and thus the *hijab*, and that her friends' arguments cannot be supported by authoritative Islamic sources. Faced with her friends' knowledge about Islamic practices, or lack of observance of such practices, Mai's tactic is not to use her friends as sources to Islam. Instead, she faithfully continues to use her individual material and social and institutional sources to Islam and to orient and legitimize her individual religious practices in relation to these (see sections 5.2.3-5.2.5, 5.3.1, 6.6 and 7.1). This means that Mai's tactics within the field of friends are to continue to use authoritative Hanafi sources and methods to Islam and to follow Hanafi regulations in relation to dress codes and ritual obligations instead of following her friends' choices and practices.

When the women experience that they and their Muslim friends choose differently from the Islamic basket, several of them use tactics similar to those of Mai. They choose not to copy their friends' practices but turn to their individual sources to legitimate individual religious practices for themselves and their friends. Some of the women do not interfere with friends' religious practices that diverge from theirs, others do. Petra's tactics are not to interfere but instead to legitimize her own by sharing her embodied Islamic knowledge, sources, personal opinions or reasons for performing them with her friends. Camilla, on the other hand, may interfere with her friends' practices. She regards it as a recommended action to inform friends if she recognizes any of their religious practices as wrong. According to Camilla, she cannot judge a person based upon her/his religious practices, only God can. However, she can make them aware of any incorrect practices and in this way make it possible for them to correct them.

The women with fields of friends that go beyond, or which are not limited to, their local Islamic fields have various ways of relating to their friends' active Islamic knowledge or/and religious practices. For instance, Katrine makes use of various tactics when faced with her non-Muslim friends' lack of knowledge and biased picture of Islam. She tries to answer their questions; she offers them her embodied Islamic knowledge, personal opinions and perspective of Islam and she tries to be a good representative for Islam and Muslims to broaden and increase their knowledge and understanding of Islam (see section 7.2.3). The women with Muslim

friends with institutional affiliations other than their own deal with their friends' diverging Islamic knowledge and practices by accepting them. Nina, for instance, who includes Sunni Muslims within her field of friends, acknowledges that they relate differently to Islamic source materials and thus practice Islam differently than she as a Shiite Muslim does. Instead of getting involved in discussions with her friends about who is wright and wrong, she acknowledges that the use of various sources and methods influences how they live as Muslims. This means that Nina's and some of the other women's tactics are to accept and recognize diversity within Islam at the same time as they choose to follow the Islamic source material they believe to be most authoritative and to legitimate their own religious practices with references to these and their institutional affiliations.

7.4.4 Friend's influence on the women's knowledge acquisition of Islam

The women have various access to Islamic knowledge capital within their respective fields of friends. Thus, their fields of friends influence their knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam in different ways. The women with friends in SG, KMIT or Mevlana can generate much Islamic knowledge from their friends. They use their friends as sources and their collective studies as a method to gain more knowledge about Islam, and in this way, their friends influence their individual quests for knowledge. As shown in Chapter 6, SG influences its members' normative field by strengthening their use of the revealed Islamic canon and its commentary literature as their primary sources to Islam. This means that the women's friends in SG do not make them activate any new Islamic source materials from the Islamic basket but influence their quest for knowledge by pushing them in a scriptural direction (see section 6.2.4). KMIT influences the women's normative field by providing them with knowledge about various Islamic methodologies to which they orient their individual quest for knowledge. In this way, the women's friends in KMIT influence their knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam by equipping them with knowledge about authoritative Islamic sources and methods that they can use to practice a well-informed "restricted bricolage" and to make well-informed choices of what Islamic practices and regulations to activate from the Islamic basket (Jacobsen 2006: 212-229; see sections 2.1.6 and 6.4.4). Moreover, Mevlana influences its members' normative field by strengthening their Hanafi identities by providing them with Hanafi knowledge and sources (see section 6.6.4). This means that the women's friends in Mevlana influence their quest for knowledge by encouraging them to activate Hanafi regulations from the Islamic basket. However, since there are differences between the interviewees when it comes to if and how they use their friends as sources and methods of gaining knowledge about Islam, their fields

of friends have various influences on their individual quests for knowledge (see sections 7.4.1-7.4.3).

Muslim and non-Muslim friends' questions about Islam and Islamic practices *trigger both individual and collective quests* for knowledge among the women. The women's friends encourage them to answer questions about Islam or to elaborate on, explain or legitimate their individual religious practices. To be able to do that, they need knowledge about Islam that they either gain from their collective or individual studies. However, in contrast to the non-Muslim-majority fields, the women are seldom ascribed the role as representatives for Islam and Muslims by participants within the field of friends since several of these identify as Muslims themselves or embody more knowledge about Islam as a result of having Muslim friends. This means that even though the women face questions about Islam and their individual religious practices from their friends, they are seldom encouraged to answer for Islam or other Muslims' actions and practices within this field. Furthermore, since many of their friends are Muslim, the interviewees do not have to elaborate or explain *all* their religious observances since Islam has social authority, and it is socially acceptable to practice Islam within the field of friends (Roy 2004: 148-152).

7.5 Summary: The local non-Islamic fields as the women's sources and methods to Islam

The women spend most of their everyday lives within the non-Islamic fields. For this reason, it is within these fields that large parts of their lived religion unfold. This is where the women practice their Islamic faith by implementing it into their lives through the observance of Islamic rituals, practices, regulations and rules of conduct and where they make individual choices concerning how to live as Muslims and how to adapt their "Muslim lives" to their surroundings (McGuire 2008: 46; see section 3.3.1). Through their engagement in the non-Islamic fields, the women encounter many questions about their religious identities and practices. To be able to implement Islam into their individual lives, and to legitimate and answer for religious identities and practices, the women need knowledge about Islam – knowledge that they gain through individual studies, collective studies with participants from their fields of family and friends or by using participants within these two fields as social and institutional and/or practical and ritual sources. This means that within the non-Islamic fields, the women *acquire* Islamic knowledge and *make use* of this knowledge by putting it into practice and by legitimating their religious identities and practices.

7.5.1 Categories of Islamic knowledge

To implement their Islamic faith into practices and to adjust their religious practices to their surroundings, the women need to embody knowledge about the Islamic tenets of faith, *sharia*'s categories of regulations – *ibadat* and *mu'amalat* – its categories of action and their legal value, in addition to various to contextual adjustments of *sharia*. This means that the women need doctrinal, ritual and practical, and ethical and legal knowledge about Islam to practice Islam within the non-Islamic fields in Trondheim (Smart 1998: 11-22; see sections 3.3, 4.1.1 and 4.3.1). This does not mean that other types of Islamic knowledge are irrelevant for the women within their non-Islamic fields, but rather that it is essential for the women to possess these types of knowledge in order to put their faith into practices, and thus live as practicing Muslims.

The women's fields of family function as a safe place for the women's religious identities and practices. Still, they need knowledge about Islamic rituals, practices, regulations and rules of conduct to know what to practice and how, and how to interact with participants within this field. To be able to engage in collective studies about Islam with family members, and to make individual choices concerning how to practice Islam and to legitimize their practices as Islamic, the women need knowledge about authoritative Islamic sources and methods. In addition, it is important for all of the women, and particularly those who function as transmitters of Islam to their children, to have knowledge about tenets of faith, central figures and events in Islam, such as the Prophets, their lives and companions. Thus, as part of their lived Islam within the field of family, the women need ritual and practical, ethical and legal, material, doctrinal and narrative and mythical knowledge about Islam (see sections 7.1.1-7.1.4). Within the fields of friends, it is important for the women to embody ritual and practical, ethical and legal, and material knowledge as well. Friends encourage the women to explain and legitimize their individual religious practices through direct questions, or by "confronting" them with other ways to practice Islam. Thus, to be able to legitimize religious practices for themselves and their friends, they need these types of Islamic knowledge. Several of the women study Islam together with their friends too, something which strengthen their need of material knowledge about authoritative Islamic sources (see sections 7.4.1-7.4.4).

Within the non-Muslim-majority fields of study and work, the women encounter questions about their individual Muslim identities and practices and questions about Islam and Muslims in general. Here they function as representatives for Islam and Muslims and are encouraged to speak and answer for Islam and other Muslims' actions. Many of the questions they face are oriented around their observance of Islamic rituals, practices and regulations, and thus the more "visible" sides of Islam. This means that even though the women may need many

types of knowledge to answer these questions, it is of particular importance for them to possess ritual and practical, and ethical and legal knowledge about Islam within these fields. Detailed knowledge about Islamic rituals, practices, regulations, rules of conduct, and various legal interpretations and contextual adjustment of these, are also important for the women who must facilitate and adjust their religious practices to their non-Muslim surroundings that do not facilitate much for such (see sections 7.2.2-7.2.4 and 7.3.2-7.3.4).

7.5.2 Elements from the Islamic basket

It is a clear connection between the elements from the Islamic basket the women wish to embody knowledge about, and the elements they must have knowledge about to practice Islam in Trondheim. As shown above in chapter 5 and 6, the women's quests for knowledge are mainly oriented around elements that may increase their knowledge about *sharia*. This include knowledge about *ibadat* and *mu'amalat, sharia*'s categories of action, their legal values, and the Islamic source materials that *sharia* is deduced from. Thus, the elements from the Islamic basket the women wish and need knowledge about are Islamic source materials, categorizations, beliefs, rituals, practices, observances and rules of conduct (Hjärpe 1997, 1998; see sections 2.2.5, 5.2.1 and 6.8.2).

It is vital for the women to embody knowledge about these elements to live as practicing Muslims in Trondheim. Within their fields of family and friends, the women need this knowledge to practice their Islamic faith, and to implement it into practices in their daily lives. Within the fields of study and work, the women make us of their knowledge about the same elements, but out of other reasons. Here they use this knowledge to adjust their religious practices to their non-Muslim surroundings, and to facilitate such, in addition to encounter questions about their religious identities and practices from the non-Muslim participants. Moreover, the women both search for, and make use of, knowledge about Islamic source materials within the non-Islamic fields. This means that they gain and use knowledge about elements from the Islamic basket that belong to the "normative field" (Roald 2001: 88-92; see sections 2.2.5 and 3.6). Knowledge about Islamic source materials, their contents, compositions, and legal statuses, are relevant and necessary for the women when they study or discuss Islam together with family members and friends. In these situations, they can use material knowledge about Islamic source materials to legitimate their sources as sound, and/or support their arguments with references to authoritative sources. The women also use knowledge about and from Islamic source materials to make individual choices concerning how to practice Islam, and how to adjust religious practices to their non-Islamic fields, and

particularly their non-Muslim-majority fields. This type of knowledge also enables the women to legitimize their religious practices as Islamic, for themselves and other participants within these fields.

Knowledge about Islamic source materials' contents encompass knowledge about other elements from the Islamic basket as well, such as Islamic narratives and historiography. These elements are important because they provide the women with knowledge about the stories and histories behind religious rituals and practices, and thus the contextual backgrounds to their religious practices. Knowledge about Islamic narratives and historiography are of particular importance for the women who function as transmitters of Islam to their children, since they often use stories about the Prophets in Islam to introduce their children to Islamic faith and practices (see section 7.1.1).

This shows that the women both want, need and use knowledge about several of the elements in the Islamic basket to practice Islam in Trondheim since the elements, like Smart's dimensions of religion, are closely intertwined and complementary (Smart 1998: 11-22; see section 3.2).

7.5.3 Fields and capital

The women use their families and friends as social and institutional and practical and ritual sources to Islam in different ways and with various frequency. Colleagues or fellow students do not function as sources for the women. Thus, even though the women practice Islam within all the non-Islamic fields, it is mainly within the fields of family and friends that their knowledge acquisition of Islam take place. The women's religious identities and practices are social accepted within their families. For this reason, the field of family functions as a safe space for their faith, Islamic rituals, practices and observances and facilitate such. Some of the women's fields of friends, and particularly those who overlap with local Islamic fields, function as safe spaces for religious practices as well. The women with more diverse fields of friends also meet acceptance of their religious identities and practices from their close friends. However, these fields of friends do not function as safe spaces for religious practices in the same way as the field of family does, since the women are often asked to explain and legitimize their individual religious identities and practices before their Muslim and non-Muslim friends. As non-Muslim-majority fields, the women's fields of study and work do not facilitate much for their religious practices. Two of the women access a prayer room at work, but seldom use it because it is located at a distance from their respective workplaces. Some of the women's workplaces facilitate their observance of Islamic diet regulations, however mainly on special

occasions. Because of this, it becomes the individual woman's responsibility to decide how to maintain her identity as a practicing Muslim within these fields, and to adjust and facilitate her religious practices.

The local non-Islamic field's make up, influence what access the women have to Islamic knowledge capital. Within their fields of family and friends, the women have access to family members and Muslim friends' embodied Islamic knowledge, experiences of living as Muslims, opinions and viewpoints on matters related to Islam, in addition to their material Islamic sources such as books, literature, videos etc. How much, and what kinds of Islamic knowledge capital they can generate from these fields vary and are influenced by the fields' make up. Those with overlapping fields of friends and Islamic fields, have more access to Islamic knowledge capital than those whose fields of friends are made up by Muslims and non-Muslims, and who merely interact with their friends around secular activities. Within the fields of study and work, the women have limited access to Islamic knowledge capital. As students at upper secondary school, Oda and Katrine have access to knowledge about Islam within their RE subject, but none of them regards it as a source to Islam. Katrine describe the knowledge about Islam transmitted within her RE-lessons as "not relevant nor enough," while Oda does not use it as a source to Islam since the presentation of Islam is oriented around a Sunni norm, and she identifies as a Shiite Muslim. None of the other women has access to a similar subject within their study programs. Thus, the women's main access to knowledge about Islam within the fields of study and work, are the types of Islamic knowledge they experience as active among their fellow students, teachers and colleagues, and whom they encounter through interactions. Even though there are variations, the women experience the level of Islamic knowledge among the participants within the fields of study and work as fluctuating, low or lacking. Because of this, the women often function as sources to Islam and representatives for Islam and Muslim within these fields.

There are differences between the women's non-Islamic fields when it comes to how they value and respect their Muslim identities, Islamic practices and knowledge. As Muslims among Muslim family members and friends, the women experience appreciations of their religious identities and practices. Because of this, it is much correspondence between the women, and their family members and Muslim friends' pictures of and attitudes towards Islam. The women's fields of family and friends also appreciate and respect their Islamic knowledge and quests for such. By providing the women with sources to Islam or by engaging in collective studies with them, they support the latter. For this reason, the women experience that Islam, Muslim identities, Islamic practices and Islamic knowledge, are active forms of cultural capital

within the fields of family and friends. This is not the case with the fields of study and work, where none of the women can generate any form of cultural capital directly from Islam or their Muslim identities. The women experience that participants within these fields may respect and tolerate their Muslim identities, but that neither religion nor religious identities are valued as important, nor function as active cultural capital. Within these fields, the women also encounter other opinions and attitudes towards Islam and Muslims than they do among their family and friends. There are variations in fellow students' and colleagues' pictures and attitudes towards Islam. Still, the women experience a biased, stereotypic and negative picture of Islam as prevailing among these.

The women gain a lot of attention for their religious identities and practices within the fields of study and work. As practicing Muslims who wear *hijab*, the women become visible representatives of Islam and Muslims within these non-Muslim-majority fields. However, it is not only the women's *hijab*s or their religious observances that gain attention but also their Muslim *identities* and their *affiliation* with Islam itself. For instance, Katrine, who does not wear *hijab*, but who is an "open" Muslim at her school, faces much negative attention in the forms of critics, critic remarks and critical questions about Islam and Muslims because of her religious identity. The same is the case within Petra's field of study. Even though Petra is the only Muslim woman with *hijab* in her class, she experiences that both she and one of her Muslim classmates who do not cover her hair, encounter questions about their religious identities and practices, or lack of such. Thus, attention is drawn to Katrine, Petra and Petra's classmate's *identities*, and not only their visible religious observances. Even though the women adjust their religious practices to their work and study situations, for instance by postponing ritual prayers or fast, they still receive a lot of questions and remarks towards their religious identities and practices, because it is not only the latter that draws attention, but also the first. Within the local Islamic and non-Islamic fields in Trondheim, it is allowed to choose one's religion, or choose not to have a religion, in accordance with the Human Right's article about Freedom of religion. However, within the non-Muslim-majority fields of study and work, it seems like choosing Islam and a Muslim identity, choices that diverge from the majority, entail both attention and skepticism, and encouragements of explaining, elaborating and legitimizing one's individual choices.

The women experience that some parts of Islam gain more attention than other parts within the fields of study and work. Most attention is given to the visible sides of Islam, like specific rituals and regulations such as the ritual prayer, the fast and Islamic diet- and clothes regulations. Seldom, or never, attention draws to the ethical sides of Islam, and thus the more

invisible sides of Islam. The women experience that their colleagues and fellow students appreciate their way of being: their nice manners, good deeds, trustworthiness and that they respect and treat their colleagues/fellow students well etc. Even though the interviewees define these sorts of behavior and practices as important parts of their Muslim identities, and as a part of their religious practices embraced by *mu'amalat*, and thus *sharia*'s rules of conduct, their colleagues/fellow students fail to recognize them as such. Instead, the women experience that participants within these fields view their conduct as their individual personality traits, and thus independently of Islam. This means that even though their colleagues/fellow students value the women's conduct which is influenced by Islamic ethics and moral, they do not manage to recognize it as parts of their Muslim identities, since the colleagues/fellow students seem to be in lack of knowledge about the ethical dimension of Islam. Thus, it seems that the active knowledge about Islam within these fields are only oriented around Islamic rituals and practical regulations, and that other parts of Islam, and particularly the ethical sides of Islam as expressed through *mu'amalat* are being overlooked. This do not correspond with the women's understanding and view of Islam. As showed above, in their descriptions of Islam and Muslims, and their self-definitions as Muslims, all parts of Islam are emphasized, since the women do not separate practices and ethics: this goes hand in hand for them (see sections 5.1-5.2). This can explain why Katrine's classmates and friends, despite her efforts of being a good human and Muslim, ascribe her with the identity "worst Muslim ever" (see section 7.2.2). Katrine's classmates and friends only look at her outer appearance: whether she wears *hijab* or not and evaluate her "qualities" as a Muslim in relation to their own stereotypic and biased picture and impression of Muslims, not hers. In other words, they do not manage to take Katrine's emic perspective on this, that *it is Islam and her efforts of being a good Muslim* that make her a nice person.

If we look at the individual women's "volume of capital" within each field, we can see how the various forms of capital influence each other (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992: 98-99). The women possess much capital within their fields of family and friends that make up their personal networks in Trondheim. Even though there are individual differences when it comes to the resources the women can generate from these fields, all of the women can generate cultural, social and economic capital from their personal network. The women's religious identities and practices do not make them stand out from these fields (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992: 102, 105-107). Rather, as Muslims from Muslims families, and with Muslims among their friends, the women experience social acceptance for Islam within these fields, and that the fields value and facilitate their Muslim identities, Islamic practices and knowledge. Thus,

the women have close relational bonds to their family members and friends and can turn to them in all situations.

The women access and are in possession of capital within the non-Muslim-majority fields as well, but in other forms than within the fields of family and friends. Here the women can generate economic capital directly from their field of work, and cultural capital in the form of educational qualifications that may provide them work positions later from their field of study. Their Muslim identities and practices make them different from most of the participants within these two fields. Within the field of work, the women cannot generate any cultural capital from religious identities, practices or knowledge. This seems to influence their access to social capital, since most of the women have just professional relationships to their colleagues. Even though the women go along well with their colleagues, only a few of them have developed close relational bonds to them. For this reason, they can mainly generate work related help from this field. We can find the same tendencies within the women's fields of study as well. Several of the women engaged in this field, relate to their fellow students on professional terms and do not include them in their personal network. However, some of the women have networks of friends within the field of study as well. These women experience that even though their friends do not share or value their Muslim identities and practices like they do, they respect them and appreciate each other's differences. This shows that within the non-Muslim-majority fields, where the women's religious identities, practices and knowledge are not considered active capital, it influences the women's volume of social capital (Bourdieu 2006: 17; see section 3.4.2). There can be many explanations for this, but it seems like when the women experience that their colleagues or fellow students do not recognize the ethical sides of Islam, which the women believe make them better humans, but only focus on Islam's ritual and practical and legal dimensions through numbers questions, it creates a distance between the women and the non-Muslims participants within these fields. In this way, the women's religious identities become the difference that make a difference, and what makes it difficult for them to develop close relational bonds to their colleagues and fellow students.

The women want to increase their Islamic knowledge and to practice Islam because they believe that it makes them better humans. Because of this, it is important for the women to be able to maintain their Muslim identities and practice Islam within their non-Islamic fields. It is important for their well-being, because they believe that Islamic rituals, practices and rules of conduct, and their observance of these, are what make them good humans and fellow humans. Thus, they do not distinguish their behavior from their religious practices, or ethics

from practices, but regard all parts as important aspects of their Muslim identities (see sections 5.1-5-2).

7.5.4 "Strategy" and tactic

The women tactically use family members and Muslim friends as sources and methods of gaining knowledge about Islam. They use family members' embodied Islamic knowledge, language skills, experiences as Muslim and their Islamic source materials to increase their individual knowledge about Islam. Thus, their tactics are to operate within, and in relation to, the various Islamic methodologies that surrounds their fields of family. The women with overlapping fields of friends and local Islamic fields are also tactically using their friends as sources and methods, since they gather with these around Islamic educational activities where they learn from and with them. The only exception here is Mai, who identify other members of Mevlana as her friends, but who mainly gather with them around non-religious and non-educational activities. Mai and her friends choose differently from the Islamic basket in relation to Islamic practices and regulations. Instead of using her friends' religious choices and practices as sources, Mai chooses to follow her individual Hanafi sources and methods in her quest for Islamic knowledge. Women, whose fields of friends do not totally overlap with any of the local Islamic fields, are in varying degrees using their friends as sources to Islam. Some use friends as sources or study partners to Islam, other do not. Faced upon religious diversity, and that they and their friends practice and follow Islamic regulations differently, several of the women use similar tactics as Mai and turn to their individual sources instead of using their friends as such. This means that their tactics in this regard are to accept and recognize diversity within Islam, at the same time as they choose to follow the Islamic source materials they believe to be the most authoritative and to legitimate own religious practices with references to these. Non-Muslim friends are not used as sources or methods to Islam by any of the women.

The non-Islamic fields of study and work do not function as sources to Islam for the women. By using various tactics, they relate themselves to these fields' dominating attitude towards and active knowledge about Islam, and the number of questions about Islam and Muslims, including their individual religious identity and practices, they encounter within these fields. For instance, the women try to provide answers to all the questions by using their embodied Islamic knowledge. Or, they turn to their individual sources to find answer to these questions, or to prepare answers to future questions. The women also aim to broaden and nuance their fellow students and colleagues' active knowledge about Islam, by sharing their embodied Islamic knowledge, personal opinions or experiences as Muslim with them. Other

try to oppose the prevailing picture of Islam, by being good role models and representatives for Islam and Muslim.

To see how the various local non-Islamic fields influence the women's "normative field" and consequently their knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam, we have to look at the women's capital within the respective fields, at the same time as we look at how they women operate within these fields. Again, I will use to "renewed Islamic basket" to illustrate this.

The renewed Islamic basket:
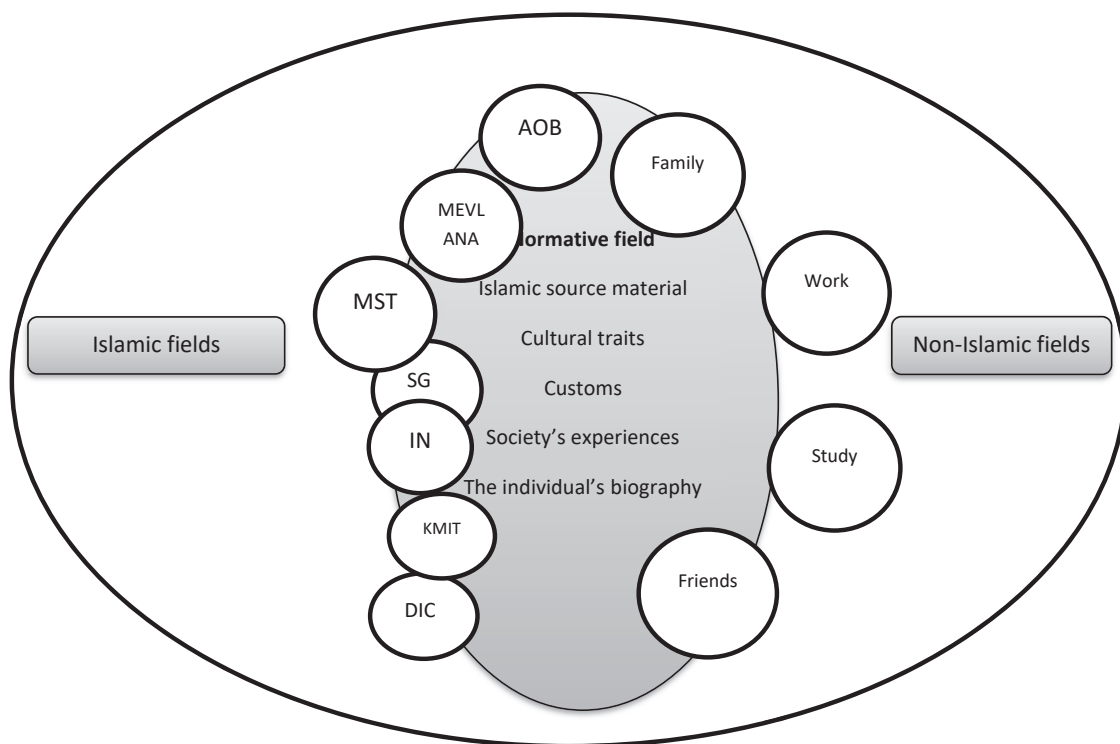
The family has much influence on the women's "normative field." Family members have been, and still are, important sources to Islam for the women. Despite individual differences in what forms of and how much, the women have access to Islamic knowledge capital within their families and uses family members as social and institutional and/or ritual and practical sources to Islam. The women can also access material sources, like Islamic scriptures, commentary literature, books etc., within the field of family, and the content of these sources through family

members embodied Islamic knowledge, language skills, experiences etc. Since the women use family members as sources to Islam, or engage in collective studies of Islam with them, there is much correspondence between what sources and methods the women and their families choose from the Islamic basket. This does not mean that all of the participants within a field of family use or prefer the exact same sources, but that they are surrounded by the same Islamic methodologies from which they choose their sources and methods. This means that even though the field of family has much influence on the women's normative field, the women make individual choices concerning what to choose from the Islamic basket in relation to sources, methods, rituals, practices etc.

The women have various access to Islamic knowledge capital within their field of friends. Because of this, it is individual differences concerning how this field influence the women's normative field. The women with friends in SG and KMIT have much access to Islamic knowledge capital. They use their friends as sources and methods, and for this reason, their field of friends' influence their normative field in various ways. As showed above, SG influence the women's normative field by strengthening their use of the revealed canon and its commentary literature as their primary sources, and thus push them into a scriptural direction (see section 6.2.4). While friends in KMIT influences the women's normative field by equipping them with knowledge about authoritative Islamic sources and methods to which they can orient their individual and collective quests for knowledge (see section 6.4.4). Friends in Mevlana strengthen the women's use of Hanafi sources and methods in various ways. Either by functioning as social and institutional and/or practical or ritual sources like Lene's friends, or by not functioning as such, but rather strengthen the women's use of their individual Hanafi sources, like Mai's friends (see sections 6.6.4 and 7.4.3). The women, who do not have overlapping field of friends with local Islamic fields, have less access to Islamic knowledge capital within their fields of friends than the women above. Even though some of these women have access to Islamic sources, discussion or study partners among their friends, friends seem to have less influence on the women's normative field and the sources and methods the choose to activate from the Islamic basket. Their main influence is to strengthen the women's use of their individual sources, rather than providing them with any new sources or pushing them into this or that direction. Thus, the field of friends' influence on the women's normative field depends upon the field's make up.

The field of study and work do not function as social and institutional and/or practical or ritual sources to Islam for the women; neither can they provide them with such. Even though two of the women have access to a subject that aims to provide them with knowledge about

Islam, within their field of study, none of them identifies or uses it as an individual source. The other women's only access to knowledge about Islam within the fields of study and work are the embodied Islamic knowledge of their colleagues and/or classmates. Since the women have limited access to Islamic knowledge capital within these fields, they not influence what *sources* and *methods* the women choose from the Islamic basket, that is. their "normative field," but strengthen their use of their individual sources to Islam. However, even though they do not influence the women's normative field directly, the fields of study and work influence what elements from the Islamic basket the women want to increase their knowledge about, namely *ibadat* and *mu'amalat.*

The non-Islamic fields and their various forms of capital trigger individualization processes in the women's knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam in different ways. Within the family, the women are encouraged and inspired to increase their Islamic knowledge by family members who function as sources to Islam, or provide them with such, and who value this type of knowledge as important. Several of the women's fields of friends influence the women's quest for knowledge in similar ways by engaging them in collective studies and by inspiring them to engage in individual studies of Islam. In this way, family and friends equip the women with Islamic knowledge, Islamic sources or knowledge about authoritative Islamic sources that they can use to practice a "restricted bricolage" in relation to what sources and methods, and what rituals, practices and regulations, to activate from the Islamic basket. Muslim and non-Muslim friends' questions about individual religious identities and practices can also trigger individual quests for knowledge among the women who must legitimate their individual choices before themselves and their friends.

Where the fields of family and friends *trigger* individualization processes in the women's knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam, the non-Muslim-majority fields of study and work *push* such processes upon the women. The fields of study and work strengthen the women's wish and self-experienced need of more Islamic knowledge and trigger individual searches for knowledge among them. The low or lacking active Islamic knowledge, and the lack of social acceptance of Muslim identities and practices within these fields, make it important for the women to explain, elaborate and legitimate their religious identities and practices before their non-Muslim surroundings. Moreover, to answer all the questions about Islam and Muslims they encounter within these fields. To be able to do that, the women need knowledge about Islam in general, and *ibadat* and *mu'amalat* in particular. The field of study and work also pushes individualization processes upon the women's Islamic practices. Where the women's fields of family and friends both accept and expect the women to observe Islamic

rituals and regulations, and facilitate such practices, the fields of study and work do not. As a Muslim minority within non-Muslim-majority fields, the women must take charge and control of their own religious practices. This means that they must make individual choices and find individual solutions and adjustments to how, where and when to practice Islam within these fields. This further strengthen their wish for more knowledge about *ibadat* and *mu'amalat* and pushes them into individual quests for knowledge.

Chapter 8. Meta analyses: Summary and conclusions

8.1 Summary

This study contributes with a more complex understanding of the problem area "*knowledge acquisition and formation and their implications for research on individualization processes among European Muslims*" by approaching the theories of individualization using various analytical categories and from several perspectives. In Chapter 1, I introduced "individualization processes in Muslim women's knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam in Trondheim" as the topic of this thesis and the objective of the study as twofold. Firstly*,* this study *explores individualization processes in Muslim women's knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam in Trondheim by looking at the women's sources and methods to Islam and the local context's influence on these.* Secondly, this study *introduces a complex methodology that brings more perspectives and analytical categories into the study of individualization processes among European Muslims. This will be used to raise a debate about the prevalent theories of individualization and their applicability on studies concerning Islam and Muslims in Europe*.

In Chapter 2, I began treating the problem area with a presentation and analysis of previous research on individualization processes in European Muslims' knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam. The analysis included a critical examination of the individualization concept and its use and meaning in the study of religion in general and in the study of Islam in particular. Furthermore, I analyzed approaches to conceptualizing Islam with examples from social science and religious studies.

In Chapter 3, I developed the thesis's methodology and positioned it in relation to the individualization and conceptualization debates. Specifically, I explained how and why I would approach the problem area through a complex methodology consisting of several "emic" and "etic" analytical categories and thus bring together more factors into the study of individualization processes in European Muslims' knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam than previous researchers have done. The "emic" categories included the Islamic institutional schools, movements and methodologies and related concepts as well as the women's own definitions. The "etic" categories included the social science concepts of "capital" and "field" (Bourdieu) and "strategy" and "tactic" (de Certeau) and the religious studies concepts of "everyday lived religion" (McGuire) and "dimensions of religion" (Smart) as well as a model for assessing continuity and change (Hjärpe/Roald). Finally, I applied a historical perspective

to assess continuity and change of Islamic methodologies and between family generations. The chapter also included presentations of the applied methods, the informants and methodological and ethical considerations.

In Chapter 4, I developed the "emic" framework of local and global Islamic methodologies, through which I analyze the women's sources and methods and critically discuss the theories of individualization. I introduced the local Islamic fields, in which the women engage and their various Islamic methodologies and methods for gaining knowledge about Islam. As an important tool for the historical assessment of the individualization theory, I also provided a historical survey of how methodologies relate to traditional Islamic institutions and schools of law and modern Islamic movements. I then described how these traditional and modern Islamic methodologies relate to the local Islamic institutional "fields" in Trondheim and argued that they contribute in significant ways to the latter.

The topics of Chapter 5 were the women's own definitions of Islam and Muslims, their individual quests for Islamic knowledge and the individualization theories analyzed with reference to the women's definitions and quests for knowledge. In particular, I showed how and why these women define themselves as Muslims, described what types of knowledge they are searching for and why and presented their individual sources and methods for gaining knowledge about Islam. Consequently, I examined the individualization theory through the information about these women's *individual* quests for knowledge. For this purpose, I also included a generational perspective and discussed the women's sources and methods in light of family practices and changes as well.

In Chapters 6 and 7, I showed how the context of Trondheim, in the form of local Islamic and non-Islamic "fields," influences the women's knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam in different ways. Specifically, I showed how the various local Islamic and non-Islamic "fields" provide sources and methods for the women's knowledge acquisition about Islam and what forms of "capital," and in particular Islamic knowledge capital, that the women can generate from each field. In both chapters, I used the "emic" and "etic" categories to analyze how the *different* local Islamic and non-Islamic fields influence the women's knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam and what this implies for understanding individualization processes.

In this concluding chapter, I summarize the main results.

8.2 Nuancing the theories of individualization

Current theories of individualization emphasize the "new" context (geographical and cultural) and the Muslim-minority situation as triggers for transformations and individualization processes in European and Western Muslims' relationship to Islam (see sections 2.1-2.2). My study builds on this approach by describing how the context of Trondheim influences individualization processes in young Muslim women's knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam and by analyzing the findings through the categories "field" and "capital." By identifying *which* Islamic and non-Islamic fields the women engage in, and *which* forms of capital, including Islamic knowledge capital, they access and experience as active within these fields, I show how the fields and their capital influence different individualization processes, or influence individualization processes among the women differently (see Chapters 6 and 7).

The use of "capital" as an analytical tool has made it possible to describe and explain in more detail how, why and in what ways the local Islamic and non-Islamic fields, which make up the "new" context of Trondheim, influence the women's knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam. In Chapter 6, I show how the Islamic institutional "field" of the Muslim Society Trondheim (MST), with its "pan-Islamic" profile and the lack of institutional capital it attributes to the women's Islamic knowledge, *triggers* individualization processes among the women since it pushes them into individual quests for knowledge where they must choose their own sources and methods (see sections 6.1-6.2). On the other hand, the Islamic institutional "field" of the Trondheim Mevlana Cultural Organization (Mevlana), which attributes a good deal of institutional capital to the women's Islamic knowledge and actively provides them with the knowledge, sources and authorities they need, *does not trigger* similar processes among its women members (see sections 6.6-6.7). Furthermore, in Chapter 7, I show how the non-Islamic fields can *both trigger and push* individualization processes in the women's knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam depending upon each field's character and the kinds of capital it attributes to the women's Islamic knowledge and their attitude toward as well as active knowledge about Islam (see Chapter 7). Thus, by *introducing "capital"* as an analytical category and a new gateway to the theories of individualization, this study contributes to a more complex understanding of *how* the new context and the Muslim-minority situation may trigger individualization processes in European Muslims' knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam.

Consequently, my material confirms those parts of Roy's theory of individualization that emphasize how the Western context and the Muslim-minority situation influence individualization processes among Muslims (Roy 2004: 1-30, 148-175; see section 2.1.10). A

central part of Roy's theory is that the lack of external pressure from society, culture and law to be a good Muslim triggers individualization processes (Roy 2004: 148-152; see section 2.1.3). This corresponds with my findings in Chapter 6, where I show how the women's relatively weak Islamic knowledge capital within MST, the lack of external pressure they experience from the institution in relation to how to be and live as Muslims and what sources and methods to use to gain knowledge about Islam *push* them into individual quests for knowledge (see sections 6.1-6.2). Another part of Roy's theory emphasizes how the lack of Islamic social authority in the form of general social acceptance of Muslim identities and Islamic practices in the West also triggers similar processes. This is supported by the findings in my own material in Chapter 7. I show how the Muslim-minority situation, and the lack of social acceptance regarding Muslim identities and practices and lack of Islamic knowledge capital within the non-Muslim majority fields of study and work, triggers individual quests for knowledge among the women and leads to an individualization of their religious practices (see sections 7.2-7.4). Within these non-Islamic fields, the women are encouraged and committed to explain, elaborate and legitimize their Muslim identities and practices to their non-Muslim surroundings, and to themselves, so that they function as representatives for Islam and Muslims as they answer questions about Islam and Muslims. The lack of social acceptance of and facilitations for Islamic practices individualizes the women's religious practices. This means that the women must take full responsibility and control of their religious practices and make individual choices, find individual solutions and make individual adjustments in relation to whether, how, where and when to practice Islam within these fields. This further strengthens the women's need for more Islamic knowledge and in particular knowledge about the ritual obligations, *ibadat,* and the inter-human relationships, *mu'amalat* (see Chapter 5 and sections 7.2-7.4).

However, even though my findings support the parts of Roy's theory that emphasize the "new" context, they also elucidate the decisive influence the particular *fields and their capital*, and particularly the women's access to Islamic knowledge capital, have on individualization processes in the women's knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam in Trondheim. This shows that it is not only the new geographical and cultural context or the Muslim-minority situation that triggers individualization processes among the women but that the women's particular fields, the fields' make-up and capital and the questions and attitudes about Islam the women encounter within these fields, influence these processes as well (see Chapters 6 and 7).

The crisis of authority within Islam, which is a central part of Roy's individualization theory, *is not supported* by my data (Roy 2004: 1-30, 148-149, 158-164; see section 2.1.3). The findings in my material show that the women and the local Islamic fields they engage in relate their quests for knowledge to established Islamic sources and authorities, though in different ways, at the same time as Islamic knowledge acquisition has always had an individual dimension (see Chapters 4 and 5). For instance, Mevlana and the women engaged in it orient their quests for knowledge toward local, external and global Islamic authorities, namely, Mevlana's local imams, the Turkish Diyanet and the Hanafi school of law (see sections 4.3.2, 5.2.5 and 6.6-6.7). Ahl O'Bait (AOB), and the women engaged in this institution, follow the Twelver Shia methodology and orient their quests for knowledge toward external and global Twelver Shia authorities (see sections 4.3.4, 5.2.5 and 6.7-6.8). MST, the Sister Group (SG) and the women engaged in these fields' ways of gaining knowledge about Islam diverge from the methods of Mevlana and AOB. Still, their methods are not new but traditional ways of gaining Islamic knowledge. MST and SG use the Muslim Brotherhood (MB)- and Salafi methods, respectively, in their quests for knowledge. Even though MST and SG *do not* orient their quests for knowledge toward a particular superior authority in the form of an institution or person, *their sources and methods*, that is, their methodologies, *have authority* by being modern forms of established and authoritative Islamic methodologies within the Islamic tradition of knowledge. Thus, they gain Islamic knowledge by using established Islamic sources and methods and by following established Islamic methodologies (see sections 4.4.2, 4.5.1 and 6.1-6.4). This means that the women's and the local Islamic fields' sources and methods of gaining knowledge about Islam are *in continuation* with the Islamic tradition of knowledge. Even though the various Islamic fields, and the women, turn to different sources and authorities in their quests for Islamic knowledge, "Islam's crisis of authority," in Roy's meaning of the words, is not evident in Trondheim. Instead, my findings give more support to Mandaville's view on religious authority in Islam that contradicts Roy on this point. According to Mandaville, there is nothing new with a pluralized and fragmented religious authority in Islam since within and between the Islamic schools of law and theology there has always existed various forms of authority to which Muslims have oriented themselves and their search for knowledge (Mandaville 2007: 101-115; see sections 2.1.9 and 3.1). The findings in my material show a diversity of Islamic authorities in Trondheim. However, this does not mean that the Islamic fields or the women engaged with these fields are in lack of clear Islamic authorities or that they do not orient their quests for Islamic knowledge toward such. Instead,

my material shows that the women and the Islamic fields orient their quests for knowledge toward *diverse forms of established Islamic authority* (see Chapters 4, 5 and 6).

Jacobsen's concept of "restricted bricolage," which refers to the fact that the young Muslims in her study claim their right to put together elements from different Islamic discourses to increase their religious knowledge, has been useful in the analyses of *how* the women gain knowledge about Islam. To a certain degree my data support Jacobsen's emphasis of the "new" context, and in particular how international pan-Islamic organizations may influence individualization processes in young Muslim's knowledge acquisition about Islam, by making them practice a "restricted bricolage" (Jacobsen 2006: 212-229; see section 2.1.6 and Chapters 5-7). In Chapters 5 and 6, I show how the women practice a "restricted bricolage," or a "restricted restricted bricolage," depending on what Islamic fields they engage in. The women in Mevlana and AOB practice what I refer to as a "restricted restricted bricolage" since they orient their quests for knowledge toward *one* particular established methodology, respectively, the Hanafi and the Twelver Shia methodology, from which they "pick and choose" their sources and methods. The women engaged in MST, on the other hand, who are pushed into individual quests for knowledge, are surrounded by several overlapping and competing Islamic methodologies from which they "pick and choose" their sources and methods. Thus, they practice a "restricted bricolage" in Jacobsen's meaning of the term. This shows that the different local Islamic fields have various influences on the women's knowledge acquisition and their "restricted bricolage" (see sections 5.3.2-5.4 and Chapter 6).

In line with Jacobsen's findings, my material shows that when the women engage in pan-Islamic fields, such as SG and Islam Net (IN), where Muslims with various national, ethnic and Islamic backgrounds come together to increase their knowledge about Islam, their quests for knowledge are pushed in a scriptural direction and are thus "normativized," in Jacobsen's sense of the term (Jacobsen 2006: 230-234; see sections 2.1.6 and 6.2-6.4). However, my material also nuances Jacobsen's view and use of the term "normativization." Jacobsen's material is collected from Muslim student and youth organizations with multicultural and pan-Islamic profiles and Salafi and MB orientations (Jacobsen 2006: 64-86, 240-246; see section 2.1.10). My material draws from a wider range of Islamic schools and Muslim groups (see Chapter 4). Thus, it provides me with another point of departure and approach to the practices Jacobsen refers to as "processes of normativization," which include young Muslims' involvement with the founding texts of Islam in order to distinguish "correct" forms of Islamic knowledge and practices from "inauthentic" forms (Jacobsen 2006: 230-234; see section 2.1.6).

My findings show that when the women engage in "pan-Islamic" fields, such as SG and IN, to increase their Islamic knowledge, their method is to follow a Salafi methodology. Even though the Salafi methodology is oriented toward the Islamic scriptures, it is an established Islamic methodology (see sections 4.5.1 and 6.2-6.4). The orientation around Islamic scriptures is not new nor exclusive to the Salafi methodology. All modern and traditional Islamic methodologies orient around these scriptures even though they may include other Islamic sources to a greater or lesser degree in their methodologies, depending on the school or movement (see Chapter 4). This means that Jacobsen and I view processes of knowledge acquisition within Islam differently. What she regards as "processes of normativization," I regard as Muslims' orientation toward established and authoritative Islamic methodologies in my material. Since both the Salafi and MB methods of gaining Islamic knowledge *are* established methodologies within the Islamic tradition of knowledge in its modern forms, the women's individual and collective practices within these fields do not diverge much from Mevlana's and AOB's women's practices – to repeat, they all orient their quests for knowledge toward established Islamic methodologies. This means that although the women engaged in pan-Islamic fields are surrounded by *more and other* Islamic discourses than the women engaged in law school-based mosques, such as Mevlana and AOB are, all of them orient their quests for knowledge toward established Islamic methodologies from the Islamic tradition of knowledge, be it the Salafi, the MB, the Shafii, the Hanafi or the Twelver Shia methodology (see Chapters 4 and 6).

A question that arises when I view my material in relation to Jacobsen's findings is whether it is accurate to regard it as "normative" to follow an established Islamic methodology to gain knowledge about Islam? Alternatively, and more precisely, whether it should be regarded as more "normative" to follow the MB's and/or the Salafi's methodology in one's quest for knowledge than a traditional school of law? From a religious studies' perspective, and "emic" Islamic historical and institutional perspectives, the answer appears to be no. Since both the MB's and the Salafi' methodologies are established and authoritative methodologies within the Islamic tradition of knowledge, following these should rather be seen as a *continuation* of the Islamic tradition of knowledge. However, whether it is possible or accurate to regard one Islamic methodology as more normative in its approach than another is a completely different question, which we avoid within the discipline of Religious Studies because of its normative character (Andreassen 2016: 48-50; McCutcheon 1999: 215ff.; see sections 3.1.1-3.1.3). Because of this, I have not involved such a discussion in the present study.

What Jacobsen identifies as a "new" trend in her material is the "paradoxical development in which Islam is both increasingly 'individualized' and 'normativized', as it enters debates and social confrontation about the nature of 'true Islam'" (Jacobsen 2006: 269). Based upon my material, I conclude that the women's practices of turning to established Islamic methodologies in their individual and collective quests for knowledge should not be seen as "processes of normativization". Neither should we regard the development in the West of an *increasingly* "individualized and normativized" Islam as paradoxical in this connection, since the women's quests for knowledge can be seen as being within and thus in *continuation* with the Islamic tradition of knowledge. This becomes obvious when we approach the material from historical and institutional perspectives but also when we approach this topic from a generational perspective.

My findings show that there is much correspondence between the young Muslim women's and their parents' sources and methods to Islam, independent of the women's institutional affiliations. The women and their parents orient their quests for knowledge toward the same Islamic methodologies even though there are individual differences between what particular sources the women and their parents prefer to use. This means that young Muslim women's sources do not diverge from their parents' sources by being new or different but should rather be seen as being in continuation with these. What influences the knowledge acquisition from a generational perspective is not methodological differences but rather factors such as embodied Islamic knowledge, confidence in one's own embodied Islamic knowledge, different life situations, different places of residence and individual preferences. The women's and their parents' methodologies are, however, the same since they use the same types of authorities, sources and methods to Islam (see sections 5.3.1 and 7.1-7.2).

My material and findings show that it is not the women's sources and methods themselves that influence individualization processes in their knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam. It is rather the Islamic and non-Islamic fields the women engage in, and these fields' various forms of capital, and in particular the capital they attribute to the women's Islamic knowledge, that are decisive for such processes. The Islamic and non-Islamic fields that attribute *the least institutional capital* to the women's religious identities, practices and Islamic knowledge have a tendency of *pushing* individualization processes upon the women by making it the women's responsibility to gain Islamic knowledge and to practice Islam within these fields. Alternatively, the Islamic and non-Islamic fields that attribute *more institutional capital* to the women's Islamic knowledge, religious identities and practices have a tendency of *triggering* individualization processes in the women's knowledge acquisition and practice

of Islam. The Islamic knowledge capital the women can generate from these fields, and the fields' acceptance and recognition of the women's Muslim identities and Islamic practices, support, inspire and equip them to engage in individual quests for knowledge and to make well-informed choices concerning what sources and methods to use and what Islamic practices and regulations to implement in their lived Islam. In this way, the women's Islamic and non-Islamic fields may trigger various individualization processes, or trigger individualization processes differently among the women, and thus function as both *negative and positive triggers* for such processes (see Chapters 6 and 7).

When I view my material in relation to Roy's theory of individualization, or Jacobsen's view of processes of "individualization and normativization," the importance of studying Islam as a historical and complex religion emerges. In the study of individualization processes in European Muslims' knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam, we cannot overlook Islam's historical roots nor its tradition of knowledge since the latter has been, and still is today, the main producer, maintainer, re-producer and transmitter of Islamic knowledge. If we do not compare individual Muslims' current practices of gaining Islamic knowledge with former practices, or prevailing Islamic methodologies, that is, other emic perspectives on Islamic knowledge acquisition, we can easily overlook traditional and established ways of gaining Islamic knowledge and regard Islamic sources and methods that are in continuity with these as new.

8.3 Emic and etic perspectives

To study Islam as a religion is also important in order to understand the women's understanding of Islam – that is, the emic perspective. The women aim to become better Muslims and to develop their virtuous selves through faith, knowledge, practices and good deeds. Even though the ritual obligations, *ibadat*, gain much attention from the women in their lived everyday Islam, it is also made up by regulations from the inter-human relationships, *mu'amalat,* such as practices and regulations concerning behavior and rules of conduct. Thus, religious rituals, practices and norms go hand-in-hand in the women's lived Islam. This is reflected in the women's self-definitions as Muslims and how they define and understand "Muslim" and "Islam" (see sections 5.1-5.2 and 5.4). It is also reflected in what types of Islamic knowledge they wish to embody and that they see as necessary to be able to live good Muslim lives (see section 5.2.1) in addition to how they practice their Islamic faith by implementing in into their daily lives through observances of Islamic rituals, practices, regulations and rules of conduct, within the Islamic- and non-Islamic fields they engage in (see Chapters 6 and 7). In these

processes, the women emphasize faith, rituals, practices, behavior and good deeds and Islamic knowledge about such things. The women's understandings of "Islam" and "Muslims" are in line with (other) classic emic understandings of these terms. Al-Ghazzālī emphasized the importance of refining one's character through rituals, practices and virtues in his ethical theory. This means that religious rituals, practices and personal and social ethics intertwine in both the women's and al-Ghazzālī's understandings of "Islam" and "Muslims" (Ames 2016: 133-137; see section 5.4).

That the women's "insider" understandings of Islam and Muslims may diverge from non-Muslims', or "outsider," perspectives/understandings become apparent in Chapter 7, where I explore the non-Islamic fields' influence on the women's knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam. The women's experiences and statements quoted in that chapter show that the participants within the non-Muslim majority fields of study and work do not recognize nor acknowledge the ethical sides of Islam nor the women's course of life in relation to these as Islamic. For instance, Kathrine, who feels that her ethical conduct of life, in the form of her good deeds and behavior, is not recognized nor acknowledged as Islam or Islamic by her classmates. Instead, they ascribe her good deeds and behavior to her personal traits and base their normative evaluation of her as a Muslim upon "outer characteristics" and their own static and stereotypical images of Muslims (see section 7.2.2). The women experience that the non-Muslim majority within the fields of study and work does not recognize the close correlation between their faith, rituals, practices and ethics. Instead, they regard their rituals and practices as disconnected from the rest. Because of this, the women face many questions, and sometimes critical questions and attitudes, regarding their religious practices from the non-Muslim majority within these fields, who do not manage to see the connection between Islamic ritual obligations and ethics (see sections 7.2.2 and 7.3.2). Emma, for instance, thinks it is hard to provide her non-Muslim colleagues with meaningful answers to basic questions about Islamic rituals and practices since they do not understand her "religious explanations," which may include references to Islamic beliefs and ethics (see section 7.3.3).

The women's emic descriptions of Islam and Muslims, where they emphasize faith, practices and morality, diverge from Cesari's etic categories of Muslim identities as well. Cesari operates with various categories of "Muslims" when she describes and distinguishes between how Muslims in Europe and the USA identify with Islam (Cesari 2004: 45-56; see section 2.1.4). In Chapter 5, I argue that it is difficult to place the women in this study within *one* of Cesari's categories of "Muslim identities," including the trend of a more "individualized and secular Islam," since they emphasize *several elements* from *different categories* in their

self-definitions as Muslims. They emphasize orthodoxy and orthopraxy *at the same time* as they identify with Islam on an ethical, cultural and emotional level and make individual choices concerning what religious observances to follow, and not, and how (Cesari 2004: 45-46; see section 5.3.2). After exploring how the local Islamic and non-Islamic fields influence the women's knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam, and how the women make individual choices and adjustments concerning their religious practices within these fields, the task of placing them within *one* category has not become easier. Instead, I find the categories to be more restrictive than useful since they distinguish between actions, practices and elements that intertwine in the women's descriptions of how they live as Muslims. Cesari's research is more politically oriented than mine since it focuses on integration and builds upon empirical material from several "generations" of Muslim immigrant "leaders" (Cesari 2004: 5-7, 9-19; see section 2.1.4). However, since she formulates her result in general terms of a particular development of Islam in the West, and uses the categories of "Muslim identities" as an analytical tool to do so, I think it is relevant to discuss her categories in this thesis.

Cesari's etic categories of "Muslims" distinguish religious rituals and practices from ethics and morality, while the women in this study's emic descriptions of Muslims do not. Instead, the women emphasize faith, practices, ethics and morality in their self-definitions as Muslims and in their lived Islam, as I have showed in Chapters 5, 6 and 7. In relation to this, I think it is relevant to point out that my material shows that there are differences between what "outsiders," such as Cesari, based on interviews with religious leaders, heads of religious and secular organizations amongst others, and "insiders" such as the Muslim women, regard as "ethical" and "orthodoxy"/"orthopraxy." In the women's self-definitions as Muslims, and in their lived Islam/understanding of Islam, they emphasize faith, observance of religious rituals and practices and ethics and morals – elements from both *ibadat* and *mu'amalat*. Thus, duty-(deontological) and virtue-related ethics seem to be of great importance for them. In relation to this, I find it relevant to question what is included in Cesari's use of the term ethics if we view it in relation to her use of the term orthodoxy. Those who identify with Islam on an ethical level, according to Cesari, emphasize "communal and personal values that may have little or nothing to do with ritual and religious prohibitions" (Cesari 2004: 45; see section 2.1.4). While those who identify with Islam on a "communal" level emphasize "orthodoxy and the performance of ritual, in which observance of the five pillars, circumcision, food prohibitions, and rules regarding dress are the crucial elements of religious praxis", according to Cesari (Cesari 2004: 45; see section 2.1.4). This means that the latter "etic" category of Muslims includes elements from Islamic ethics without acknowledging it as "ethics." This, again, makes

it relevant to question what is included in the etic category "ethical identification with Islam". Are these types of ethics limited to certain forms of (applied) ethics, such as abortion, euthanasia, environmental protection, etc. and "Islam's" view of this?

As shown earlier, to develop one's virtues through good deeds and through refining one's character can also been seen as an elementary part of ethics, with associated theories within Islamic and other (non-Islamic) ethical theory (Ames 2016: 121-140; see section 5.4). I will therefore call attention to the fact that there are different ethical priorities and theories in operation both within and between "insiders" and "outsiders". Because of this, and based upon findings in my material, I will argue that it can be problematic to distinguish categories such as "ethical" versus "orthodoxy"/"orthopraxy" in the study of individualization processes among Muslims in Europe. Even though Cesari's etic categories of Muslims can help us expose some diversity among Muslims in Europe and the USA, my material shows that they can also be misleading if they miss the *connection* between the doctrinal, ritual and ethical dimensions, which is crucial for the Muslim women in this study's emic understanding of Muslims and Islam.

8.4 The religious studies approach

The complex picture of Islam as a religion that the religious studies approach implies has been very useful in this study of individualization processes in Muslim women's knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam. When we analyze "historical change," it is easy to enlarge the significance of particular findings if we just include a limited number of factors in our analyses. The religious studies approach has made it possible for me to conceptualize and study Islam as a religion with a long history and tradition of knowledge and with several simultaneously active dimensions. By recognizing Islam as a contemporary and historical "phenomenon," the religious studies approach has made it possible to approach individualization processes in Muslims' knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam from several etic and emic perspectives: a contemporary lived religion perspective, a contemporary comparative institutional perspective and a historical perspective.

By exploring local Islamic institutional fields' Islamic methodologies, I have been able to describe how various Islamic traditions of knowledge have been established and have evolved in Trondheim and how and in what ways the local Islamic methodologies are in continuation with global Islamic methodologies and thus the Islamic tradition of knowledge (see Chapter 4). In relation to this, the "renewed Islamic basket" and Smart's model of dimensions of religion have been useful analytical tools (see sections 3.2-3.3 and 3.6). By using

the renewed Islamic basket as an etic category, I have been able to conceptualize Islam as *one* religion and to explain institutional and individual differences when it comes to how Muslims acquire and practice Islam in Trondheim. In this way, the renewed Islamic basket has enabled me to describe and explain how the context of Trondheim – in the form of the Islamic and non-Islamic fields the women in this study engage in and these fields' capital – influences the women's knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam in various ways. Moreover, how these fields and their capital, and in particular the capital they attribute to the women's Islamic knowledge, trigger various individualization processes, or trigger individualization processes differently, among the women (see Chapters 6 and 7).

The use of Smart's dimensions has also helped me gain a more complex understanding of the women's emic understanding of Islam and what it means to be a Muslim in addition to how various dimensions of Islam intertwine in the women's lived Islam and their quest for Islamic knowledge. By using Smart's dimensions as a categorical tool, I have been able to distinguish between what types of Islamic knowledge the women are seeking and, what sources they use in these knowledge quests in addition to describe how the types of knowledge are interconnected and how they can influence different aspects of the women's lived Islam. In this way, it has helped me translate emic types of knowledge and emic concepts into etic categories. For instance, by applying the dimensions to *ibadat* and *mu'amalat*, I have gained more knowledge about what these emic categories include and entail in the form of knowledge about faith, rituals, practices, ethics and morality. The knowledge the women seek about *ibadat* and *mu'amalat* is mainly legal and ethical and practical and ritual knowledge about Islam. However, the use of Smart's dimensions as a categorical tool has shown that the women's quest for knowledge about *ibadat* and *mu'amalat* can also include other types of Islamic knowledge, such as dogmatic, narrative and material as well as social and institutional knowledge, depending on why the women want these types of knowledge and how they approach and understand it. This means that if we want a more overall and realistic understanding of what, for instance, the five pillars of Islam mean for the women, it is not enough to gain practical and ritual knowledge about them. We also need dogmatic knowledge about the Islamic faith, legal and ethical knowledge about what the faith entails, in the form of rituals, practices, regulations and morals, in addition to narrative and material knowledge about the background of the pillars and their sources. These findings display a more general problem in the study of religion, namely that even studies that do not analyze historical change can miss significant characteristics of a religion if they solely focus on a limited number of factors. For instance, if we only focus on Islamic rituals, we will miss the significance of the Islamic faith and its

influences on religious practices and personal ethics. By using Smart's dimensions of religion as an analytical tool, I have shown that even though some of Smart's dimensions seem to be more important for the women than others, they are all interconnected in the women's quest for knowledge and in their lived Islam. Thus, they have provided an important and useful tool in order to understand how comprehensive the knowledge about *ibadat* and *mu'amalat* really is in the form of influencing many aspects of the women's lived Islam (see sections 3.1.4, 3.2, 5.2.1-5.3 and Chapters 6 and 7).

The findings in my material show the importance of studying Islam as a religion with several dimensions and of approaching individualization processes in European Muslims' knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam from several perspectives and with a complex method. If we want to develop a more complete understanding of Islam, we must turn our attention to all its dimensions and look at how they are interconnected and how they can intertwine, from both etic and emic perspectives. Furthermore, the findings in this thesis show that we should approach individualization processes in European Muslims' knowledge acquisition and practice of Islam from the same overall perspective as well, using several perspectives and analytical categories. Altogether, my perspectives and analytical categories contributed with new ways to nuance the etic categories and theories used in current studies of individualization processes among European Muslims. By including an emic perspective to these categories and concepts, I have shown that there are several challenges with the etic categories and theories that these studies build upon. Thus, by introducing a "package" consisting of contemporary and historical perspectives, and various analytical categories, this study contributes to a more complex understanding of the problem area of "knowledge acquisition and formation and their implications for research on individualization processes among European Muslims".

8.5 Further research

The negative publicity that the topics of "Islam" and "Muslims" get in Norwegian media is well documented (Ishaq 2017: 11-15; Retriever 2017; Integrerings- og mangfoldsdirektoratet 2010: 9-12). This affects our classrooms and influences how Norwegian students, both Muslims and non-Muslims, talk about religion and diversity in general and Islam and Muslims in particular (Lippe 2011). This project and my position as a teacher educator have made me realize that we are facing some major pedagogical challenges in relation to *how we transmit knowledge about Islam* in Norwegian classrooms. There seems to be a need for more correspondence between emic understandings of Islam and the etic presentation of Islam

transmitted within classrooms. As shown in this thesis, in emic presentations and understandings of Islam and Muslims, faith, rituals and ethics closely intertwine. However, when we teach about Islam within teacher education or in school, my impression is that we tend to treat these dimensions of Islam separately. Moreover, we focus more on the practical and ritual dimension than on the others, notably the doctrinal/theological, ethical, legal and hermeneutical dimensions. In relation to this, I would like to gain more knowledge about the ethical dimension of Islam, and in particular various emic perspectives on Islamic ethics: what it may include and entail in the form of rituals, religious practices and rules and conduct. Furthermore, I would like to explore how we teach about Islamic ethics and ethical theory within Norwegian classrooms and how these etic presentations correspond with or diverge from emic presentations of Islamic ethics. I think that if we want to challenge the prevailing picture of Islam and Muslims in the media and public debates, one place to start is in our classrooms. Thus, gaining more knowledge about Islamic ethics and how this topic is dealt with in Norwegian classrooms (and the compulsory Christianity, Religion, World-view and Ethics subject), seem to be a relevant place to start.

Glossary

Abaya – a loose-fitting and full-length over/outer-garment worn by some Muslim women

Al-aslāf – the three first generations of Muslims

Al-fathia – the Arabic name of the first chapter, *sura*, of the Qur'an, called 'the Opening'

Al-Sayyid, or just *sayyid* – an honorific title that refers to descendants of Prophet Muhammad

Adhan – the ritual call to prayer

Alim – 'Islamic scholar', pl. *Ulama*

Alayhi salam – 'Peace be upon him'

Amin or *Ameen* – a word many Muslims say after reciting sura *al-Fathia*, during the ritual prayer, *salat*, or personal prayer, *du'a*

Aqida – the Islamic Creeds

Aql - reason

Aya – verse in the Qur'an

Ayatollah – an Islamic scholar within Shia Islam. The jurist who can use *ijtihad*. The most learned scholars are referred to as grand *ayatollah*s

Bayan – to clarify, to make known meaning

Bida' – (religious) innovation

Darura – 'need', 'necessity'; a legal principle

Da'wa – invitation, call to Islam; e.g. mission

Dikhr – remembrance of God; ritual

Du'a – personal prayer

Fatwa – expert legal opinion

Fiqh – Islamic jurisprudence

Fiqh al-muqarin – comparative jurisprudence; the method of combining and/or using all of the law schools

Fitna – conflict, dissension and internal strife. Condemned as the main threat to the unity of the community of Muslims, *ummah*

Fuqaha – jurists

Furu'al-fiqh – the Branches of jurisprudence

Ghusl – the large ritual purification

Hadith – narrative, tradition; literature that contain narratives about Prophet Muhammad's life and teaching

Hajj – the pilgrimage to Mecca; one of the Five Pillars of Islam

Halal – lawful

Halaqa – 'circles'; study circles, one of the traditional Islamic institutions of knowledge

Haram – unlawful

Hasanat – religious rewards or merit which good deeds are believed to entail

Hijab – headscarf (not face veil)

Hijra – migration. Refers to the Prophet Muhammad and his followers' migration from Mecca to Medina in the year 622 CE.

Husayniyya – a Shiite place of worship

Ibadat – 'service to God'; the individual's ritual obligations, one of *sharia*'s categories of regulations

Id al-fitr – a holiday that marks the end of Ramadan

Iftar – the meal that ends the fast at sunset, 'fast-break' meal

Ijaza – license, authorization, given by a professor to his students

Ijma – consensus (one of the main sources to *sharia*)

Ijtihad – individual, independent legal reasoning; the human capability to mediate between the will of God and the human reality

Ilm – knowledge

Imam (Shia) – rightful successor after the Prophet Muhammad according to Shia Islamic beliefs, honorary title

Imam Mahdi (Shia) – the 'Rightly guided'; according to Twelver Shia beliefs, the hidden and twelfth Imam

Imam (Sunni)– leader of (Friday) prayer, also honorary title

Iman – faith

Insha Allah – "God willing", or "if God wills"; common Arabic saying/phrase

Isnad – the chain of narrators in a *hadith*

Istihab – 'the continuity of performance'; legal principle

Istihsan – 'juristic preference'; a form of legal reasoning

Istislah – 'public interest'; a form of legal reasoning

Ithna ashariyya – the Twelver School, the largest branch within Shia Islam

Ittaba'a – 'To follow' (the rulings of a Salafi scholar)

Kafir – infidel, pl. *kufar*

Katiba – 'battalion training'; a type of group meeting included in the Muslim Brotherhood's educational program

Khutba – sermon

Madhhab – law school, pl. *madhahib*

Mahdi – according to Twelver Shia beliefs, the hidden and twelfth Imam

Madrasa – school, religious school; one of the traditional Islamic institutions of knowledge

Makruh – 'disapproved'; legal value of a human action

Mandub – 'recommended'; legal vale of a human action

Marja al-taqlid – 'source for emulation', 'grand ayatollah', honorary title within Shia Islam

Masjid – mosque

Masjid jami – congregational mosque

Maslaha – 'public interest'; a form of legal reasoning

Matn – *hadith*'s content

Mu'amalat – inter-human relationship, one of *sharia*'s categories of regulations

Mu'askar – 'quarterly camps'; a type of group meeting included in the Muslim Brotherhood's educational program

Mubah – 'netural'; legal value of a human action

Mubin – clear

Mujtahid – the one (highly learned jurist) who performs *ijtihad*

Mufti – jurisconsult, an expert in the law who issues expert legal opinions, *fatwa*s

Mulla – Islamic scholar/teacher within Shia Islam

Naqib – prefect; an experienced member of the Muslim brotherhood who guides new members through the Muslim Brotherhoods' cultivation curriculum

Niqab – face veil (most common understanding)

Nikah – wedding ceremony

Qibla – prayer direction, towards Mecca

Qiyas – reasoning by analogy (one of the main sources to *sharia*)

Raka – sequence in prayer. The ritual prayer is made up by different sequences, called *raka*

Rihla – a biannual field trip included in the Muslim Brotherhood's educational program

Sadaqa – voluntary charity, voluntary alms

Sahaba – 'friends'; the Prophet Muhammad's companions, sing. *sahib*

Salafiyya/salafi – from *salaf*, 'forefathers. Can refer to the modernist reform movement *salafiyya* and the conservative salafi movement rooted in the Hanbali school of law

Salam aleikum – 'peace be upon you'

Salat – Islamic ritual prayer; one of the Five Pillars of Islam

Salat al-isha – 'night prayer'; the last of the five daily ritual prayers

Sallallahu alayhi wa salam – "peace and blessings of God be upon him"

Shahada – The Islamic creed; declaration of faith; the double testimony: "There is no god but God and Muhammad is the Messenger of God"; one of the Five Pillars of Islam

Sawm – fast; one of the Five Pillars of Islam

Sheikh/shaykh – honorary title

Sharia – 'the way to the watering place'; the Islamic law

Shirk – all forms of associating other beings or things with God, or polytheism

Shu'ba – a branch made up by a group of 'families' within the Muslim Brotherhood

Shura – consultation

Sujūd – the prostration sequence of the ritual prayer

Sunna – The Prophet Muhammad's life and teaching, i.e. his example, as recorded in *hadith*

Sura – chapters in the Qur'an

Tafsir – 'explanation', commentaries and explanations of the Qur'an

Takbir – 'God is greater' (*Allahu Akbar*), common Arabic phrase

Tarbiya – 'upbringing', 'education'; the educational program within the Muslim Brotherhood

Tariqa – Sufi order

Tawhid – unity of God

Taqlid – 'imitation', legal expression

Ulama – 'the learned', Islamic scholars

Ummah – the (global) Muslim community

Urf – 'customs', legal expression

Usra – 'family'; weekly 'family' meetings. A type of group meetings included in the Muslim Brotherhood's educational program

Usul al-fiqh – the Roots of jurisprudence

Wali – 'friend'

Wali Allah – "friend of God"; a third part to the *shahada* that Shia Muslims may add.

Waqf – a form of charity that financed the *madrasa*s

Wajib – 'obligatory'; legal value of a human action

Wudu – the ritual purification

Zakat – alms; one of the Five Pillars of Islam

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     20, 2017. http://oxfordbibliographiesonline.com/view/document/obo-
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     Azhar#firstMatch

Appendix 1: Norwegian Social Science Data Service's (NSD) "recommendation" of project

Norsk samfunnsvitenskapelig datatjeneste AS
NORWEGIAN SOCIAL SCIENCE DATA SERVICES

Eli-Anne Vongraven Eriksen
Institutt for arkeologi og religionsvitenskap
NTNU
Dragvoll
7491 TRONDHEIM

Vår dato: 06.10.2009   Vår ref: 22618 / 2 / JSL   Deres dato: Deres ref:

TILRÅDING AV BEHANDLING AV PERSONOPPLYSNINGER

Vi viser til melding om behandling av personopplysninger, mottatt 17.09.2009. Meldingen gjelder prosjektet:

22618	*Kontinuitet og endring i forståelse av religion, identitet og utøvelse av religiøs praksis blant unge muslimske kvinner i Trondheim*
Behandlingsansvarlig	*NTNU, ved institusjonens øverste leder*
Daglig ansvarlig	*Eli-Anne Vongraven Eriksen*

Personvernombudet har vurdert prosjektet, og finner at behandlingen av personopplysninger vil være regulert av § 7-27 i personopplysningsforskriften. Personvernombudet tilrår at prosjektet gjennomføres.
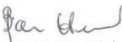
Personvernombudets tilråding forutsetter at prosjektet gjennomføres i tråd med opplysningene gitt i meldeskjemaet, korrespondanse med ombudet, vedlagte prosjektvurdering - kommentarer samt personopplysningsloven/-helseregisterloven med forskrifter. Behandlingen av personopplysninger kan settes i gang.
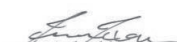
Det gjøres oppmerksom på at det skal gis ny melding dersom behandlingen endres i forhold til de opplysninger som ligger til grunn for personvernombudets vurdering. Endringsmeldinger gis via et eget skjema, http://www.nsd.uib.no/personvern/forsk_stud/skjema.html. Det skal også gis melding etter tre år dersom prosjektet fortsatt pågår. Meldinger skal skje skriftlig til ombudet.

Personvernombudet har lagt ut opplysninger om prosjektet i en offentlig database, http://www.nsd.uib.no/personvern/prosjektoversikt.jsp.

Personvernombudet vil ved prosjektets avslutning, 31.07.2013, rette en henvendelse angående status for behandlingen av personopplysninger.

Vennlig hilsen

Bjørn Henrichsen   Juni Skjold Lexau

Kontaktperson: Juni Skjold Lexau tlf: 55 58 26 35
Vedlegg: Prosjektvurdering

Appendix 2: Information letter

Version one:

Information about the research project

My name is Eli-Anne Vongraven Eriksen and I am a PhD-candidate at Religious Studies at NTNU. I am working on a research-project concerning Islam in Trondheim. The working title of the project is: "Continuity and change in the understanding of religion, identity and religious practices among young Muslim women in Trondheim". The project aims to explore how the context of Trondheim influences young Muslim women's understanding of Islam, identity and religious practices.

The project was started in August 2009 and will come to an end in July 2013. NTNU is financing the project.

I will gather information by using two qualitative methods: interview and participant observation. I will use a tape recorder during the interviews. The young Muslim women will be asked questions about how they experience public debates, organizations, family and work/studies, and how these experiences are influencing their understanding of religion, identity and religious practices. During the participant observation I would like to observe the women's everyday religious practice, and their participation in activities inside and outside the mosques. I will also gather information about the women's municipality of residence, sex, age and their affiliation to Muslim organizations.

I can assure you that all information will be treated confidentially, and every person and personal details will be made anonymous when the project is over.

The project's supervisor is: Professor Ulrika Mårtensson, Associate Professor at Department of Archeology and Religious Studies at NTNU. E-mail: ulrika.martensson@hf.ntnu.no, Tel Office: 73 5x xx xx

PhD-candidate, and in charge of the project is: Eli-Anne Vongraven Eriksen. PhD-candidate at Department of Archeology and Religious Studies at NTNU.

E-mail: eli-anne.eriksen@ntnu.no. Tel office: 73 5x xx xx, mobile: 92 60 77 03.

It is voluntary to participate in the project. The participants have the right to withdraw from the project at any point if they want. The project is reported to Norsk Samfunnsvitenskapelig Datatjeneste (Norwegian Social Science Data Services [NSD]).

Kind regards,

Eli-Anne Vongraven Eriksen

Version two:

Information about the research project

My name is Eli-Anne Vongraven Eriksen and I am a PhD-candidate at Religious Studies at NTNU. I am working on a research-project concerning Islam in Trondheim. The working title of the project is: "Continuity and change in the understanding of religion, identity and religious practices among young Muslim women in Trondheim". The project aims to explore how the context of Trondheim may influence young Muslim women's understanding of Islam, identity and religious practices.

The project was started in August 2009 and will come to an end in the turn of the year 2014/2015. NTNU is financing the project.

I will gather information by using two qualitative methods: participant observation and interviews. I will use a tape recorder during the interviews. The interviews will deal with topics such as the young Muslim women's experiences with organizations, family, work/studies and public debates, and how these experiences influence their understanding of Islam, identity and religious practices. During the participant observation I would like to observer the women's everyday religious practice, and their participation in activities inside and outside the mosque. I will also gather information about the women's municipality of residence, sex, age and their affiliation to Muslim organizations.

I can assure you that all information will be treated confidentially, and every person and personal details will be made anonymous when the project is over.

The project's supervisor is: Professor Ulrika Mårtensson, Associate Professor at Department of Archeology and Religious Studies at NTNU. E-mail: ulrika.martensson@hf.ntnu.no, Tel Office: 73 5x xx xx.

PhD-candidate, and in charge of the project is: Eli-Anne Vongraven Eriksen, PhD-candidate at Department of Archeology and Religious Studies at NTNU.

E-mail: eli-anne.eriksen@ntnu.no. Tel office: 73 5x xx xx, mobile: 92 60 77 03.

It is voluntary participate in the project. The participants have the right to withdraw from the project at any point if they want. The project is reported to Norsk Samfunnsvitenskapelig Datatjeneste (Norwegian Social Science Data Services [NSD]).

Kind regards,

Eli-Anne Vongraven Eriksen

Appendix 3: Interview guide - first interview with the main informants

Who are you?

- Describe who you are: which identity aspects are most important to you when you introduce yourself to others? (For instance: place of origin; nationality; lineage; ethnicity; family; age; education; politics; lifestyle; class; religion; language; gender; other?)

Social activities/situations

- What social activities do you participate in regularly (e.g. during a month)?

Religious identity

- What is a Muslim?
- What makes you a Muslim?
- Is your religious identity an individual choice? Have you taken an individual choice to be a Muslim?
- Is it possible for you to stop being a Muslim, e.g. convert to another religion?

Your identity in social situations

- What aspects of your identity become important when you are together with/at:
    - ○ Your family
    - ○ Muslim organization(s)
    - ○ School/university/classmates/fellow students
    - ○ Work/colleagues
    - ○ Other?
- How are you seen/recognized/What is your "ascribed" identity in the situations/relations above?
- How important is your religious identity in the situations above?
- In what situations do you think your religious identity becomes relevant/irrelevant? How and why?

"Cultural capital"

- What values, norms, knowledge, skills, language etc. do you think is valued/appreciated in/among your:
    - ○ Family
    - ○ Muslim organization(s)
    - ○ School/university/classmates/fellow students
    - ○ Work/colleagues

        o   Other?
- What about you are appreciated in the different "social fields" above?
- How is your religious identity recognized and appreciated in the fields above?

Social networks

- Please give a description of your networks in Trondheim:
    - Family
    - Muslim organization(s)
    - School/university/classmates/fellow students
    - Work
    - Other?
- What kind of help can your network(s) offer you?
    - For instance: help with study/work assignments/baby-sitting/water flowers/fill in forms/lend money/'practical matters'/other?
    - If you need someone to water your flowers/lend you money/help you create a bank account – who do you ask?
    - How does your religious identity influence your social networks?
    - Is your religious identity seen as important or unimportant in your social networks?

The individual

- What is an individual?
- How are you an individual?
- What is the case between being an individual and a Muslim?
- What does it mean to be a Muslim individual?
    - in the family
    - in Muslim organizations
    - at university/school
    - at work
    - Other?

Religious knowledge

- What kind of knowledge about and attitudes toward Islam do you encounter in the different social fields/situations above?
- How knowledgeable are your family/Muslim organization(s)/fellow students/co-workers/friends - in Islam?
- How do you get knowledge about Islam?
    - Books/internet/TV/radio/family/friends/imams/other etc.?
- What sources do you use to get knowledge about Islam?
- If you have a question about Islam: To whom, or what, do you turn to for answers?

Appendix 4: Interview guide – template. Second interview with main informants.

This is the <u>template</u> which all the second interview guides sprung from. The second interview guides were informed by the first interviews with the main informants and developed and tailored to each woman and the interview situation, including the mother-daughter interviews.

Religious practice
When did you start to practice Islam (pray, fast, wear *hijab* etc.)? Why?

Is it up to each individual to decide when to start practicing Islam?

- Can you choose for yourself what to start with? Or is it a "sequence" which is better to follow? If so, where do you get **knowledge** about the sequence?
- Can you choose for yourself which religious practices and rules you want to follow, and which you don't? Where do you get **knowledge** about this?
- In Islam we find several obligations and regulations. Do you see any of these as more important than others? **Why/why not?** Can you decide which regulations you want to follow, and define **the reason for why** you choose these regulations over others? From where do you get knowledge about these choices?

Your parents' Islam

Do you and your parents have the same view of Islam and what it means to be a Muslim? Why/why not?

- Do you practice the same Islamic obligations and regulations?
- Do you practice Islam, live as Muslims, in similar ways?
- Reflections on similarities and differences, including **sources of knowledge**.

Islamic sources
How do you get knowledge about Islam?

- If you have a question about Islam: To whom, or what, do you turn to for answers?
  - Parents/siblings/husband/family members/friends/imam/teacher/other?
  - Religious texts/mosque/school/books/websites/tv-programs/Social media/other?
- What types of knowledge about Islam do you get from your sources?
- How do you use this knowledge? What do you do with it?
- Do you consider all the sources to be equally good or reliable? Why/why not?
- Are you free to choose which sources you want to use? Why/why not?

Which religious texts are important to you?

- Are you in possession of any religious texts yourself?

The Islamic scriptures (the Qur'an and hadith) were written many years ago. How relevant is their content today?

- Do you recognize yourself in the scriptures?

Knowledge about Islam

From whom/where have you learned about Islam?

From whom/where did you learn to practice Islam? (like wudu, pray, fast, read in the Qur'an etc.) How did you learn it?

What kind of knowledge about Islam have you gotten from your parents?

- o Religious practices
- o Religious stories
- o Religious texts/scriptures
- o Other things?

Do you know from where your parents learned about Islam?

- Similarities and differences between how you and your parents learned about Islam.
- Will you say that you have less, equally much or more knowledge about Islam than your parents have? Why?

Should each Muslim try to gain more knowledge about Islam?

- If so, from which **sources** should they get knowledge?
- How should they learn about these sources?
- Do you think it is a long tradition in Islam to encourage individuals to search for more Islamic knowledge, or do you think this the individual's search for more religious knowledge is a new trend/phenomenon?

Is it important for Muslims in Norway to be knowledgeable about Islam? Why/why not?

What do you think about media's presentation of Islam and Muslims?

- What are its sources of knowledge about Islam/Muslims do you think?
- Do you recognize yourself in the media presentation of Islam?

Religious denominations and law schools

Which denomination *(sunna/shia/sufism)* do you belong to? Why?

- How is this different from other?

Do you follow any of the Islamic law schools?

- Which one(s), and why?
- How do you follow it? Examples.
- In which ways does the law school(s) influence how you see Islam?
- Do you think it is important to follow a law school? Is it possible to follow several law schools?
- Do your parents follow any specific law school? Why/why not?
- Do you know which law schools other Muslims in Trondheim follows? Do you think it matters for differences in religious beliefs, values and practices?

Religious authorities

Do you follow any religious authorities or leaders (e.g. imams) in Trondheim? Why/why not?

Do you follow any religious authorities outside Trondheim? Why/why not?
- Is it common among your friends and family to follow one or more religious authorities/leaders?

Do you think it is important to have a specific authority/leader to follow?

Muslim organizations

Which Muslim organizations in Trondheim do you know?

Are you a member of any Muslim organization in Trondheim? Why/why not?

Do you think that it is important to be a member of a Muslim organization? Why/why not?

Individualization of Islam

Do you think that Islam is an important part of your life in Trondheim? Why/why not, and how?

Do you think that you can interpret the Qur'an and the hadith more freely in Norway than in your home country/Muslims in Muslim majority countries? Why/why not?

Is it more of an individual task for you to define "Islam" and what it means to be a Muslim in Norway, than it was in your home country/ than it is for Muslims in Muslim majority countries? Why/why not?

Can Muslims in Norway choose more freely among which Islamic practices and rules to follow or not than Muslims in Muslim majority countries? Why/Why not?

How would you describe the relationship between (a) knowledge about Islam that comes from external authorities such as family, imams etc, and (b) knowledge about Islam that comes from your own studies and reflections?
- How would you compare your view of the above to your parents' view of the same issue (in so far as you think you know their view)?
- If there are differences between you and them in this respect, how would you explain the change?

Appendix 5: Themes and questions to key-persons interviewees – general template

About my project: Background for the interview

In my PhD-project I am exploring Muslim women in Trondheim's methods of gaining knowledge about Islam. By using the methods observation and interview I have been observing Islamic educational activities and asked Muslim women question about which methods they use to learn about Islam in Trondheim. We have talked about which sources they have to Islamic knowledge and how they valuate and use these sources. In relation to this I have asked the women about their relationship to the different mosques and mosques' activities in Trondheim, and their relationship to the Islamic law schools (*madhhab*) and religious authorities outside Trondheim. The women have also described for me how they think these different sources to Islam shape their knowledge of Islam.

All of the women in my project have a relationship to one or more of the mosques in Trondheim. They are either both members and users of the mosques, or just members, or just users of the mosques. During my fieldwork I have discovered that there are differences between the mosques in Trondheim when it comes to the mosques' identities and the way they practice Islam: their organizational structure, their religious affiliation, activities, rituals in general and to what degree women participate in the mosques' activities and the role they play in the mosques in particular.

To get a more overall picture of Muslim women's methods in gaining knowledge about Islam in Trondheim, and how the different mosques may influence their knowledge, I need to make a general characterization of the mosques in Trondheim and their relationship to Islam by looking at their relationship to: the Islamic law schools, Sufism, Shia Islam, and global trends and movements such as Tablighi Jama'at, Jama'at-i Islami, The Muslim Brotherhood and Salafism.

I would like to learn more about the different mosques' "methodologies" in relation to gaining and transmitting knowledge about Islam to its members, and in particular its women members. In addition, but also in relation, to this I have some research questions I would like to discuss with you. In particular I would like to hear your opinion on one theory about Islam in the West and processes of religious individualization, which is important for my research. This theory will be presented in further detail at the end of the interview. Below you will find the kinds of questions I would like to ask in relation to your mosque organization:

Islamic law schools, global trends and movements

What kind of relationship does [local Islamic institution] have to the Islamic schools of law (jurisprudence): Hanafi, Shafi'i, Maliki, Hanbali?

- Does [local Islamic institution] follow one or more of the Islamic schools of law? Why/why not?
    o If yes, how do you follow it/them? Can you give some examples?
- Does [local Islamic institution] represent a particular methodology? Why/why not?
    o If yes, which methodology?

During my fieldwork among Muslim women in Trondheim I have seen that it is possible to recognize that the different mosques in Trondheim are more or less influenced by traditional Islamic schools and authorities.

Does your mosque have any "sources" of inspiration?

Where will you place your mosque in the larger "map" of Islamic theology and methods? Why?

Local Islamic institution's methods of gaining and transmitting knowledge about Islam in relation to the other mosques' methods

What do you see as the main differences between [local Islamic institution's] theology and the other mosques in Trondheim's theology?

What do you see as the main differences between [local Islamic institution] and the other mosques in Trondheim when it comes to methods used to gain and transmit knowledge about Islam to its members?

Muslim women

What kind of activities does the mosque arrange?

- Who participate in these activities? (Men, women, youth, children, nationality?)
- How often does the mosque arrange these activities?
- Does the mosque arrange any women activities? How? Why/Why not?
    o If yes, who are responsible for these activities?
    o If yes, who organize these activities?

Does the mosque provide religious education for women? How? Why/why not?

- Who are responsible for this education?
- Who organize and leads this education?
- What kind of access do the women in [local Islamic institution] have to activities which may increase their knowledge about Islam?

Today, are there any women in the leadership of the mosque? Why/why not?

- Are women actively involved when [local Islamic institution] plan and develop its activities? How? Why/Why not?
- Do the women in [local Islamic institution] have any influence on the mosque's leadership? How? Why/why not?
- Is [local Islamic institution] trying to get the women more involved in the mosque's leadership and activities? How? Why/why not?
- Do you think it is important that the women members play an active role in the mosque? Why/Why not?
- I know that several of the women who uses [local Islamic institution's] mosque from time to time possess a great deal of theoretical and practical knowledge about Islam. Does [local Islamic institution] make us of the women's Islamic knowledge in a way? How? Why/Why not?

Sources to Islamic knowledge

What do you see as the authoritative sources to Islamic knowledge? Why?

- Which are the <u>sources</u> from which each Muslim should get knowledge about Islam? Which methods should they use to learn about these sources?
- Do you think it is a long tradition in Islam to encourage individuals to search for more Islamic knowledge, i.e. beyond the knowledge they are taught by parents, imams etc., or do you think this the individual's search for more religious knowledge is a new trend/phenomenon?

How would you describe the relationship between (a) knowledge about Islam that comes from external authorities such as family, imams etc., and (b) knowledge about Islam that comes from your own studies and reflections?

Processes of religious individualization among Muslims in the West

Oliver Roy is one of the leading scholars on Islam in the West. He has a theory which says that processes of individualization are (re)shaping Muslims' identities and practices in the West. Islam today is, according to him, less ascribed to a specific territory or a civilization. This has several consequences which trigger the processes of religious individualization among the Muslim in the West:

- **"A crisis of authority":** The Islamic debate has moved from religious institutions, to private madrasas and to the individuals in the public sphere. Modern media technologies have made information easily accessible for everyone. The religious debate is now everywhere and on everybody's hands, and the "line" between the religious intellectuals and the ordinary people has become blurred.
- **The individual's right to define "Islam" and "Muslim:** In the absence of strong Islamic authorities and powerful Islamic institutions in the West it becomes the task of the individual to interpret Islam. Everyone is free to define what it means to be "Muslim" and "Islam". In this way it is the individuals who decide what "Islam" means to them and to what degree they want it to influence their everyday life.
- **"A return to the sources":** When the Muslim individuals in the West are trying to define "Islam" and what it means to be a "Muslim", they turn to the Islamic sources and start to read and interpret the Quran and the Hadiths on their own. The "individual's turn to the sources" is a new phenomenon according to Roy.
- **"Islam online":** People with no religious training present themselves and act like "religious experts" on the Internet. Ordinary Muslims surf the Internet and "pick and mix" among the enormous variation of religious ideas and information they find there until they find something which is "suitable" for them. What they choose to follow and not, become the individual's choice.

Roy thinks that the processes of individualization may have two main outcomes: First, it can "lead to a critical approach to dogma, a quest for *itjihad* and renewal theological thinking". This again can lead to a reformation of Islam, and a liberalization of the religion. Second, the individualization of Islam can also lead to fundamentalism. Many fundamentalists see globalization and individualization of Islam as an opportunity to reconstruct a Muslim community based solely on the explicit tenets of religion.

What do you think about Roy's theory of religious individualization? Here I would like to hear your views both on the "consequences" which Roy thinks trigger the processes of individualization, and the "main outcomes" of the individualization.

- Do you recognize these consequences and outcomes? How? Why/why not?
- Do you find this theory suitable for my project, which explore the Muslim women in Trondheim's methods of gaining knowledge about Islam? Why/why not?

Appendix 6: Consent to interview and the use of a digital voice recorder

Trondheim, March 2011.

<u>**Consent to interview**</u>

I give my consent to be interviewed by Eli-Anne Vongraven Eriksen in relation to her PhD-project. The working title of the project is: "Continuity and change in the understanding of religion, identity and religious practices among young Muslim women in Trondheim".

I consent to that the answers I give during the interview can be used in the formulation of her project, and in the final version of her PhD-thesis. Eli-Anne has given me information about the project, and I am familiar with the project's objectives. I also consent to that Eli-Anne uses a digital voice recorder during the interview, and that she can keep these recordings as long as the project is running. At the end of the project, I know that all recordings will be deleted, and that all persons and personal details will be made anonymous.

I am aware of that it is voluntary to participate in the project, and that I have the right to withdraw from it at any point if I want.

Date/place:

Signature:

NTNU

Norwegian University of
Science and Technology