

**Pakistani Children in Norway:
Islamic Nurture in a Secular Context**

Sissel Østberg

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The Community Religions Project is a research group working on contemporary issues related to religions in Britain, particularly those of relevance to minority ethnic communities. In addition to monographs, it publishes a series of research papers. A list of titles appears at the back of this volume.

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Series Preface

The Community Religions Project was initiated in 1976 in the Department of Theology and Religious Studies at the University of Leeds in order to encourage research on religions in the West Yorkshire area. In the years that followed it extended its interest to religions in other parts of Britain, its primary focus remaining the manifestation of religious communities within particular localities or regions. Research has been undertaken by staff members, doctoral students, and those working on relevant undergraduate and postgraduate dissertations. Research funds have been obtained from a number of grant-awarding bodies. Since the Project's inception it has published research papers and, from 1986, a series of monographs.

This particular monograph, on Pakistani Muslim children in Oslo, falls outside the formal remit of the Community Religions Project in being on a community situated beyond Britain. However, Sissel Østberg's research on religious socialisation accords with the discussion by Eleanor Nesbitt of young British Sikhs in an earlier monograph, and utilises a related theoretical approach based on the interpretive method of Clifford Geertz. In discussions of education and nurture, time and space, and purity and impurity, Østberg shows how young Norwegian Muslims from Pakistani heritage families become competent at expressing 'integrated plural identities' in which ethnicity, religion and nationality all play a significant part.

Dr Østberg's study was undertaken at the University of Warwick under the auspices of the Warwick Religions and Education Research Unit (WRERU), and was supervised by Professor Robert Jackson. She was awarded her doctorate in 1999.

Kim Knott, Community Religions Project

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Last, but not least, I want to thank my own family, Aage and Hilde, for their willingness to share me with so many other families.

Abbreviations

| | |
|------|---|
| Ar. | Arabic |
| F | female (e.g. Aisha f 9) |
| I | interviewer |
| FIEF | Human-Etisk Forbund (Association of Secular Humanists, Norway) |
| IMER | Internasjonal migrasjon og etniske relasjoner (International Migration and Ethnic Relations); a research programme of NFR |
| IRN | Islamsk Råd Norge (Islamic Council of Norway) |
| Jl | <i>Jama 'at-i Islami</i> (an Islamic political party in Pakistan, founded by Mawdudi in 1941, headed now by Qazi Hussain) |
| JUP | <i>Jami'at-ul-Ulama Pakistan</i> (a Bareilwi-oriented political party in Pakistan headed by Shah Ahmad Noorani, the leader of WIM) |
| KRL | Kristendomskunnskap med religions-og livssynsorientering (Knowledge of Christianity with an Orientation of Religions and Worldviews; the term for the new RE in Norway) |
| KULT | Program for kultur og tradisjonsformidling (Programme for Culture and Transmittance of Traditions); a NFR programme |
| m | male (e.g. Jamshed m 9) |
| NFR | Norsk Forskningsråd (Norwegian Council of Research) |
| NOU | Norges Offentlige Utredninger (Public Record Office) |
| PUF | Pedagogisk utdanningsforskning (Pedagogic Research on Education) |
| RE | Religious Education |
| S | <i>Surah</i> , a chapter of the Qur'an |

SAAS *`salla allahu `alayhi wa sallam'* eulogy uttered by pious Muslims after the name of the Prophet Muhammad; meaning 'peace and blessings of Allah be upon him'.

WIM *World Islamic Mission* (an umbrella organisation for *Barelwis*, founded by Pir Maroof in 1973)

Notes on transliterations, transcriptions and translations

Words from Urdu, Panjabi and Arabic have been rendered in Roman script and italicised on each occurrence in the text, unless they are currently in use like the 'Qur'an' and 'Qur'an class'. The italicised words are explained in the Glossary if they are not always translated in the text. 'Panjabi' denotes the language, 'Punjabi' is employed for the word in other usages. Unless otherwise specified, Urdu terms for Islamic concepts, originally Arabic, are applied, e.g. *Id-e-azha* for *Id al-adha*. The principle informing the language of the study has been to keep as close as possible to the everyday language use of the respondents. Since they, for example, mostly preferred the form *Ramadan* when speaking Norwegian (and not *Ramazan*), the Arabic/Norwegian form has been rendered here.

Proper names, caste names, mosque names and names of festivals have been capitalised. These are transcribed according to common writing practice in English, but occasionally adjusted to academic transliteration standards (cf. McGregor 1992 and Ferozsons' Dictionary). This is the reason for preferring to write *Id* instead of *Eid* and the Qur'an instead of the Koran. Full diacritic marks, e.g. macrons to indicate long vowels, are not applied. The letter 'ain (not pronounced in Urdu) is transliterated as in some Arabic loan words, like '*dim*', but not transliterated in common words like *Id* or *izzat*. The English plural 's' is applied in common words, e.g. *dupattas*.

The principle of keeping as close as possible to the language use of the respondents is most strongly broken by translating children's sayings from Norwegian into English. An essential part of their Norwegian-ness was lost. However, translation problems, combined with the alternation of Urdu, Panjabi and Arabic terminology, have increased the language sensitivity of the study.

Glossary

(If not indicated, the words are rendered in their Urdu form although most of them are loan words from Arabic. For kinship terminology, see Appendix C. Words used just once and explained in the text are not listed.)

| | |
|--------------------|---|
| <i>ajr</i> | merit; 'reward' for good or bad action |
| <i>'alim</i> | (pl <i>'ulama</i>); a learned man; scholar; particularly in law and religion |
| <i>al-Kitab</i> | (Ar.) the Book; i.e. the Holy Qur'an |
| <i>al-Qur'an</i> | Ar.) literally: the reading, the recitation; the Holy Book of Islam |
| <i>barakat</i> | blessings, prosperity, good fortune |
| <i>Barelwi</i> | a supporter of the Barelwi movement founded by Maulana Reza Khan (1856-1921) in Bareilly, India; defender of customary beliefs and traditions against the attacks of reform movements, e.g. the Deobandis |
| <i>Bari Id</i> | the Great Id, i.e. <i>Id-e-azha</i> (= <i>Id-e-qurban</i>), the feast of the sacrifice (= the feast of slaughter) |
| <i>biradari</i> | literally: 'brotherhood'; extended kinship network defined through male lineage; intermarrying group |
| <i>bismillah</i> | literally: 'in the name of God'; a formula generally pronounced at the beginning of any action, e.g. a child's first reading of the Qur'an |
| <i>burqa`</i> | female over-coat (often of black silk) covering head and body |
| <i>charpai</i> | bed, bedstead |
| <i>Choti Id</i> | Little Id, i.e. <i>Id-ul-fitr</i> ; marking the end of the fast |
| <i>dars Qur'an</i> | teaching the Qur'an and <i>Islamiyat</i> (see below) to adults |

| | |
|-------------------------|---|
| <i>Deobandi</i> | a supporter of the reform movement founded in 1867 in Deoband, India. |
| <i>desk</i> | home, country, region |
| <i>du'a</i> | prayer of supplication, invocation |
| <i>dupatta</i> | Pakistani female head scarf; shawl |
| <i>fajr</i> | early morning prayer |
| <i>ghusl</i> | full ablution, bathing |
| <i>Hadith</i> (Ar.) | narrations of sayings and customs from the Prophet's life based on the oral traditions of a chain of transmitters |
| <i>hafiz</i> | person who has memorised the Qur'an |
| <i>Hajj</i> | the pilgrimage to Mecca during the month of <i>Dhu-l-hijja</i> (Ar.) |
| <i>halal</i> | actions permitted by Islamic law, e.g. food, ritually slaughtered meat |
| <i>Hanafi</i> | one of the four Schools of Law; dominant in the former Ottoman Empire and in South Asia |
| <i>haram</i> | actions forbidden by Islamic law |
| <i>haya'</i> | modesty |
| <i>henna</i> | the leaves which are used to dye the hands, feet and hair |
| <i>hijab</i> | female head scarf or veil, in the Arab style |
| <i>ibadah</i> | religious duty, act of worship, ritual |
| <i>Id</i> | feast, religious celebration, festival |
| <i>Id-e-azha</i> | = <i>Bari Id</i> , the feast of the Sacrifice on the 10 th of <i>Dhu-l-hijja</i> |
| <i>Id al-adha</i> (Ar.) | = <i>Id-e-azha</i> |

| | |
|-----------------------|--|
| <i>Id-ul-fitr</i> | = <i>Choti Id</i> , the feast ending the fast in the month of Ramadan, celebrated on the 1 st (or 2 nd) of <i>Shawwal</i> (Ar.) |
| <i>iftari</i> | the meal breaking the fast at sunset |
| <i>imam</i> | mosque prayer leader |
| <i>Islamiyat</i> | Islamic studies, knowledge of Islam, RE subject in schools in Pakistan |
| <i>i'tiqaf</i> | seclusion; retirement to a mosque for continuing prayer, especially during the last days of <i>Ramadan</i> |
| <i>izzat</i> | reputation, honour, respect |
| <i>Juma</i> | Friday; the prescribed day for the Muslim communal prayer |
| <i>Lailat ul-qadr</i> | the Night of Power, i.e. the night on which the revelations of the Qur'an, according to Islamic tradition, were first sent down to Muhammad; feast celebrated on the 27 th of Ramadan |
| <i>lena-dena</i> | to receive and give; a system of reciprocal gift giving amongst Pakistanis |
| <i>madrasah</i> | a traditional religious school of higher studies |
| <i>Mawlid</i> | the celebration of Muhammad's birthday (Ar. <i>Mawlid al-nabi</i>) on the 12 th of the month <i>Rabi al-awwal</i> |
| <i>mehndi</i> | myrtle, the <i>henna</i> plant |
| <i>molvi</i> | a learned religious man; a Muslim doctor of law |
| <i>Muharram</i> | the first month of the year; the martyrdom of Hussain is commemorated on the 10 th , the day of Ashura |
| <i>najasah</i> (Ar.) | dirtiness, impurity |
| <i>namaz</i> | ritual prayer |
| <i>napak</i> | dirtiness, impurity |

| | |
|----------------------|--|
| <i>na 'ts</i> | devotional songs praising the Prophet |
| <i>niyya</i> | intention, spirit |
| <i>pak</i> | purity, cleanliness |
| <i>pardesh</i> | foreign country, abroad |
| <i>Parwaizi</i> | a Pakistani movement founded by Ghulam Ahmad Parwaiz; a rationalistic interpretation of the Qur'an |
| <i>Pir</i> | <i>Sufi</i> guide or master; highly respected or holy person; often with the gift of healing |
| <i>Purdah</i> | literally 'curtain'; veil, the spatial segregation of sexes |
| <i>qawwali</i> | singing or playing devotional songs, e.g. as part of <i>Sufi</i> rituals |
| <i>qibla</i> | the prayer direction, i.e. the direction of Mecca |
| <i>raka 'at</i> | literally 'bowing'; unit of prayer which includes standing, bowing, prostrating and sitting |
| <i>Ramadan</i> (Ar.) | = <i>Ramazan</i> , the ninth month of the Islamic year, the month of fasting |
| <i>rozah</i> | a fast |
| <i>rozah rakhna</i> | to observe a fast |
| <i>Sayed</i> | the caste group with the highest status in the Pakistani Muslim community, claiming a direct line of descent from Muhammad |
| <i>sehri</i> | the last meal in the morning before the start of the fast |
| <i>shalwar qamiz</i> | traditional Pakistani dress |
| <i>shari 'a</i> | Islamic law |

| | |
|-----------------|--|
| <i>Shia</i> | shorthand for <i>shi 'at Ali</i> , the faction of Ali; the minority tradition within Islam; have a different view of political and religious authority than the Sunnis |
| <i>Sufi</i> | an adherent of Islamic mysticism; member of a <i>Sufi</i> brotherhood |
| <i>Sunnah</i> | customs and sayings of the Prophet written in the <i>Hadiths</i> (traditions); norms to be emulated by Muslims |
| <i>Sunni</i> | shorthand for <i>ahl al-sunnah wa 'l-jama 'ah</i> (Ar.: the people of custom and community); the majority of Muslims |
| <i>surah</i> | a chapter of the Qur'an |
| <i>Tablighi</i> | <i>Tablighi Jama 'at</i> ; 'the faith movement' founded in India by Maulana Ilyas (1885-1944) |
| <i>tafsir</i> | commentary on the Qur'an |
| <i>tahara</i> | the act of purification |
| <i>takbir</i> | declaring God's greatness by the words <i>Allahu akbar</i> (God is most great) |
| <i>tanzil</i> | a sending down (from Heaven), i.e. a revelation |
| <i>tawhid</i> | unity; the unity of God (monotheism); the unity of Islam |
| <i>ta 'wiz</i> | amulet |
| <i>tehsil</i> | an administrative unit in Pakistan |
| <i>topi</i> | hat, cap |
| <i>`ulama</i> | (pl. of <i>alim</i>); see above |
| <i>ummah</i> | the community of Muslims transcending ethnic and political boundaries |
| <i>umrah</i> | minor and abbreviated pilgrimage to Mecca on days other than those specified for <i>Hajj</i> |
| <i>wuzu</i> | ablution |

zat

caste

zikr

'remembrance', the repetition of divine names as part of Sufi rituals

Chapter 1

Immigration History and Institutional Context

1.1 Introduction

Background information will be given concerning mainstream Norwegian society and its immigrant population (the secular context of Islamic nurture), the Pakistani community in Oslo (their immigration history and socio-economic situation) and the institutional development of Islamic organisations in Oslo (the Islamic context).

The respondent children of this study are called *second generation Pakistanis* or *Norwegian Pakistanis*, not second generation immigrants, to underline that their status is different from that of their parents. Their biographical histories and their actual life situations are, however, part of the history of Pakistani immigration to Norway. In public statistics they are classified as second generation immigrants (Vassenden 1997).¹

This chapter will not deal with all aspects of this history, but will present a brief account of immigration and an overview of the development of Islamic institutions in Norway. The weight put on the perspective of children who are not themselves immigrants will, as the study develops, contribute to a shift from an immigration to an ethnic minority perspective (cp. Anwar 1996:15). The focus on religious nurture will add new dimensions to previous research (cf the introduction to the study) and to most public statistics which lack information

about religion. Some background information concerning the Norwegian state school system, and religious education (RE) in particular, will be given.

Similarities to, and differences from, the immigration pattern experienced by Britain and other European countries will be emphasised. The comparative approach of this study will not only add material from Norway, but seek to shed some light on general processes of religious change and identity management among Asian children in diaspora. The background presentation will especially draw on the theoretical framework developed by Kim Knott. In explaining the changes of South Asians in Britain she distinguishes between the categories *home traditions*, *host traditions*, *nature of migration process*, *nature of migrant group* and *nature of host responses* (Knott 1991:87-8). This background chapter will also relate to Nora Ahlberg's research on variations and conflicts among Pakistani Muslims in Norway in the late 1980s (Ahlberg 1990). Her analysis and categorisations of Pakistani Islamic organisations in Norway will be modified by indicating some lines of later development.

1.2 Immigration history

The total population of Norway in 1997 was 4,369,957 out of which 494,793 lived in Oslo.² At the beginning of 1996 the immigrant population numbered 223,800, i.e. 5.1% of the total population.³ Included in this number are 191,900 first generation and 31,900 second generation immigrants. In a strict statistical sense no more than 14 persons could be classified as third generation immigrants, i.e. where both parents were born in Norway but in all other aspects belonged to the definition of immigrant (cf. above).

The Pakistanis formed the largest group within the immigrant population: 19,400, followed by Danes (18,200), Swedes (15,200) and Vietnamese (13,800). There were also large groups from Bosnia-Herzegovina (11,300), Great Britain (10,700) and Yugoslavia (9,600) (cf. Appendix A). Among the 19,400 Pakistanis, 11,800 were first generation immigrants and 7,600 from the second generation.

Compared to Britain's large number of South Asian immigrants, it is of interest to note that the number of people from India was only 5,309 and from Sri Lanka 7,554. Bangladesh did not even figure in the statistics, except as part

of the general classification Other Asian (6,041). The total number of Asians in Norway was 73,462.

The history of Pakistanis in Norway may be illustrated by the rise in their numbers since 1970 (Vassenden 1997):

| 1970 | 1971 | 1980 | 1981 | 1986 | 1987 | 1990 | 1996 |
|------|------|-------|-------|-------|-------|--------|--------|
| 170 | 990 | 5,401 | 6,842 | 7,563 | 8,164 | 10,536 | 19,400 |

The first group of ten Pakistani men arrived in Oslo in 1967 (Ahlberg 1990:17; cf. Korbøl 1972; 1977; Lien 1982). They all had close kin in Denmark or Britain, but came to Norway because of more difficult labour market conditions in other parts of Europe. At the same time there was a need for unskilled workers in Norway. This situation saw Norway become a target for labour migrants along with the rest of Europe.

The pattern of Pakistani immigration to Norway was typical of the labour seeking 'chains' which have characterised the immigration of Pakistanis to Britain (Anwar 1996; Ballard 1994; Joly 1995; Nielsen 1995; Saifullah-Khan 1976; Shaw 1988, 1994; Werbner 1990). It was 'a chain of migration on the kinship-friendship basis' (Anwar 1996:7). Single men emigrated in order to earn money to send back to help their families at home. They expected to stay for only a short period before they themselves would return home. The first Pakistanis who settled informed their brothers, brothers-in-law, neighbours and friends about work opportunities and accommodation, and most of those who arrived were met at the airport by someone they knew (cf. Chapter 3). The men clustered together in the central parts of Oslo where they shared cheap rooms or flats. This first settlement pattern laid the foundation for later residential concentration (Lien 1982:18-19; cp. Werbner 1990:336).

80-90 % of Pakistani immigrants came from the province of Punjab and of these the majority belonged to rural areas like Gujrat or Jhelum (Aase 1983 [1979]; Ahlberg 1990; Lien 1982; Puntervold-Bø 1980). The *tehsil* Kharian, in

the district of Gujrat, has had the highest density of emigration to Norway. In some respects, this somewhat homogeneous immigration background explains characteristic traits of the Pakistani community in Oslo. However, as Ahlgren says, 'this is only partly true, since the Pakistanis are split by sectarian disparities with deep roots in the history of Islam in the Subcontinent and its relationship to the Pakistan Movement' (1990:19). (This will be elaborated in the next section.)

The relatively strong socio-economic and socio-cultural homogeneity of the Pakistani majority in Oslo has made it difficult for those Pakistanis who do not associate with this group to be seen or heard in Norwegian society. Some of them have an urban middle class background and are well educated. These Pakistanis distance themselves from the majority of Pakistanis in Norway and suffer from cultural stigmatisation. A characteristic trait of the Pakistani community in Oslo is that it is large enough to form a community, but too small for individuals, who do not identify with the group, to choose an alternative lifestyle, or for minorities within the minority to be respected.

Because of their size, most Asian communities in Britain offer greater opportunities for alternative lifestyles than in Norway, despite the limitations of a strong and tight Asian family structure (Baumann 1996; Larson 1990; Shaw 1988). Another characteristic trait of the Pakistanis in Norway is their dominance compared to other Asian groups. This situation gives less opportunity, compared to Britain, for negotiating a flexible Asian identity (cf. 4.5).

A related structural difference between Norway and Britain was Norway's ethnic and cultural homogeneity at the end of the 1960s when the first wave of immigration took place. Except for the Sami indigenous population in the northern parts of the country,⁴ a small group of Finnish background and some Romas (Gypsies), Norway had at that time no ethnic minorities (Lakeberg-Dridi 1996:149). The number of inhabitants born in a foreign country increased from 1.2% in 1865 to 5.5% by 1996,⁵ but the growth was very uneven. Moreover, since 90% of the inhabitants within this category in the 19th century were Swedes, they would hardly count as an ethnic minority. Even in 1950s more than half of the inhabitants born in a foreign country were from one of the Nordic countries and the rest from Western Europe or North

America. Things began to change in the 1970s when, among inhabitants born in a foreign country, the number born in a third world country increased from 7% to 21%. In 1993, this number had reached 44%.

The host country encountered by the Pakistani immigrants at the beginning of the 1970s differed therefore from what Pakistani immigrants to Britain had met ten to fifteen years earlier. In Norway immigrants found a welfare society which, on the one hand, appreciated their work and had no colonial past but, on the other hand, had little multi-cultural or multi-religious competence. Key informants of this study reported little antagonism and racism in this first phase of their immigration history (cf. Lien 1997:108). The majority and the minority group, however, had different agendas. For example, Norwegians took for granted that the immigrants were genuinely interested in *Norwegian* culture and wanted to adjust as much as possible. By contrast, the first Pakistanis were actually more concerned about what was happening at home than in the society that was hosting them.

Pakistanis' position in the Norwegian labour market during this first period of community development determined, to a large extent, their position in society (Lien 1982:5). With regard to Pakistanis in Britain Anwar says: 'The type of work available to them on arrival not merely governed their incomes, it also determined in which areas they settled, where their children went to schools, their chances of participation in the civic life and their overall status in society' (Anwar 1996:13).

The second phase of the immigration history of Pakistanis in Norway started with the immigration ban of 1975.⁶ After 1976 Pakistanis had to apply for a visa to enter Norway. As in Britain, after the Commonwealth Immigrants Act 1962, the nature of migration changed (Ahlberg 1990:23; cp. Ballard 1994:11). Despite the fact that no labour seeking immigrants from Pakistan were accepted, the number of Pakistanis still increased because of family reunions or the establishment of new families. Because of the marriage system among Pakistanis (cf. Ballard 1994; Shaw 1988), most immigrant Pakistani men married a cousin or another relative in Pakistan who then moved to Norway after some time (cf. Chapter 3).

Especially relevant to this study is how the arrival of women and children

changed the pattern of life in the Pakistani community (Ahlberg 1990:23). This change had to do with the introduction of family life, the upbringing of children and the increased need for the institutionalisation of religious life. In some respects, and for some families, this meant a closer attachment to the host country (a sign of being established here); in other respects it meant a renewed attachment to the home country through a greater transmission of Pakistani cultural elements. This will be elaborated in the next section and will also be part of the discussion of the succeeding chapters.

The second phase of immigration history (the period of establishment of family life in the host society) lasted throughout the 1980s. In the 1990s, a third phase, which is the actual context for this study, is characterised by the increased social and cultural influence of second generation Pakistanis. These phases of immigration history are closely linked to, and mirrored in, the development of Islamic institutions in Norway.

1.3 Islamic institutional development

This background information will be based on three different types of sources: the available Norwegian statistical figures (Vassenden 1997), previous Norwegian research (Ahlberg 1990; Leirvik 1996; 1997; Vogt 1995) and information given by the Islamic organisations themselves. Some cross-checking has been possible by discussing the general development with *imams* and other leaders of the Pakistani dominated mosques in Oslo and with representatives of the Islamic Council of Norway (IRN). The organisation pattern in Oslo will also be compared to the last decade of development in Britain (Geaves 1995; Joly 1995; Lewis 1994; Raza 1991) and other parts of Western Europe (Nielsen 1995; Vogt 1995). Some of the themes raised in this chapter will be further discussed in relation to the analysis of Qur'an schools in Chapter 7 and in other parts of the study.

A Norwegian law concerning religious communities⁷ guarantees freedom of belief and secures some funding from the State to all registered religious communities (Christian or non-Christian). The aim of this system of registering is to secure equal rights for all communities outside the Norwegian Church.⁸ In 1996 a total of 1133 religious congregations were registered with 237,733 members. Islam was the religion with the highest number of members: 42,134

(followed by the Pentecostals 41,459 and the Roman Catholic Church 35,284).⁹ The organisation of secular humanists (Human-Etisk Forbund) numbers 64,322 and forms the largest worldview organisation besides the Norwegian Church. HEF is registered as a non-religious community (livssynssamfunn) and has the same rights of funding as the religious communities.¹⁰ HEF increases its membership numbers by approximately 3,000 a year and plays an active role in public debates in Norway, especially when it comes to educational issues such as RE (cf. next section).

The system of registering as a member of a mosque is traditionally not familiar to Muslims (Nielsen 1995:122), but they have adjusted to the Norwegian system, partly because of the advantages given to them by the system of funding (instrumental integration) and partly as a consequence of accepting their new status as a minority religion (structural integration).

The development of registered Muslims in Norway is a result of both an increased number of Muslim immigrants and an increased rate of registration of Muslims already settled in the country.

Registered Muslims in Norway (Vassenden 1997):

| 1980 | 1983 | 1986 | 1990 | 1994 | 1996 |
|------|-------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| 1006 | 3,540 | 10,520 | 19,189 | 33,000 | 42,134 |

Since not all Muslims have registered (either because they are not familiar with the system, are not interested, or do not wish to be a member of one of the existing mosques), the total number is approximately 60,000, i.e. 1.2 % of the population (Leirvik 1996:24;1997:3; Opsal 1994:296).¹¹

The Pakistanis form the largest ethnic group among the Muslims in Norway, followed by Bosnians, Turks, Iranians, Moroccans, and Somalis. There are around 400 Norwegian converts to Islam, most of them women married to Muslim immigrants (Larsen 1995; Leirvik 1996). Of the 25-30 mosques in Oslo, 10 are dominated by Pakistanis, i.e. they have Urdu speaking religious leaders and the majority of the adherents are Pakistanis (Appendix B).

Only one mosque (WIM) is purpose built. The others are in rented flats or houses (often previously industrial localities). Formally and ideologically, the mosques are open to every Muslim regardless of ethnic or linguistic background, but the following account will make clear how deeply these mosques are affiliated to formal and informal South Asian networks. The institutional development is, in this respect, fully in accordance with other social and cultural networks among the Pakistanis, especially related to *zat* and *biradari* relations across national borders (cf. Glossary). More than anything, the organisational pattern mirrors sectarian differences within the South Asian Islamic world (Ahlberg 1990:122; cp. Joly 1995:68).

In addition to the mosques there are Muslim organisations like the Islamic Women's Association (IKN), the Islamic Information Association (DIM), Norwegian Muslim Youth (NMU) and the Muslim Students' Union (MSU) where individual Pakistanis are members. Except for a separate Pakistani Students' Union, these organisations are, however, dominated by Norwegian converts and Arabic speaking Muslims. Since none of these organisations are directly relevant to Pakistani children, they will not be discussed further.¹²

The main sectarian distinction is the one between *Sunnis* and *Shias*. More than 90% of the Pakistanis in Norway are *Sunni* Muslims, belonging to the *Hanafi* school of law.¹³ When groups of men organised themselves as religious communities in the mid 1970s, they organised types of institutions with which they were familiar from their home communities, either in rural Punjab or in cities like Lahore or Karachi. The exact foundation dates are difficult to fix because meetings often started quite informally with some 40-50 men gathering for social purposes and for prayers. These gradually developed into formal organisations before finally being registered. The first two to be founded were the *Islamic Cultural Centre* (1974) and *Central Jama 'at Ahl-e Sunnat* (1976; changed name in 1979 and registered 1981)." The first *Shia* mosque in Norway, *Anjuman-e Hussaini*, was founded in 1974.

Further Pakistani Islamic organisations have been established at later dates in Oslo because of organisational discrepancies, sectarian differences and/or differences in social background or political ideology. Another well-known organisational pattern among South Asians is the tendency of

organisations to split because of personal and other conflicts (Nielsen 1995:120) (cf. 8.3, endnote 13). An influential religious person or a *pir* tends to establish his own group followed by loyal adherents. Political parties and religious organisations are more personal than ideological in orientation (cf. Lewis 1994). Opposed to this attitude, it was not uncommon to hear statements like the following: 'We did not want one man to decide everything. After all, we are in Norway. We want the board to decide.' The Norwegian system of financial support has proved to be another incentive for the establishment of new mosque organisations. This tendency is discernable in all Western countries and may have unforeseen consequences like 'imposing an ethnic restriction on Islam' (Nielsen 1995:126).

From a Muslim perspective, the Pakistani dominated *Sunni* mosques in Oslo can be divided into three groups: the *Barelwi* movement (5 mosques), the *Tablighi* movement (2 mosques)⁵ and the *Jama'at-i Islami* movement (1 mosque) (cf. Appendix B). There is also one *Parwaizi* oriented group (*Bazm-e Tolu-e Islam*) which meets for philosophical discussions and some *Sufi* groups which meet for the performance of *zikr*. *Sufi* influenced elements, like the performance of *na'ts* and *zikr*, are also part of the rituals at the *Barelwi* mosques. Members of the Islamic Cultural Centre regard themselves as closer to the *Deobandis* and the *Tablighis* than to the *Barelwis*, especially in their opposition to *Sufi* rituals and folk-religious practices like the wearing of *ta'wiz*. The Islamic Cultural Centre is clearly oriented towards Saudi Arabia and supports *Jama'at-i Islami* (ii) in Pakistan. To a different degree the *Barelwi* mosques support the policy of *Jami'at-ul-Ulama Pakistan* (IUP).

The 'average' adherents of the mosques (registered members or not) were unaware of these distinctions or the distinctions meant little to them. The mosque leaders were also liable to obscure some of their affiliations, partly because the distinctions were vague and flexible, partly for strategic reasons. The leaders of a mosque might belong to a specific theological or political tradition, without all the members sharing their views. Because of the increased hostility towards Islam in mainstream Norwegian society, some religious leaders preferred to reveal as little as possible of their ideology in order to avoid misunderstandings or possible conflicts.

In the present situation the traditional *Barelwi-Deobandi* distinction was not always the most dominant. Among the *Barelwis* there was, in certain aspects, a distinct difference between the *Idara Minhaj ul-Qur'an* and the other *Barelwis*. This difference seemed to be more political or organisational in character than theological. The centralised structure of the *Idara Minhaj ul-Qur'an* movement was, for example, not appreciated by the others. Towards Norwegian non-Muslim society, all mosque leaders and the 'average Muslim' tended to underline their unity more than their diversity. The discussion below will also give evidence of how the Norwegian context influenced the pattern of sectarianism among Muslims.

From the perspective of the sociology of religions, the classifications applied by Ahlberg (1990) are still partly valid. She distinguished between three groups: the popular Muslims (the *Barelwis* and the *Sufi* oriented), the normatives (the *Deobandis*, the *Tablighi* and the *Jami 'at-i Islami* oriented) and the liberal Muslims (individuals, not organised) (ibid.p.124, 243). However, from the background of developments in the 1990s, this religio-sociological classification has to be modified. Folk-religious, normatives and liberals are still there, but not easily identified as belonging to specific organisations. Firstly, the diversification among the *Barelwis* has increased so that all *Barelwi* mosques cannot be classified as popular Islam or folk-religious. Folk-religious elements and Sufi-orientation are more prevalent among the *Barelwis* than among others, but there are also normative (and Islamicist) layers within these mosques. This change is not least caused by the increased educational level of second generation Pakistanis among the *Barelwis* and the *Tablighis*.¹⁶ Secondly, increased formal and informal networking among Islamic organisations in Oslo has led to institutional development beyond sectarianism (cf. below).

The development described above is similar to the well-known ideologies and organisational structures of Islamic institutions in South Asia, in Britain and in the rest of Western Europe (Geaves 1995; Joly 1992; Lewis 1994; Nielsen 1995; Raza 1991; Vogt 1995). The pattern is formed by the historical roots of these movements, their present international network and the homogeneity of socio-economic development in the world (globalisation). In the study of Islamic institutional development in Norway, individuals (Muslims and non-Muslims) and initiatives from the host society have been found to be

influential. For example, the Islamic Council of Norway (IRN) was established after an initiative taken by the Council of Churches. More than anything, however, this development has been initiated and organised by ordinary Pakistani men and women (cf.8.3).

The first phase of Islamic institutionalisation in Norway may be categorised as a *primary needs stage* (a *masjid* - mosque - was wanted for *Juma* prayers, religious festivals and Qur'an classes). The second phase in the 1980s was characterised by a *consolidation of sectarian differences*. The third phase, from 1992 onwards, is characterised by *establishment of formal and informal cross-sectarian networks* (exemplified by the establishment of IRN and informal meetings of Pakistani religious leaders). This is equivalent to what Lewis has called 'beyond sectarianism' in describing the situation in Britain during the 1980s (Lewis 1994:143).

It remains to be seen if formal and informal co-operation will result in any concrete actions, like agreeing on a date for the celebration of *Id-ul-fitr*, educational improvement of the Qur'an schools,¹⁷ unified attitudes towards mainstream Norwegian society and the media in particular. Despite strong sectarian and personal discrepancies within the group, there are tendencies to represent more unified Muslim attitudes towards mainstream society (cf. the opposition against the new RE subject in Norwegian state schools, the support of a private Islamic initiative for establishing a private Islamic school, support of IRN etc.). This may be partly interpreted as a defence strategy against what is perceived as increasing antagonism from the host society; it may also be partly interpreted as an expression of greater internal self-confidence. Ahlberg's distinction between those who turn *against* the culture of the host community (the normative ones), those who turn *away from* it (the folk-religious ones) and those who turn *towards* it (the liberal ones) has to be modified (Ahlberg 1990:247). The increased internal networking and formalised co-operation within the Muslim community and towards Norwegian mainstream society have, at an institutional level, led to presenting a united front to 'outsiders' (the non-Muslims) despite increased sectarian plurality.

A consolidation of sectarian differences combined with stronger internal networking has led to a new openness towards mainstream society. An informal sign of this new attitude is the willingness of some of the *imams* to

learn Norwegian and to establish personal contacts with non-Muslims. A sign of greater openness towards each other is the increased co-operation in connection with the visits of famous religious or political leaders from abroad.

When Tahir ul-Qadri, the founder of the *Idara Minhaj ul-Qur'an* movement, visited Oslo and gave a speech in July 1997, all Urdu speaking *imams* were not only present, but were placed at the front of the audience. Earlier on the same day, only some of them (*the Barelwis* and *Sufi* oriented) had participated in the procession arranged to celebrate *Mawlid*, the birthday of the Prophet. Likewise when Qazi Hussain, the leader of *Jama'at- i Islami*, was the guest of the Islamic Cultural Centre in March 1995, he also paid a visit to *Central Jama'at Ahl-e Sunnat* and to WIM, although the leaders of these mosques generally express their support for JUP, not to JI.

For *Central Jama'at* and WIM, with 5,500 and 4,000 members respectively, it was important to underline that different political views were represented in their organisations. The *Central Jama'at Ahl-e Sunnat* claimed to be formally unattached to any organisation and not receiving financial support from organisations abroad. They had, however, through previous and present *imams* and initiated members, strong attachments to *Sufi* movements, like the *Chishtis*, the *Qadris* and the *Naqsbandis*, and felt especially attached to the other *Barelwi* dominated mosques in Oslo (Ahlberg 1990; Opsal 1995; Vogt 1995). WIM was established when some men, for organisational reasons, broke with *Central Jama'at* in 1984. The *Ghousia* mosque and the *Bazme-Naqsband* later split from WIM.

Of the Pakistani-dominated mosques, the following are members of the Islamic Council of Norway (MN): ¹⁸ *Central Jama'at Ahl-e Sunnat*, the Islamic Cultural Centre and *Tohid Islam*. However, informal meetings between all Urdu-speaking *imams* take place. The topics for discussion at these meetings have included the settlement of a date for the celebration of *Id-ul-fitr* or *Id-e-azha* for example. This is one of the issues where the differences between the Saudi Arabia-oriented and the Pakistan-oriented manifest themselves (cf. Chapter 6). Joly's understanding that mosques in Birmingham 'inter-relate through cooperation as well as competition' (Joly 1992:70) is also pertinent for the situation in Oslo. Moreover, sectarianism indirectly played a role in the lives of the children; not in the sense that they were aware of the theological

differences (very few Pakistani Muslims were), but in the way that their social and religious life took place within a sectarian context (cf. Chapter 3).

1.4 Norwegian state schools and RE

Almost all children, including Muslims, attend state schools. There are only a few private Christian schools, some Rudolf Steiner and some Montessori schools. An application from an individual Muslim (a Norwegian convert) to establish a primary school based on Islam has been rejected by the local political authorities and by the previous Labour government (Det Norske Arbeiderparti) in alliance with the Conservatives (Høyre). It was argued that such a school would not promote integration and gender equality. The Christian Liberals (Kristelig Folkeparti) and others have supported Muslims' right to establish a private Islamic school with reference to Human Rights and the principle of equality among religious minorities (Larsen 1995; Leirvik 1996; Østberg 1996).

An all-encompassing school reform (Reform 97) was implemented during the period of this study, the main changes being the lowering of the age for starting school from age 7 to 6, i.e. an increase of compulsory schooling from nine to ten years, and a new National Curriculum for classes 1-10 (Læreplanverket for den 10-årige grunnskole, 1996).¹⁹ Of special relevance to the topic of this study is the substitution of the two-model RE (cf below) with a new compulsory RE (KRL) without any general exemption rights.²⁰ This reform did, however, not affect schooling at the time of the field work and the following background information will therefore limit itself to a presentation of the practice in Norwegian primary and lower secondary state schools during the middle of the 1990s.

At the time of the fieldwork (1994/95) children started schooling at the age of 7. Primary school (barnetrinnet) covered classes 1-6. Lower secondary (ungdomstrinnet) covered classes 7-9. Almost 90% of young people in Norway complete Upper Secondary, i.e. 12 years of schooling. The legislative foundation of the state school was the Act of 13 June 1969:

The purpose of primary and lower secondary education shall be, in agreement and cooperation with the home, to help to give pupils a Christian and moral upbringing, to develop their mental and physical abilities, and to give

them good general knowledge so that they may become useful and independent human beings at home and in the society. The school shall promote intellectual freedom and tolerance, and strive to create good forms of co-operation between teachers and pupils and between school and home.²¹

This paragraph was general in character, valid for all subjects and all school activities. The Curriculum Guidelines for Compulsory Education in Norway (Mønsterplanen av 1987/M87) contained an interpretation of the law, i.e. the curriculum specified the values on which the state school was based. It was here stated that

'the teaching and activities of the school shall be founded on fundamental *Christian and Humanistic values*. These values are connected specifically to Christian belief and morals, democratic ideas, human rights, and scientific thinking and methods' (M87; my emphasis).

Religious Education/Religious Instruction was, since the Act of 1969 and up to the School Reform 97 (Læreplanverket for den 10-årige grunnskolen/L 97), taught as a compulsory subject called 'Knowledge of Christianity' (kristendomskunnskap). It was confessional in the way that 'the teaching of Religious Instruction must be in accordance with Evangelical-Lutheran doctrine' (The Education Act, paragraph 18:3). However, it was stated in the National Curriculum (Mønsterplanen av 1987/M87) that 'the teaching must be open and inclusive, so that children from as many home backgrounds as possible can take part' (M87:114, English version). The discussion in Norway concerning 'Knowledge of Christianity' was whether this subject was to be regarded as Christian nurture or religious education (cf. Hull 1984; Jackson 1997). Attached to this question was the issue of exemption rights.

Since 1889 dissidents (members of Christian denominations other than the State Church) had the right to withdraw their children from the RE at school.²² In 1936 this right was extended to all parents who were not members of the Norwegian Church. From the beginning of the 1970s children of these parents were offered an alternative subject called 'Orientation of Worldviews' (livssynsorientering, cf. M74), later on 'Knowledge of Worldviews' (livssynskunnskap, cf. M87).²³ This subject was initiated and developed by the secular humanists (HEF) during the 1960s, and most pupils who attended this

alternative subject in the initial period had a secular humanistic background.

On a national level, 1-2 % of the pupils used their right to alternative education in the middle of the 1990s, but in Oslo and some of the other cities, the percentage was much higher. At many schools in Oslo more than 50% of the pupils (mostly Muslims with an immigrant background) had the right to be exempted from 'Knowledge of Christianity'. Most of them attended the alternative subject. The content of 'Knowledge of Worldviews' (called 'General Religious and Moral Education' in the English version of the National Curriculum) was divided between general ethics, world religions and secular worldviews, like humanism. Because of the historical background of the subject, the character of its textbooks and the recruitment of teachers, it had the reputation of being critical, not only of Church dominance, but of religions and religious attitudes generally. However, during the 1990s the subject gradually changed in character, not least because of the increased participation of Muslims, Sikhs, Hindus and Buddhists. Some parents belonging to these religions preferred, however, to let their children attend 'Knowledge of Christianity' because in these lessons 'they at least spoke about God with respect.' My previous research gave evidence for the importance of the attitude of the class teacher in recruiting pupils to either of the two subjects (Østberg 1992). All the respondent children of this study attended 'Knowledge of Worldviews' (livssynskunnskap) (cf. Chapter 7).

The rhythm of the school year follows the rhythm of mainstream society, i.e. it is mainly influenced by the Christian festivals (Østberg 1992). In the 1990s it has become increasingly common to arrange alternative assemblies for children who do not want to participate, for example in school worship in the Church, e.g. before Christmas. School assemblies and everyday life in schools are, however, not generally marked by Christian dominance.

The absence of religious attitudes and practices is more characteristic of Norwegian state schools than the presence of Christianity. Despite strong Christian elements as part of the legal foundation of the state school, the school of the 1990s is a secular school. (Cf. 8.2 for a discussion of the discrepancy between the high percentage of members of the Norwegian Church with the general low participation in Church activities.) There are, however, great regional differences with regard to religious attitudes and practices. Oslo and

the surrounding area has the lowest number of active Church members. This 'church distant' attitude is discernible in the teaching practice of RE in schools in Oslo and in the attitudes of pupils, i.e. there is a plurality of attitudes among the majority population although most are members of the Norwegian Church.

In the middle of 1990s, the differences between teaching 'Knowledge of Christianity' and teaching 'Knowledge of Worldviews' were in practice minimal, and the negative aspects of splitting the children into two groups had to be measured against the advantages. Another consequence of the two-model RE was that Muslim pupils increasingly attended neither of the two RE subjects offered in schools. This development was one among other background aspects of the RE reform (cf. NOU 1995:9, 'Identity and Dialogue') and in a broader sense: of the general reform of primary and secondary schooling (Reform 97). The school reform (including the RE reform) was implemented *after* the fieldwork period of this study, but the issue of debate — to find a balance between a Christian cultural heritage and increased cultural and religious plurality - may (as will be further explored in Chapter 8) illustrate the school context of Pakistani children in Oslo in the 1990s.

1.5 Conclusion

The background information presented in this chapter has contextualised the lives of Pakistani families in Oslo. It has also contributed to situating the study itself within the frame of Norwegian society. Both Pakistani immigration history and Islamic institutional development have been found to contain elements of *home traditions* and *host traditions* (cf. 1.1). The permanent situation of Pakistanis as an ethnic minority in Norway has been determined by the same double set of traditions and by the *nature of the immigration process*. Since children's lives in Norway are especially linked to mainstream society through schooling, the institutional development of Norwegian state schools in the 1990s may be said to have had a direct impact on Pakistani children. The institutional development of schools also mirrors general traits of society. The secular context of the Islamic nurture of Pakistani children has therefore been exemplified by the development and position of RE in Norwegian schools.

The account in this chapter has been dominated by an outsider perspective whereas the study itself aims at letting the voices of children be heard. Why this research approach was chosen, and how it was achieved, will

be discussed in the following chapter.

¹ Second generation immigrant is in the Statistical Yearbook (Vassenden 1997) defined as a person who is born in Norway but whose parents (at least one of them) are born in a foreign country. The term 'immigration population' encompasses both first and second generation immigrants. See Introduction, endnote 5.

² If nothing else is specified, all the following statistics are from Statistical Analysis 20, Vassenden 1997. The figures from 1996 statistics are used, even if new 1997 figures have been published, since the main purpose of this background chapter is a contextualisation of the fieldwork data and a presentation of general tendencies of development during the 1990s,

³ According to the 1991 British Census, 5.5% of the total population were ethnic minorities (Anwar 1996:15).

⁴ There are said to be more people with a Sami background in Oslo than in Finnmark, but no reliable statistics are available. An estimation of at least 40,000 persons with a Sami background in Norway was made based on the census of 1970 (Samene. Lærerveiledning og arbeidsoppgaver til Samisk utstilling, Norsk Folkemuseum—Publikumsavdelingen/Norwegian Folkmuseum).

⁵ The category 'born in a foreign country' is wider than the category 'immigrant' (Vassenden 1997).

⁶ The law was said to be preliminary, but was renewed yearly and made permanent (St.meld.74 (1979-80); NOU 1983:47; Toreng 1985).

⁷ Lov om trdomssamfunn av 13.juni 1969.

⁸ The Norwegian Church is a Lutheran State Church. 89% of the population is a member (cf. 8.2).

⁹ A few years back Islam came second, next to the Pentecostals (not the Adventists as stated in Nielsen 1995:85).

¹⁰ Regulated by 'Lov om tilskudd til livssynssamfunn av 12.juni 1981'.

¹¹ Since Muslims cluster in specific areas. Oslo has 5% Muslims. and inner city areas 25%.

¹² Non-Islamic Pakistani organisations, like the Pakistani Resource Centre for Children or Pakistani Workers' Union, will also be left out of this account.

¹³ In Oslo there are also ca. 1000 *Ahmadiyyah* Muslims, out of which ca. 700 have a Pakistani background. The *Ahmadiyyahs* reckon themselves as Muslims, but other Muslims see them as a heterodox sect (Ahlberg 1990:91; Glassé 1989; Lewis 1994:58). In contrast to the majority of Pakistani Muslims in Oslo, 99% of the *Ahmadiyyahs* are well educated (information given by the 'Nor' mosque, April 1998). The *Ahmadiyyahs* are not part of this study.

¹⁴ The Islamic Cultural Centre supports the *Jama'at-i Islami* movement in Pakistan and, according to Nielsen (1995:122), it is typical that this type of organisation was among the first to establish itself in diaspora since it already had an organisational structure easily transferable to the West. *Central Jama at Ahl-e Sunnat* is a Bareilwi mosque. In Urdu: *Markazi Jama 'at Ahl-e Sunnat*.

¹⁵ In April 1998 the two mosques merged back into the original one: *Anjuman Islahudin (Madni Masjid)*.

¹⁶ An example of this development is the increased use of second generation youth as spokesmen for the mosques. Young people whose parents are *Tablighi*, and therefore more focused on Islamic mission among Muslims, are frequently to be found informing mainstream society about Islam, for example, through the Islamic Information Association.

¹⁷ In 1998 an initiative was taken by IRN.

¹⁸ In addition to IRN, The Islamic Information Association (Den Islamske Infonnasjonsforening, DIIF), founded in 1989 by Norwegian converts, plays an important role in networking among Muslims in Norway and in communication towards a broader public. One of their main activities is translation and publishing of written material from the Islamic Foundation and International Islamic Federation of Student Organizations.

¹⁹ The reforms initiated by the previous government (Labour) also included Upper Secondary Schools.

²⁰ For a more elaborate discussion of the debate concerning the new RE, cf. Østberg 1995; 1996; 1997.

²¹ This paragraph was not changed in the new school law, which passed through the Storting (Parliament) in 1994. The paragraph was, however, debated in 1996/97 as part of the political compromises connected to the new RE.

²² Prior to the School Law of 1969, there was a strong link between The Norwegian Church and RE in schools. RE at school was regarded as the baptismal instruction of the Church. The bishops had the right to assess the teaching.

²³ Only those pupils whose parents (at least one of them) were not members of the Norwegian Church had the right to be exempted. If the minimum of 5 pupils at a school were exempted they had the right to be offered the alternative subject.

Chapter 2 Methodology

2.1 Introduction

This chapter will discuss methodological issues such as the selection of research topic, the shaping of research design, the fieldwork, analysing the data and writing-up this study. Emphasis will be put on the integration of theories and methods. The study aims primarily at making the 'voices of children' heard and understood, and represents, as such, an *interpretive ethnographic approach*. According to Bryman and Burgess an interpretive approach 'seeks to establish a coherent and inclusive account of a culture from the point of view of those being researched' (1994:6). The study will, however, take into consideration that the actors' point of view can never be rendered without being 'filtered' by the researcher, i.e. without being interpreted. As Geertz says: '...what we call our data are really our own constructions of other people's constructions of what they and their compatriots are up to...' (Geertz 1973:9; cf. 1988:145). In the section on ethnographic methods (cf. 2.3) how to write in a way that is consistent with the multiplex communication between the researcher and the researched will be discussed, i.e. how to avoid a falsely coherent and inclusive account.

That the account sought here is to be coherent and inclusive does not imply a view of Pakistani culture — or the lifeworld of Pakistani children — that is coherent and inclusive. Neither does it imply an understanding of the

researcher/the writer as being an authoritative voice speaking on behalf of others. The methodological approach of this study is based on Geertz's theories of cultural interpretation (Geertz 1973; 1983), which are grounded in Ricoeur's hermeneutic (Ricoeur 1971;1986).¹ However, account has been taken of recent criticism of this position (cf. the 'writing culture' debate: Abu-Luhgod 1993; Clifford 1983; Clifford and Marcus 1986) and of criticism of the critics (Geertz 1988; James, Hockey and Dawson 1997) (see below).

Both theoretically and methodologically the study is influenced by the Religious Education and Community Project (RECP) and other work of the Warwick Religions and Education Research Unit (WRERU) conducted by Robert Jackson and Eleanor Nesbitt (Jackson and Nesbitt 1993; Jackson 1997; Nesbitt 1995). Religion and religious traditions are regarded as ingredients of dynamic changeable cultures without being reduced to subsets of cultures (cf. Baumann 1996; Berger 1967; Fitzgerald 1993; Geertz 1973; Hannerz 1992; Eriksen 1994; Luckmann 1970). A systematic or phenomenological study of Islam would, according to this view, be insufficient to understand the religious nurture of Pakistani children in a plural late-modern society.² An understanding of the *context* is regarded as essential for an understanding of the *meaning* of Islam in the lives of children (cf. 2.2).

Like the RECP, this research seeks to understand the complexity of religious nurture from three different perspectives or levels: the individual level (here understood in the context of the family), the community level (mosque affiliation and sectarian influences) and the international level (Islam as a world religion) (cf. Jackson and Nesbitt 1993). The combination of these perspectives is also central to the approach of the Community Religions Project (CRP), led by Kim Knott, of the University of Leeds (Barton 1986; Geaves 1996;³ Knott 1986).

2.2 Ethnographic interpretation

Hermeneutic paradigm

Hermeneutics in the Continental philosophical tradition as formulated by Paul Ricoeur is the epistemological foundation of this study (Cf. Bernstein 1983; 1991:24-25; Nerheim 1996:308-30; Ricoeur 1971;1981; 1993). Central to Ricoeur's hermeneutics is the thesis of interpretation as a presupposition for understanding. People's actions are regarded as symbolic in the sense that they

have to be 'deciphered', i.e. interpreted, to be understood. The understanding of literary texts forms the model for Ricoeur's theory of human actions. In the same sense as the meaning of a text (in contrast to the meaning of oral discourse) is liberated from the intention of the author, human actions are liberated from the actor and develop their own consequences, i.e. their social dimensions (Ricoeur 1971:541). Ricoeur says: ..,like a text, human action is an open work, the meaning of which is "in suspense." It is because it "opens up" new references and receives fresh relevance from them, that human deeds are also waiting for fresh interpretations which decide their meaning' (p.544). The methodology of this study will be discussed through Geertz's application of Ricoeur's theory of interpretation, modified by new perspectives from the 'writing culture' debate (cf. 2.5).

Meaning and context

The aim of this study is not to find a quantitative distribution within a selected universe, nor even to establish a quantitative gradation of children according to a scale from religiously active to not active. Rather, the aim is to detect patterns of transmission of Islam, and to understand what Islamic nurture *means* to Pakistani children in Oslo with regard to the management of their social and cultural identities (cf. the Introduction).

A presupposition for grasping the perspective of children with regard to the transmission of religious and cultural traditions is an understanding of the social context of their lives. What makes Geertz's approach, which is explicitly related to Ricoeur's theory of 'inscription of action' (Geertz 1973:19), especially relevant to the methodology of this study, is its integration of hermeneutics, cultural theories and ethnographic methods. According to Geertz *culture* 'denotes an historically transmitted pattern of meanings embodied in symbols, a system of inherited conceptions expressed in symbolic forms by means of which men communicate, perpetuate, and develop their knowledge about and attitudes toward life' (Geertz 1973:89). At this stage a discussion of culture as 'a system of inherited conceptions' will be put on hold (see the discussion in the next sub-section) and my focus will be on the concept of culture as a semiotic concept, which implies that an analysis of cultural forms is a search for meaning (ibid.p.5). Doing ethnography is 'like trying to read (in the sense of "construct a reading of") a manuscript — foreign, faded, full of ellipses, incoherencies, suspicious emendations, and tendentious

commentaries, but written, not in conventional graphs of sound but in transient examples of shaped behaviour' (ibid.p.10). Doing ethnography in the sense of 'reading' shaped behaviour; i.e. detecting the meaning of symbolic acts, is a process of interpretation; like reading a poem, to use one of Geertz's metaphors (Geertz 1993 [1983:70]).

Such an approach is rather different from trying to plunge into other people's way of thinking and feeling through empathy (ibid.p.58). Jackson and Nesbitt write: 'We would argue that empathy becomes possible after one has grasped the 'grammar' of another's discourse. It is the tools for learning that 'grammar' that the researcher needs' (1993:19). To put it another way, validation of ethnographic authority is not sought through an appeal to experience, in the sense of an 'I was there' style, but in the sense of interpretation of a 'text'. To understand action as 'text' is, according to Ricoeur, not to understand a foreign psyche *behind* the 'text', but to understand what the 'text' is about, or to understand 'the world' that is disclosed *in front of* the 'text' (1971:557; 1993:77). Transferred to this study it means that an interpretation of the symbolic actions studied (i.e. 'the text') aims at an understanding of the meaning-in-context of this symbolic expression (e.g. a child's ablution before prayer), not what is hidden in the expression (e.g. the situationally conditioned emotions of the child).

Geertz borrowed Gilbert Ryle's concept of 'thick description' to characterise the essence of what it means to do ethnography (Geertz 1973:6). The object of ethnography is 'a stratified hierarchy of meaningful structures' in terms of which the phenomena studied are not only perceived and interpreted, but produced as cultural categories (ibid.p.7). The difference between 'thin' and 'thick' descriptions reveals the ethnographic object. A 'thin description' of a child reading the Qur'an in the mosque would limit itself to describing the movements and postures of the child and the sound of the reading, whereas a 'thick description' would disclose the situation as a recitational event (cf. Chapter 6). What makes a description 'thick' is the integration of *meaning* and *context* at a 'textual' level, distinguishable from 'discourse', understood as spoken language tied to particular events in life (Geertz 1973:20; Jackson 1997:33; Ricoeur 1971:530). The understanding of ethnography as 'inscribed social discourse' has some implications for ethnographic writing which will be discussed in section 2.5.

Deconstruction

The criticism of Geertz, especially by James Clifford (Clifford 1983; Clifford and Marcus 1986), has not been a criticism of how he 'did ethnography' in the field, but on how he 'wrote ethnography'. The core of the debate is equivalent to the core issue of anthropology — and to the philosophy of understanding: *how to represent others* without being tempted to impose our categories on them or pretending we think and feel like them (Bernstein 1983:94).

Geertz could hardly be criticised for being unaware of the problem of representation of other's representations (Rabinow 1986:250), since this is part of his own critical reflections (e.g. Geertz 1973:9; 1988:145). Because these critics, however, tend to define ethnography textually, not in a Ricoeurian sense but as a writing activity, their criticism is formulated within a framework of postmodern deconstruction.⁴ As expressed by Clifford '...one must bear in mind the fact that ethnography is from beginning to end enmeshed in writing. This writing includes, minimally, a translation of experience into textual form' (1983:120). Clifford and others not only aim at deconstructing monological ethnographic texts, but proclaim the necessity of an epistemological deconstruction (Clifford 1986; Crapanzano 1986; Dwyer 1986; Tyler 1986). Whether the critics have hit their target (e.g. Geertz's ethnographic writing), and whether they actually represent an alternative paradigm, will be discussed below. Responses to the critics will also be discussed (Geertz 1988; Wallman 1997), but first the main points in Clifford's criticism will be elaborated.

Clifford's main objection to Geertz's ethnography is his creation of a generalised author representing the others, for example 'the native point of view', 'the Balinese'. This happens because 'the research process is separated from the texts it generates and from the fictive world they are made to call upon' (Clifford 1983:132). By viewing cultures as assemblages of texts that can be interpreted as parts of a whole, cultures are constructed as meaningful coherent realities. In this sense Clifford's criticism is not only a criticism of Geertz's way of writing, but of his monological construction of 'worlds'. In Clifford's words:

It becomes necessary to conceive ethnography, not as the experience and interpretation of a circumscribed "other" reality, but rather as a constructive negotiation involving at least two, and

usually more, conscious, politically significant subjects. Paradigms of experience and interpretation are yielding to paradigms of discourse, of dialogue and polyphony (Clifford 1983:133).

How this has been transformed into actual doing and writing of this study will be discussed below.

Experiences and reflexivity

The criticism of Geertz by Clifford and others was that the complexity and inconsistency of the research process was hidden in a coherent and inclusive way of representing data. The consequence was that 'cultures' were presented as coherent wholes instead of as discursive complexities.' The deconstruction of these constructed 'wholes' has been the main point of the proponents of the alternative 'writing culture' approach. Clifford says: 'An alternative way of representing this discursive complexity is to understand the overall course of the research as an on-going negotiation' (1983:135).

In this present study negotiations took place at different levels. The researched presented *their* reflections on different issues and were confronted by responses and reflections by the researcher, and a continuous 'negotiation' in the form of increased reflexivity took place as part of the researcher's analysis and writing.⁶ At both levels the negotiations were part of the interpretation process, but whereas the interpretation at the first level was part of a communicative 'speech event', at the second level it was part of a textual communication (cf. Ricoeur 1971). The interlocutor of the ethnographic author is both the 'other' as the researched and the 'other' as audience.⁷ The challenge raised by Clifford and others is how to avoid letting the voice of the researcher at the stage of writing turn into an authoritative abstraction. This will be discussed further in the section on writing ethnography (2.5), but some examples from the fieldwork of this study will serve as a preliminary discussion of the relation between experience and reflexivity as part of the interpretation process.

Personal experiences of the researcher during the fieldwork period, especially in Pakistan where the degree of participation increased, 'disclosed' bodily experiences as parts of Norwegian Pakistani children's lifeworlds. These experiences were connected to sleeping and eating habits, social

communication, relations between grown ups and children, gender relations, praying etc. The bodily experiences of the researcher were sources of reflexivity that would have been unreachable without participant observation. The experiences of the researcher do not represent the experiences of the children (I did not feel or act like them; Geertz 1993:58), and the fact that 'I was there' is not used as an authoritative voice of knowledge, but my bodily and emotional experiences cannot be excluded from the knowledge generating and interpretation process.⁸ Despite criticism of participant observation as a method, Clifford admits that participant observation 'may be taken seriously if reformulated in hermeneutic terms as a dialectic of experience and interpretation' (1983:127). Because our body in itself is experience, and contains a pre-conceptual relation to the world, Merleau-Ponty talks about being-in-the-world as a kind of experience position which nobody can escape, not even in scientifically-based practice and orientation (Engelsrud 1995; Merleau-Ponty 1962). This underlines the importance of personal experience both as part of the research process and as part of the source of knowledge based on reflexivity.

Qualitative research is not a straightforward procedure from research design, through data gathering to data analysis and writing up. Ambiguities, uncertainties and shifts back and forth between the different research elements are not only to be accepted as part of the research process (Ely 1991:134), but are also sources for increased reflexivity. During the fieldwork there was a constant shift of positions and feelings: being a non-Muslim among Muslims, being a woman among men, being a grown-up among children, being a Norwegian speaking person among Urdu or Panjabi speakers etc., but also the feeling of being included: a woman among women, a friend among friends, a Norwegian among Norwegian Pakistanis. These experiences of my own shifting positions increased my awareness of the shifting positions of children. Bodily and emotional experiences became part of the hermeneutic reflexivity (cf Ricoeur's concept of 'concrete reflexivity', 1993:54).

To have children as the main respondents implied both practical, psychological, methodological and ethical considerations with regard to the issue of representation and power. First of all children were regarded as active partners in a socially constructed world. They were not studied as victims of external influences from parents, imams and schoolteachers etc., but as actors

in a multiplex world, influenced by and influencing others (Berger and Luckmann 1991 [1966]:78; Berentzen 1979:395; Gullestad 1989:21; Hundeide 1989:144). The *context* of their lives was focused, but also their *capacity* (Wallman 1997:245) within this context. In this pattern of co-action some power structures were, however, detected, like the power of political authorities, institutions, adults and 'majority' children (cf. Høgmo 1990:28).

The role of the researcher was also studied in a power perspective. I could not escape being an adult representing the majority 'ethnic' group, a teacher and an academic. At the same time I was a mother, a student of Urdu, a visitor who participated in meals, celebrations etc. Gradually I became 'Sissel', a person they knew, and whose role they accepted - with or without the tape recorder. An intimate and therapeutic role (being their 'helper') was easily at hand, but had to be avoided, not least because of the power structures implicit in this role (Ely 1991; Fog 1992). The issue of representation and power was part of the reflexivity aspect of the research process, including the writing process.

Theoretical foundation and grounded theory

In this thesis theories are applied in three different ways. First, *interpretive ethnography* as elaborated above forms the methodological paradigm underpinning the whole study. Secondly, a diversified set of theories are used as analytical 'tools' closely related to the process of clustering, codifying and interpreting empirical data, for example theories on ethnicity, lifestyle, culture, identity, purity-impurity, patterns of religion, socialisation (e.g. Barth 1969; Douglas 1971; Eliade 1971; Hannerz 1992; Hoem 1979; Gullestad 1989; Taylor 1991; Tajfel 1978; Wallman 1986). Since data gathering, analysis and theory all have reciprocal relationships with one another, they are 'grounded' in the sense that they were chosen because of their relevance to the area of study. They were not identified and fixed ahead of the study. These and other relevant theories will be presented as part of the analytic discussion in the respective chapters. Thirdly, a strictly grounded theory approach has been applied in the sense that a theory was inductively derived from the study itself (Glaser and Strauss 1967; cf. Chapter 8). A grounded theory in this sense is 'discovered, developed, and provisionally verified through systematic data collection and data pertaining to that phenomenon' (Strauss and Corbin 1990:23).

This theoretical positioning is closely linked to the choice of qualitative research methods, and the following section emphasises fieldwork methods not simply as the use of some specific techniques, but as an approach which embodied 'certain assumptions or understandings about the world, the people in it. research activity, and the relationships among these' (Addison 1992:111).⁹

2.3 Research design and fieldwork methods

Theoretical framing, research design, development of methodological 'tools', fieldwork, data analysis and writing were not separate phases following each other chronologically (cf. Bryman and Burgess 1994:2,217; Ely 1991:86). In respect of this study, the whole process was characterised by backward and forward movements, overlapping phases, reshaping of research design, reformulating of interview questions and an openness towards the possibility of changing the research focus. However, the research focus and the key questions of the research, as presented in the Introduction, were not changed dramatically during the process. The reason for this may be that both were clearly established within a familiar theoretical and methodological framework, and a tradition of previous research, for example, within RECP and WRERU, which served as 'model studies'. The initial period of research and the first meetings with the actors in the field were, however, decisive for designing this specific study as different from previous research. The study was also continually redesigned as part of the fieldwork and writing process (cf. Ely 1991:140). The form of the thesis does not mirror the actual overlapping phases of the research process, but this chapter on methodology will at least present the different elements of the research process as an 'overall ecosystem' (Miles and Huberman 1994:306).¹⁰ The main point in the following presentation of fieldwork methods is not so much to relate what was done (technically), but to reflect on why it was done. This reflexivity links fieldwork methods 'back' to the hermeneutical paradigm and 'forward' to data analysis.

Early in the research process, *time* and *confidence* were seen to be necessary factors for answering the questions for research (related to the question of reliability and validity; cf.2.4). The selected 'universe' for the field of research was Pakistani children in Oslo from the age of 8 to 15 years. Since a main concern of qualitative 'sampling'¹² is *information-richness* (Kozel 1992:43), a few children were selected, but a lot of time was spent with

them spread throughout a year. This was also done because religious and cultural traditions are closely connected to the rhythm of a year, and it would be essential both to observe children's participation in different festivals and to interview them close in time to these celebrations.

A long time-span was also important to give both the researcher and the children a chance to adjust or to attune to each other (cf. Rommetveit 1992:21) and to get beneath the surface of rhetoric. The subject for research in some ways 'invited' children and parents to present either a picture of themselves as 'good Muslims' or the opposite. Besides the time factor, confidence building was important to avoid over- and undercommunication of religious attitudes and practices. (Related ethical aspects will be discussed in section 2.7).

Access to the field

The issue of access was related to two 'fields', i.e. to get access to the Pakistani community (including their homes) and to get access to the world of children. Larson says: 'Few anthropologists use children as their primary source of information; for the most part, they have looked AT children rather than listened to them' (1990:22).

The fieldwork (1994 to 1995) took place in a period of increased negative focus on immigrant groups generally, and Muslims in particular, both within the Norwegian media and as part of political debate (cf. Eriksen 1995; Wikan 1995).¹³ This had created mistrust towards representatives of mainstream society in parts of the Pakistani community.¹⁴ To overcome mistrust, weight was put on confidence building by using personal contacts as 'gate-keepers' ¹⁵ instead of sending formal applications to schools or communities. An effective way of being accepted and trusted was to be introduced by respected persons within the community. To avoid a biased selection of informants, gate-keepers with different backgrounds and different networks were used.

To get to know the children it was important to be accepted and trusted by their parents (this attitude was also ethically based). For this reason the children were mostly interviewed in a family setting. Some researchers have underlined the importance of interviewing children outside their homes in order to have them speak more freely (e.g. Nesbitt 1995). Because of the character of

the research topic, it was, however, felt that more was gained than lost by gaining access to the families and by doing most of the interviews in the homes. Being in their homes also gave an opportunity for observation that otherwise would have been lost. This did not vitiate the importance of interviewing the children alone, without the attendance of parents or sisters or brothers. An aim of the research was to understand the role of Islam from the viewpoint of children. To achieve this, it was essential that the children felt confident enough to speak openly without being betrayed to authorities, parents or friends. They should feel free to express both anti-Islamic and pro-Islamic feelings, and be allowed to criticise parents and others, without being encouraged to do so. The researcher should in no way be regarded as a person interfering with the relationship between parents and children. Parents were, however, not allowed to listen to tapes or read transcripts of interviews with their children. After a one to one interview with a child, the themes that had been in focus for the interview might, however, be informally discussed afterwards with parents and the interviewee. In this way information was shared (cf.2.7) and respondents took part in the interpretation process (communicative validity, cf. 2.5).

In some families one to one interviewing was rather complicated, because of lack of space or lack of understanding of its importance. Parents and children were accustomed to communication situations where more people were present, and they felt more relaxed in an interview situation as similar to everyday life as possible. Besides being with the children in their homes, time was spent with them at school, in the mosques and in other social settings.

The fieldwork implied much personal involvement, and it was a constant struggle to move smoothly between nearness and distance, empathy and honesty (Geertz 1993 [1983]:58; Ely 1991:112; Repstad 1987:40). At the initial phase, no written formula concerning participation in a research project was presented, because it might have been found intimidating. Much time was, however, spent on sharing information, ideas and ethical reflections.¹⁶ This also included thoughts and feelings of a personal character on issues we had in common, such as sharing experiences of being mothers. For example, the family that was most difficult to gain access to, was the one that had its mother absent during the first weeks of the research (cf. Chapter 3). My profession as a teacher / educator and historian of religions, focusing on Islam, was a

motivating factor for parents to participate. They hoped the research would benefit Pakistani children in Oslo through greater knowledge among teachers.

A moderate knowledge of Urdu and the fact of having visited Pakistan on several occasions also contributed positively to good rapport. A 'border' was passed in their direction, yet at the same time my lack of competence compared to them was demonstrated. In particular, my attempts at speaking Urdu produced laughter throughout the process. Humour was a main ingredient in the creation of good rapport, and helped the researcher not to despair in the face of adversity (Ely 1991:134).

The combination of formal and informal (partly personal) aspects in the early meetings was not a deliberate strategy to use emotions in order to achieve information, but was a combination of a culturally adjusted way of communication (for example, taking into consideration hierarchical structures within most South Asian contexts, cf. Tylor 1973; Kakar 1981) and a recognition of the communicative, participatory and asymmetric relationship between researcher and researched within a qualitative approach (Fog 1984:30; 1992:6; Lilleaas 1995:34). The necessary balance between distance and nearness was related to psychological as well as methodological (cf. the discussion of experience and reflexivity above) and ethical factors (cf. 2.7).

To choose families as the main social arena was not only a question of confidence building, but was founded on an approach that focuses on religion as rooted in practical concerns of everyday life (Berger 1990 [1967]:41) and as a cultural system (Geertz 1973:87). Another argument for a family-based approach lies in the role of the family in the Indian/Pakistani way of life (Kakar 1981:113) and the way in which the family is often regarded as the basis of Islamic society (Dahl 1992:49; Sarwar 1980:165). The fieldwork was not limited to the home arena, but had the home arena as its base both for methodological and theoretical reasons. For me, as a religious education specialist, this implied a conscious shift from a pupil-oriented to a child-oriented approach.

Five families were selected, according to religious and socio-economic criteria, in order to illustrate the variety within the Pakistani community in Oslo (cf. Chapters 1 and 3). The character of this variety was discussed with the gatekeepers and other key informants before selecting the families. The

'sample' will be more fully discussed in the next chapter. To supplement the data from the five selected families, other children, especially at the Qur'an schools, and 'significant others' such as imams, Qur'an school teachers and school teachers were interviewed and observed.

Formal and informal interviews and diaries

Most members of the five families were interviewed, formally and informally. Three different forms of interviewing were used (in addition to spontaneous conversations): informal interviews, formal semi-structured interviews (Cohen and Manion 1989:307ff), focused interviews (Jackson and Nesbitt 1993:17). (Cf. below and appendix E). At least two interviews with each respondent¹⁷ child were taped and transcribed. Notes from informal interviews and observation data were written down as soon as possible after the visits. Family members were accompanied to different activities in which they participated, both in religious contexts (e.g. at the mosques), and in secular contexts (e.g. at school or physical training).

Informal interviews were difficult to distinguish from everyday conversation, and often the one turned into the other and vice versa. The interviewee might not even be aware that an interview was taking place (Spradley 1979:58). The challenge in conducting an interview was not to remember the interview guide, but to develop the ability to listen and to follow up inputs and initiatives from the respondents (Kvale 1989 b). (Cf. below about analysing interviews as oral conversation and as text.)

Jackson and Nesbitt developed a method of using *focused interviews* in their research among Hindu and Sikh children (Jackson and Nesbitt 1993; Nesbitt 1995). Slides were made of the actual children in the community and these were used as a starting point of conversation. Because of negative attitudes to representational pictures within Islam, I decided not to take photographs as part of the field work.¹⁸ The use of photographs from a book on Islam was chosen as an alternative way of performing focused interviews.¹⁹ This was a method well adjusted to children because the starting point was a concrete picture which allowed the child to provide a description of the concrete or to elaborate further, using abstract thinking, comparing, arguing or expressing emotions. Whereas the RECP material based on focused interviews led to a better understanding of the community level of tradition, the focused interviewing of this study was a method to achieve better understanding of the

children's attitudes to, and knowledge about, Islam at a general level. The use of photographs contributed to a contextualisation of their perceptions of, and reflections on, Islam (cf. 2.2 on meaning and context).

In addition to being interviewed, the children were at times asked to write diaries. Some were asked to do this before Christmas time, some before and during *Ramadan*. These diaries were primarily used as a starting point for informal interviewing, but were also analysed as written material (cf. Jackson and Nesbitt 1993:17). The individual variations were great when it came to the content and form of these diaries (for examples see Chapter 6).

Participant observation as experience and interpretation

With reference to meaning as not only that which is verbalised but also expressed in action and practices (Addison 1992:111), participant observation was the most effective all-round method, not least with regard to observation of Islamic practices in 'natural' situations. Social actions were contextually interpreted, i.e. their meanings were deciphered, through participant observation or a combination of participant observation and interviewing (cf. the sub-section on multiple methods strategy in 2.4).

The experience of being a participant observer was mainly characterised by a constant shift between insider and outsider positions, or by having both experiences simultaneously (Spradley 1980:57). The awareness of these shifting positions led to an increased reflexivity. I involved myself in informants' family life by sharing meals, gossip, secrets, but did not 'go native', for example, in the sense of adopting Pakistani clothing. Likewise, I showed respect for Islam, but never participated in prayers or pretended I was interested in becoming a Muslim. My interest in Islam was occasionally misunderstood in that direction, especially by children. When answering direct questions from children, I learned the importance of balancing openness and vagueness, in order not to hurt their feelings (Bogdewic 1992:51). Having children as respondents or informants required a special attention to methodological and ethical considerations (cf. Larson 1990:22; discussed further in 2.6).

A recurrent theme in talks and interviews with children and parents was their relationship to relatives in Pakistan (cf. Chapters 3 and 6). These relatives

were in different ways present in the lifeworlds of the children, either as someone they remembered from a recent visit or someone they talked to on the telephone or often talked about. As a part of the research process, one family was joined on their holiday trip to relatives in Lahore during June/July 1995 and families in a village in Gujrat were also visited.²⁰ The aim of the fieldwork in Pakistan was to observe Norwegian Pakistani children in a new setting: as part of the extended family (cf. Larson 1990:23).

This period turned out to be of special interest, not only in obtaining data²¹ on children's behaviour and attitudes, but to give new perspectives on general methodological issues, like the gender issue, bodily experiences as sources of knowledge and affective and cognitive aspects of the research process. Since the two last mentioned aspects were dealt with in the previous section, some aspects of being a female researcher among Muslims will be discussed next.

Gender aspects of doing fieldwork

Gender was an aspect taken into consideration in all phases of this study (cf. Melhuus, Rudie, Solheim 1992:12), but it was felt especially relevant during the fieldwork in Oslo and in Pakistan. For example, gender raised questions in terms of the following: the effect of the gender of the researcher on the research; the gender roles of the people being researched; and gender as related to Islamic practice. The different roles of mothers and fathers in the process of gaining access to families has already been mentioned. The fathers, and their brothers and male friends, were often discussion partners and key informants in a much broader sense than merely giving information about their own family. When both men and women were present, I often found myself sitting with the men. The mothers were, however, the ones who opened up for the deeper, personal contact of inner family life.²² Being a female researcher gave me the advantage of having access to both the male and the female sphere (although the inner male circles were closed).

In Pakistan, with a stronger practising of the *pardah* system, these tendencies were strengthened. In female settings, in Oslo or in Pakistan, I was a woman among other women. In settings dominated by men there was a difference between being in one of the participant families or being with strangers. With strangers I felt I was regarded as a non-gendered person, i.e.

status was given priority. Gender was not absent from the role of researcher, but it made a difference if the interviewees looked at me as a female researcher or as just a female member of the family or a female friend. A conscious shift of positions was necessary to avoid negative aspects of personal involvement (cf. the discussion of experience and reflexivity).

How to get out of the field

The problem of getting out of the field concerns both the need to withdraw from time to time during the fieldwork period (cf Wikan's explanation for why she preferred *not* to stay with her informants; 1976:22), and the question of when and how to finalise the data gathering period. In Oslo I had the opportunity to go home - taking care of my own family was regarded as an acceptable reason for withdrawing. However, doing fieldwork at home place creates other problems, such as how to finally leave the field without hurting people. By contrast, the fieldwork situation in Pakistan gave neither space nor opportunity for being alone.²

There was also a feeling of personal ambiguity about leaving the field. It was important to stop collecting material ('enough is enough', Ely 1991:158) and formally to leave - in order to have 'distance' during the writing period (cf. below). On the one hand, it was a relief not having to make appointments, and not having to be away from my own family on numerous evenings and at weekends. On the other hand, I missed being with some of the families, not knowing what was happening to them, what they were doing etc.²⁴

2.4 Qualitative data analysis

As stated above, the distinction between research design, fieldwork, data analysis and ethnographic writing were not four stages in a one-way process, but interlinked aspects of qualitative research as an 'overall ecosystem' (Miles and Huberman 1994:306). It might be useful though to distinguish between analysis in the field and analysis after data collection (Bryman and Burgess 1994:7), and some distinctions between the two phases of interpretation will be highlighted below.

According to the hermeneutical paradigm of this study (cf 2.2), interpretation is a presupposition for understanding. This implies among other things that there is no interpretation free or 'clean' material. In most literature on qualitative research methods the term 'data' is therefore used synonymously

with 'material' (e.g. Strauss and Corbin 1990:21). Johansen, however, restricts 'data' to mean 'knowledge which is put in an order to make it comparable to another knowledge' (Johansen 1981:6, my translation). This is done to differentiate between observation and data. Johansen says 'To put observations together as data is therefore not only to put them together or put them in layers, but to interpret them' (1981:7; my translation). This is in accordance with the interpretive approach of this study. No doubt, there is an after-fieldwork (or after-data-gathering) period of doing ethnography, but interpretation is not limited to this phase. By 'writing down', the ethnographer, inscribes the flow of social discourse through interpretation (Geertz 1973:20; cf.2.2).

The principles that have informed the data analysis of this study are: contextualisation, multiple methods strategy, coding and conceptualisation. These principles informed the analysis as part of fieldwork and as an after-fieldwork activity. The following discussion will relate to both phases, and aims at exposing how the 'voluminous, unstructured and unwieldy data' were analysed (Bryman and Burgess 1994:216).

Contextualisation

Actions, activities or meanings as social phenomena can not be analysed without taking the context or the setting into consideration (Geertz 1973:9; Miles and Hubennann 1994:102; cf. 2.2 on meaning and context). This was an essential part of the interpretation process as part of the fieldwork (data analysis as an aspect of data collection), but was also a principle for data analysis at a later stage. Every utterance or action was contextualised by asking when did this happen, where, who was present etc.

In addition to the actual setting (when - where - who), contextualisation also meant including the three levels of Islam mentioned above (2.1): the individual level, the community level and the international level. Contextualisation implied more than describing what was going on 'there and then'. It implied taking the whole lifeworld of the children into account in order to understand a particular situation. Contextualisation is in this sense linked to the relation of parts and wholes (cf.2.5) and may be seen as an implementation of the hermeneutic circle (Bernstein 1983:95). The question is not *whether* to contextuatise. but *how* to do it and how to decide which contexts are the most relevant in the actual situation. In Geertz' words, the task of the

anthropologist is to engage in 'a continuous dialectical tacking between the most local of local detail and the most global of global structure in such a way as to bring them into simultaneous view' (1993 [1983]:69).

The analytical principle of contextuality can be related to the interpretation of interviews in two ways, i.e. as external and internal contextualisation (cf. the different types of interviews presented in 2.3 and the hermeneutical distinction between oral discourse and text explained in 2.2). External contextualisation means regarding the setting of the interview as relevant to the interpretation of what was said. Internal contextualisation means emphasizing the *sequence of utterances* and the interplay of interviewer and interviewee as decisive factors in the reconstruction of the actors' point of view. This should be understood not as shortcut answers to fixed questions, but as a *flow of reflections* in a dialogical situation (cf. Kvale 1997; Luckmann 1992). The principle of sequential analysis of interviews as dialogue is contrasted to the principle of concentration of meaning, i.e. making long sequences more condensed (Kvale 1997:174). Both methods of analysing interviews have been applied in this study and will be illustrated through different types of quotations and codifications (see below). Finally, it should be noted that the reliability / credibility of qualitative research is to a large extent founded in the contextualisation of data (Ely 1991:95; Miles and Huberman 1994: 38).

Multiple methods strategy

The term 'multiple methods strategy' expresses the variation and deliberate combination of different qualitative methods: making field notes, tape recording interviews, listening to tapes and reading transcriptions of interviews, comparisons, text analysis (e.g. children's diaries), network analysis, documentary analysis (the Qur'an, Islamic textbooks for children, curricula etc.), use of photographs. The validity of this study was increased by analysing the same phenomena (e.g. fasting) through different channels or perspectives (facilitated by a multiple methods strategy) and by continually questioning the interpretation (Zyzanski *et al* 1992:234; Kvale 1989b:80). A valid interpretation was reached through combining different methods and through consulting the researched themselves with regard to the interpretation (communicative or respondent validity). As Kvale says: An ideal interview may be considered as one interpreted - with the interpretations verified and

communicated - in the interview situation' (1989 a:80). A presupposition for this communicative or respondent validity is confidence and openness in the relationship between researcher and the researched (cf. section 2.3).

Whereas triangulation is used to check findings against each other (Bryman and Burgess 1994:222), often by combining quantitative and qualitative methods, the focus of a 'multiple methods strategy' is on meaning and understanding and not on checking reliability (Smith 1996:10). Other researchers use the term triangulation (Ely 1991) or 'neo-triangulation' (Wu 1995) within a qualitative research paradigm in the same sense as 'multiple methods strategy' is applied here. Ely says: 'Many experts indicate that triangulation characteristically depends on the convergence of data gathered by different methods, such as observation and interview. We have found that triangulation can occur with data gathered by the same method but gathered over time' (1991: 97). The time-dimension as part of a multiple methods strategy is also essential for this study (cf.2.3). To avoid the association of triangulation with cross-checking, the term 'multiple methods strategy' is preferred.

Coding and conceptualisation

'Analysis is a search for patterns' (Spradley 1980:85), and a main tool for discovering patterns, or finding cultural themes, is 'categorisation', to use Spradley's terminology, i.e. categorisations of meanings as part of *domain analysis* (see below).²⁵ However, since the approach of this study is within *interpretive ethnography*, and therefore not related to the cognitive approach of Spradley, the terms 'coding' and 'conceptualisation' have been found more consistent with the actual process of the study. The idea of categorisations as tools for *discovering* cultural patterns might **be** thought to suggest that these patterns are fixed and reified entities which could be technically 'found' without being interpreted. 'Coding' is, however, a way of structuring complex data and at the same time implies analysis. As Miles and Huberman put it (1994:56), 'Codes are tags or labels for assigning units of meaning to the descriptive or inferential information compiled during a study. Codes usually are attached to the "chunks" of varying size — word, phrases, sentences, or whole paragraphs, connected or unconnected to a specific setting'. In this study 'coding' meant conceptualising data or assigning units of meaning, either by experience-near or experience-distant concepts (see below). The emergence

of the theoretical complex 'purity-impurity' started, for example, with respondents' own coding of some feelings and situations as '*pale* (clean, pure) (cf. Chapter 5). Other data, for instance within the areas of food or dress, were then found to belong to the same complex of ideas and were coded as pure or impure. Coded data were then clustered (e.g. all purity-impurity codifications, and all time and space codifications) and analysed with the help of relevant theories (cf. 2.2). The theoretical complexes which emerged were thus based on the clustering of coded data. Finally, comparisons and links were drawn from one clustering type, i.e. from one theoretical complex, to another.²⁶

A method much applied in analysing data was the combination of 'experience-near' and 'experience-distant' concepts (cf. Geertz [1983] 1993:57; Jackson 1993; 1997; Jackson and Nesbitt 1993; Nesbitt 1995). This method illustrates what is typical for an interpretive approach compared to an ideal of empathy and compared to Spradley's Developmental Research Sequence method (D.R.S). As discussed in the section on Meaning and Context (2.2), the aim of an interpretive approach is not to plunge into other people's way of thinking and feeling through empathy. Firstly, because empathy is regarded as unachievable (it is an illusion to believe that the researcher can overcome the 'otherness' of her/his respondents), and secondly, because it is insufficient to achieve the researcher's goals (the aim of research is not to 'go native' but to communicate an understanding through interpretation) (cf. 2.2). This does not imply, however, an exclusion of empathy from an interpretive approach, for example, as a consequence of interpretations. Rather, Geertz's recommendation of a conscious shift between an insider and outsider position is aimed at, and is reflected in, the method of combining experience-near and experience-distant concepts.

A rather similar approach within cognitive anthropology is found in relating folk terms to analytic terms (Spradley 1980:103). The aim is to construct categories of meaning or, in Spradley's terminology, to construct cultural domains. The reason why Spradley's Developmental Research Sequence method (D.R.S) is not applied systematically in this study will be discussed below. His description of domain analysis has, however, been useful, and aspects of the prescribed sequence and terminology within D.R.S (domain analysis, taxonomic analysis, componential analysis, theme analysis) may be detected in the framework for analysis in Chapter 5, 6 and 7. The term

'read the Qur'an' may serve as an example. This is what the children themselves called one of their activities, i.e. it is an experience-near concept or, in Spradley's terminology, a *cover term* including other terms like: attending a Qur'an class in the mosque, reading the Qur'an at home every morning, recitation as part of prayers. A *componential analysis* of each of the *included terms* brought to light attributes as what to wear, how to sit etc. A *taxonomic analysis* discovered the relationship between categories/domains, such as reading the Qur'an, praying, clothing, fasting etc. *Cultural themes* were consequently found, such as male-female relations, purity-impurity relations, time-space relations, formal and informal learning.

Related to a domain analysis, but closer to the method of shifting between experience-near and experience-distant concepts, is what Olesen *et al* call *dimensional analysis* (Olesen *et al* 1994:111). The dimensions are the categories into which respondents' *first-order statements* (cp. experience-near concepts) are put, and by which one moves up a level on a scale of abstraction and generalisation. An example from my study will illustrate the move from a first-order statement to a *dimension*. 'Go to the aunt's place' was an experience-near concept or a first-order statement (cf. Chapter 7). It was children's way of telling me that they regularly read the *Qur'an* (as good • Muslims are supposed to do), but also, by emphasising that the activity took place at their aunt's place, undercommunicated the religious aspects of the practice. A first-order statement, e.g. 'going to the aunt's place', is by Olesen *et al* moved to a higher abstract level, a dimension, e.g. the dimension 'reading the Qur'an'. In this thesis there is a conscious shift throughout the study between the use of experience-near concepts like 'going to the aunt's place' or 'going to the mosque' and experience-distant concepts like 'Islamic nurture'. The one should not substitute, but rather supplement, the other. The last phase of dimensional analysis is, according to Olesen *et al*, to compile dimensions into analytical schemes and, if possible, to generate theories. The Chapters 5, 6 and 7 of this thesis represent dimensions compiled into analytical schemes or, as termed in this thesis, *theoretical complexes*.²⁷

The analytical process, as described by Spradley and by Olesen *et al*, seems too much of a one-way process when compared to the experiences of this study.²⁸ The process of codification and conceptualisation was a dialectical and creative process. It was dialectical because codification and

clustering of data immediately led to a search for relevant theory which in turn contributed to further codification, clustering and conceptualisation. Codification was not a tool of interpretation applied *after* the data collection, but was present at each phase of the study from designing the research to the writing of the thesis. Codification was part of the communicative discourse between researcher and the researched (cf. next chapter's discussion of everyday discourse and conceptual traps) and it was the main tool for analysis of inscribed social actions as texts (Geertz 1973:19; Ricoeur 1971:532). The analytic process was not always a systematic step-by-step procedure, but had the character of being a creative and unpredictable process (cf. Geertz 1988:8). This was characteristic of the clustering of coded data into themes (for example 'food and fasting') and the final identification of the three theoretical complexes (see Chapters 5, 6, 7). The creative aspects of qualitative data analysis are clearly linked to the issue of ethnographic writing which will be discussed in the next section. This discussion will again focus on the 'writing culture' debate introduced at the beginning of this chapter, but now more directly related to the writing of this thesis. The problems of representation, power, authority, parts and wholes will be raised. However, before this, some clarifications concerning reliability, validity and generalisability within qualitative research will be made.

Reliability, validity and generalisability

According to Miles and Huberman (1994:262ff) there are no canons or decision rules in qualitative research to decide whether findings are reliable and valid, but the following 'tactics' are recommended for testing and confirming findings:

- checking for representativeness
- checking for researcher effects
- triangulation
- weighting the evidence
- checking the meaning of outliers
- using extreme cases
- following up surprises
- looking for negative evidence
- making if-then tests
- getting feedback from informants

These tactics are very similar to the methods described by Brody (1992:177ff) for seeking trustworthiness in qualitative research: triangulation, thick description, reflexivity, member checking, and searching for disconfirmations.

Modified forms of these tactics or methods (some termed slightly different) are traceable within this study, but they will not be treated systematically as a kind of checking-list. Discussion of *reliability*, *validity* and *generalisability*, concepts originally belonging to a quantitative research paradigm, has in this study been integrated into the methodological discussion of research design, methods, data analysis and writing and will also be integrated into relevant parts of the rest of the thesis. It is the quality of the study (with regard to *what* is studied, *why* and *how*) that is decisive for 'checking the credibility of knowledge claims, of ascertaining the strength of the empirical evidence and the plausibility of the interpretations' (Kvale 1989:78). If the theoretical framework, the research design, the research methods and the analysing procedures are sound, the findings are reliable. The study is valid if interpretations are continually questioned, theorised, communicated and negotiated with the research participants — and if new knowledge is generated (Kvale 1989:90). The generalisability of the findings is not grounded in representativeness and sampling, but depends on the quality of conceptualisation, coherence of arguments and the depth of the analysis (including referential and grounded theory). Validity is connected to the theoretical conception of the phenomena investigated (ibid.p.82), i.e. in this study it is inseparably linked to the grounding of the research design within an interpretive ethnographic approach, and to the development of a theory of social reality.

The discussion of trustworthiness and credibility within interpretive ethnography has changed its focus from being a discussion of methods and style 'out there' (in the field) to a discussion of what is going on 'here', i.e. focusing on ethnography as writing (cf. Geertz 1988). This topic will be elaborated in the next section, establishing a link between the discussion of ethnographic interpretation (cf. 2.2) and ethnographic writing, all in the context of writing this study.

2.5 Writing ethnography and writing a monograph

One critical point of ethnographic writing is how to transform a complex research-process-oriented (or researcher-oriented) experience into an appropriate 'they-presentation'. The discussion above has shown how this issue has changed from being a technically oriented task (how to get "their" lives into "our" works; Geertz 1988:130) to an epistemological challenge ('What happens to reality when it is shipped abroad?'; *ibid.*:131). Writing a thesis, for example, differs in many ways from writing an ethnographic monograph, but the core epistemological issues are the same; for example, what happens to the complex social reality of Pakistani children when transformed into a book?

Representation and power; text and communication

As stated in the section on interpretation (2.2), the postmodern criticism of ethnographic writing focused on what was perceived as a discrepancy between actual research processes and writing style. These ideas were launched as representing an alternative paradigm of doing ethnography and perceiving culture(s), of which the main concern was the contesting of culture as a coherent and essentialised entity, and the contesting of the authoritative ethnographer. As Clifford says: 'Experiential, interpretive, dialogical, and polyphonic processes are at work, discordantly, in any ethnography. But coherent presentation presupposes a controlling mode of authority' (1983:142). Based on feminism and the perspective of the 'halfies'²⁹, Abu-Lughod recommended anthropologists not only to contest culture, but to write *against* culture in order to break with the culture concept as marked by 'coherence, timelessness and discreteness' (1991:147). Feminism and the insights of 'halfies' offer, according to Abu-Lughod, alternative perspectives on the relationship between self and the other. Feminism has highlighted the *oppression* of the self by the other (i.e. hierarchical structures attached to the representation of 'others'), whereas the position of halfies illustrates the *permeability of the borders* between the other and the self. By focusing on individuals and particularities, Abu-Lughod wants to disturb the culture concept and emphasise similarities in our lives. Dwyer, in his Moroccan dialogues, went even further by limiting his presentation to one informant (1982).

The approach of this study is, however, in line with Geertz, Waltman and

other critics of the so-called deconstructive paradigm (Jackson 1997). The problem of representation and power is seen as inseparably linked to doing and writing ethnography. We need to ask, in Wallman's words, 'representations of what, by whom and to what end?' (Wallman 1997:244). Representations are always simplifications of reality, but such simplifications are necessary in order to communicate to an audience. The ethnographic writer functioning in this role as 'an intending communicator' is a necessity (ibid. p.245). She/he starts 'negotiations' by applying simplifications or metaphors already known to her/his audience (ibid.: 245). 'The intending communicator' is the ethnographer *who writes down*, i.e. who inscribes social discourse by interpretation (Geertz 1973:19). The problem of representation cannot be avoided by emulating Dwyer, but has to be made explicit in the way of writing. Firstly, the others/the researched should be presented both as representing a group/groups and as individuals (Jackson 1997). Secondly, the researcher should be present in the text as an actor and an author, not only as an authorised abstraction.

In this study, individual voices of children are presented, combined with collective representations, as a counter-strategy to a presentation of a falsely coherent and inclusive account of Pakistani children as a group (cf Abu-Lughod 1993:25) and thereby also to avoid the pitfall of 'cultural fundamentalism' (Wikan 1995:46; cp .Baumann 1995; Eriksen 1994) or reification (Geertz 1973:11) in the study of minority children. The attempt to 'let the voices of children' be heard, may otherwise either lead to a simplified presentation where the interpretation of the researcher is concealed, or may lead to an over-interpretation where the experience-near concepts and emotions of children are lost in the writing process. It is the combination of experience-near and experience-distant concepts (of *emot* and *etic* perspectives; Miles and Hubermann 1994:61) which characterises interpretive ethnography.

Asymmetrical relations between the researcher and the researched have been discussed relating to the fieldwork period, but the topic is also relevant within a writing context. The question is how to avoid the 'intending communicator' being transformed into a writer who misuses her power and authority. How does one communicate the complexity of the world of Pakistani children to an audience and at the same time make the work consistent and coherent? The strategy chosen here is consistent with the hermeneutical framework of the study: to move between experience-near and

experience-distant concepts, between an insider and outsider position, between exposing the researcher as an acting subject among other subjects and an authoritative writer, between 'parts' and 'wholes'. It is in this respect that the mode of data analysis (and consequently, the mode of writing) of this study differs from the one offered, for example, by Spradley (1979;1980). Although the use of 'folk terms' is part of Spradley's domain analysis (cf. the discussion in 2.4), no methods or strategies of writing are offered to insure that the voices of the researched and the voice of the researcher are heard. The concept of 'folk terms' is used more like a first step on a scale to analytic abstractions than as part of a dialectical interpretive process. The same criticism, but to a lesser degree, can be raised against Olesen *et al* in their transforming of first-order statements to a higher level of abstraction.

The hermeneutic circle has already been discussed as part of the interpretation process. As for writing, the challenge was how to make it transparent in terms of the writing style and structure of the thesis. The study operates with two types of 'wholes': the complex lifeworlds of children, i.e. the study of contexts (Wallman 1997:246), and the 'wholes' understood as theoretical complexes. The parts, e.g. particular individual expressions can, accordingly, be related to two kinds of 'wholes'. This is made transparent in the structure of the study in the following way. First, a link is established between the contextual whole and parts understood as individual voices (from the immigration history of the Pakistani community in Oslo via family biographies to children's self-presentations). Secondly, another link is made within each of the three following chapters, from interpretation of particular symbols (stories, rituals, institutions), via coding and clustering, to interpretations of complexes of symbols (cf. the section on data analysis). This is in accordance with the semiotic approach of the study, i.e. aiming at an interpretation of the meaning of social actions as signs (cf. 2.2; Jackson 1997:33). The last chapter aims at combining the two trajectories of 'parts and wholes' and thereby generating empirically based theory on Islamic nurture related to identity management. The study can be classified as ethnographic writing in the sense of being a textual communication of the complexity of Pakistani children's lifeworlds, but differs from ethnographic writing as art, in a Geertzian sense (1988), by being rather a piece of academic craft.

2.6 Ethical guidelines

In the discussion above, the linkages between ethical and methodological issues have been emphasised, for example, in the discussion of distance and nearness and representation and power. Some additional ethical aspects will be summarised briefly in this section. The issues are of a general character, but will be especially related to the challenges of having children as key respondents (cf. 2.2)

There were ethical aspects associated with the effect of the researcher's presence, regardless of this presence being positively or negatively evaluated by the researched themselves (cf. Nesbitt 1998). On the one hand, Islam was given status through the main interest of the research and this focus may have enhanced the Islamic dimension in children's lives.³⁰ On the other hand, the presence of a Norwegian, secular and non-Muslim researcher in their lives made them more personally acquainted with the world of mainstream society, and may have enhanced the influence from school, Norwegian friends and the media. The particular ethical guidelines considered now are as follows: *honesty in communication, trustworthiness in writing, confidentiality and the sharing of reflections and ideas.*

Honesty in the communication situation

More important than verbal honesty (to say what is meant), was the importance of being emotionally honest.³¹ This was of ethical importance, but was also experienced as the attitude that brought the best research results (Bogdewic 1992:51). Honesty is related to the subjectivity-objectivity complex of qualitative research and to the problem of representation and power in respect of the role of the researcher (cf. 2.6). In Ely's words: 'I do believe that by recognizing and acknowledging our own myths and prejudices, we can more effectively put them in their place. I also believe that greater self-knowledge can help us to separate our thoughts and feelings from those of our research participants, to be less judgmental, and to appreciate experiences that deviate greatly from our own' (Ely 1991:122).

However, verbal and emotional honesty did not vitiate the importance of vagueness or silence (cf. 2.2), especially in direct communication with children. The ethical guideline of honesty had to be balanced with an imperative not to harm either individual children or their families.

Trustworthiness in writing

Honesty in the communication situation is related to trustworthiness in analysing and writing (Kvale 1997; Lincoln and Cuba 1985). The challenge of being honest in rendering informants' perspectives, and honest in exposing the analytical process, was discussed above as a methodological issue. The life-world of Pakistani children is rendered, in the specific genre of a monograph, as a constructed lifeworld (Berger and Luckmann 1966; Geertz 1973; Clifford 1986). A story is told and this story is situated, i.e. it has both a teller and an audience (Abu-Lughod 1993:15; Geertz 1988:8-9; Wallman 1997:244). The ethical claim, however, remains that the respondent children and their parents would recognise the descriptive part of the text as a description of their world (cf. *respondent validity*, Miles and Hubermann 1994:275; Walsh 1998:231).

Confidentiality

Confidentiality has not only been ensured by technically changing personal names and names of places as part of the writing process, but by being aware of the confidentiality issue during the data collection process as well. Because the Pakistani community in Oslo is relatively small (cf. Chapter 1), and because of the character of social networks, there have occasionally been some difficulties in disguising my contacts. None of the families was informed about other families and a deliberate vagueness concerning numbers as to how many families participated etc. was maintained. Confidentiality was achieved by having a broader network of contacts in the Pakistani community than the respondent families. Likewise, the respondents knew that all the mosques dominated by Pakistanis were visited, but they were not told which ones were represented in the study. However, individuals could not of, course, be prevented from revealing to others that they had been interviewed or visited by a researcher.

Sharing reflections and ideas with respondents and informants

The families were promised that no information from the research would be published in the media or given to school teachers or representatives of political authorities without their approval. They were, however, not promised the opportunity to read papers intended for an academic audience (e.g. to read the original doctoral thesis on which this study is based before submission). Our agreement was that the main findings would be discussed with them during the research process.

The sharing of reflections and ideas with respondents and informants has been the ethical basis for this study. In this way both parents and children have participated, not only in the data production process, but in the reflective part of the research - though without necessarily agreeing with, or being responsible for, the conclusions drawn.

2.7 Conclusion

Whereas Chapter 1 conveyed the empirical context of the study, this chapter has conveyed its methodological framework including theoretical underpinning and ethical reflections. Methodological aspects of all phases of the process have been considered, and not only as a legitimization of the methods used for data collection. Questions of theory, method and ethics are closely interwoven at all stages, and the stages themselves have not been presented as strictly separated.

In addition to being a theoretical starting point for the study, decisive for designing the research with regard to focus and methods, Geertz's theoretical reflections and methods have been influential throughout the interpretation process.³² Not least through incorporating some of the criticisms made of Geertz (cf. 2.2) and his response (Geertz 1988), this study's interpretive ethnographic approach has been strengthened and sharpened.

¹ This does not imply support for all aspects of Geertz's theories, cf. the discussion on ethnicity in Chapter 4.

² This study distinguishes between the concepts late-modern and postmodern in the sense that postmodern implies a theoretical position, whereas late-modern is a time indicator. Cf. endnote 4.

³ This study deviates from other CRP studies by not being a local case study.

⁴ Anthropological deconstructivism is largely inspired and influenced by postmodern theories within literature, linguistics and philosophy, e.g. Jean-Francois Lyotard, Jacques Derrida, Michel Foucault, Fredric Jameson, Pierre Bourdieu, Richard Rorty (Clifford 1986:4-5; Fischer 1986:194; Rabinow 1986:247).

⁵ Cf. the discussion of Baumann's concept of culture in Chapter 4.

⁶ For a discussion of the contribution of ethnographic research to participants' own reflexivity, see Nesbitt 1998.

⁷ Interestingly, for the development of ethnographic writing, those people who

find themselves being researched are increasingly a part of the audience for such research. Cf. Geertz 1988:148.

⁸ The personal pronoun 'I', instead of 'the researcher', will only be applied in contexts where it is of importance to underline the presence of the researcher as subject.

⁹ Addison summarises these assumptions and their implications for conducting research in five points of which the most essential is that participants of research are *meaning-giving beings*. Meaning is not only that which is verbalised, but is expressed in action and everyday practices. He says: 'Meanings are not limited to pre-established categories. Meaning is being negotiated constantly in ongoing interactions. Meaning changes over time, in different contexts and for different individuals' (ibid.p.112). He also underlines that an objective, value-free position from which to evaluate the truth of the matter cannot be achieved (cf. the hermeneutic paradigm of the thesis).

¹⁰ References are deliberately made to a wide range of qualitative research approaches, Ely (1991) and Miles and Huberman (1994) are examples which may be placed on each end of the spectrum (cf Ely 1991: 95).

¹¹ This includes all classes in the Norwegian primary and lower secondary school system, except class 1, and was felt more appropriate to a Norwegian setting than the age group 8-13 chosen by Jackson and Nesbitt (1993). Due to the family focus, some elder and younger siblings were included in the material.

¹² The term 'sample' is put in commas because it is actually a statistical term that should be avoided in a qualitative research context (Miles and Huberman 1994:28). The sample of this study may be termed 'purposive sampling' because the researcher handpicked the cases on the basis of their typicality within the Pakistani community (Cohen and Manion 1980:103).

¹³ During the main year of fieldwork I did not participate in any public debate on issues like immigration, racism or discrimination, to avoid the role as 'their defender' or to support some groups and offend others.

¹⁴ Another type of mistrust could be traced back to internal factors, like scepticism among the *Tablighis* (cf. Chapter 1).

¹⁵ In Norwegian the term 'door-openers' is used, a term which expresses their actual function in this context.

¹⁶ This was a necessary process leading to the acceptance or rejection of the invitation to be part of the research.

¹⁷ A respondent is a person giving information about her/himself, whereas an informant gives broader and more general information about a subject or about others. Informants may be key-informants if they give very important information, or if they are regular sources for information (Repstad 1987). The term 'respondent' is within this study limited to the members of the five families. The respondent children are, however, mostly termed as 'the children' in recognition of their active participation in the research process.

¹⁸ During the fieldwork period in Pakistan, however, photos were taken. This was not uncomplicated, but easier for two reasons: I knew the family very well and it was more acceptable to bring a camera as a 'tourist' in a foreign country.

¹⁹ Pictures were copied from Thorley 1982.

²⁰ The district of Gujrat is situated between Lahore and Rawalpindi and is to be distinguished from (Indian) Gujarat. I had more invitations, but chose to stay with a family with whom I was well acquainted, Because of temperatures of up to 50 degrees Celsius, it was no disadvantage either, that one room in their house had air conditioning (Østberg 1996).

²¹ For a discussion of the terms 'material' and 'data', cf. section 2.4

²² Mothers had generally less Norwegian language competence than the fathers. This did not, however, hinder good rapport.

²³ The only time available for writing field-notes was early in the morning while the men went for prayer or to work, the women were doing housework and the children were still asleep.

²⁴ Because of my future career prospects and the possibility of a follow-up study, it was also in my interests to keep in touch with respondents / informants after the formal finalising of the fieldwork period. For ethical reasons, such as avoiding the use of information given to me as a friend, and not as a researcher, my shifting roles have been a topic for open discussion and direct questioning. The presence of a tape recorder or a note book were the obvious signals of research activity going on. Situations without these technicalities were less identifiable.

²⁵ A cultural domain is a category of cultural meaning that includes other smaller meanings (Spradley 1980:88). Spradley distinguishes between 'social situations' and 'culture' in the following way: 'Social situations refers to the stream of behaviour (activities) carried out by people (actors) in a particular location (place)... Culture, on the other hand, refers to the *patterns* of behaviour, artefacts, and knowledge, that people have learned or created' (ibid. p.86). Since culture is 'the definition of the situation', categorisations are part of this defining or analysing process. Spradley operates with different types of ethnographic analysis: domain analysis, taxonomic analysis, componential analysis, and theme analysis.

²⁶ No computer programs for data analysing were applied.

²⁷ The concept of 'theoretical complex' is preferred to underline the analytical preliminary at this stage. The final analysis will be presented in Chapter 8.

²⁸ Olesen *et al* underline, however, that the way they present their account may invoke a 'linearity and smoothness that did not always characterize the hard work of the analysis' (Olesen *et al* 1994:112).

²⁹ 'People whose national or cultural identity is mixed by virtue of migration,

overseas education, or parentage' (Abu Lughod 1991:137)

³⁰ This will be a central topic for a planned follow-up study as part of the programme 'International Migration and Ethnic Relations' (Internasjonal Migrasjon og Etniske Relasjoner/IMER) under the Norwegian Council for Research (Norsk Forskningsråd/NFR).

³¹ Honesty is, in this context, used both as a moral and a psychological concept. As a moral concept it is used to underline the ethical aspect of communication. The use of the concept does not imply any value judgement. As a psychological concept it is used in a way that is close to the concept 'self-knowledge'. Through knowing oneself one takes responsibility for one's own feelings.

³² In addition to Geertz, Berger and Luckmann's theories on the social construction of reality, including the role of religion, form the foundation of this study (1966, 1976, 1995). Cf. Chapter 5.

Chapter 3

Biographical Presentation of the Families

3.1 Introduction

This chapter will present family life as a lifeworld context for individual children and as a preparatory discussion for the later analysis of family life as an arena for Islamic nurture¹. The thematic discussion will highlight both differences and similarities among the five families. The theoretical focus is to identify common cultural traits which organise differences of family life (cf. Gullestad 1989:103). As a follow up to the discussion on representation and authority (cf.2.2) it was initially intended to present the life histories of each of the five families as narratives. This approach was, however, found to be too unfocused in relation to the analytical purpose of the chapter and a thematic presentation is therefore preferred (cf. Appendix D for an overview of the respondent families).

The main methodological device of the chapter is network analysis and life history (cf. 2.4). There is an analytical progression from the general background presentation of Pakistanis in Oslo (Chapter 1) via this chapter's discussion of family biographies to children's self-presentations (Chapter 4). Increasingly, the voices of children are heard. The relationship between individuality and family bonds will be touched upon, but elaborated in Chapter 8. The chapter also provides a context for the theoretical complexes to be

discussed in Chapters 5, 6 and 7 - a contextualisation which moves between collective social patterns and individual biographies in accordance with the hermeneutic approach of the study (cf. Chapter 2). The families are not presented as fictitious examples but as realistically as possible, but without revealing their identity (cf. 2.6). A systematic overview of the families is given in Appendix D. Appendix C gives an overview of some Urdu terminology connected to the kinship system. The main interest of this chapter is not with hierarchy and power structures within the family, based for example on age and/or gender. However, since hierarchy and power are important for an understanding of Pakistani/Indian family patterns (Brah 1996:76; Kakar 1981:117; Saifullah Khan 1976:225; Shaw 1988, 1993; Vatuk 1992:63), they will be touched upon when relevant for the analysis. Some of these structures are present implicitly in the kinship terminology in Urdu.²

The main reason for studying children within a family setting was to understand the role of Islam in children's everyday life (cf. Chapter 2). The family focus of the study may also be theoretically based by referring to 'everyday life' as a scientific term, elaborated in recent social science research (Berger and Luckmann 1967; Douglas 1971; Gullestad 1984, 1988, 1989; Rudie 1984). An everyday approach implies that all themes presented in the following chapters have been studied from the perspective of everyday life, including the study of religious and non-religious festivals which traditionally might be seen as contrasting with everyday life. Recent research on 'everyday life' has, however, broadened and slightly changed the concept in the direction of meaning 'research that has its starting point in the sphere of intimacy'. As Gullestad remarks, 'the world is seen from the viewpoint of the home' (1989:174; my translation). The focus of research is not limited to the home sphere, but has the home as its starting point. From this everyday perspective the theoretical complex of qualitatively different time and space experiences emerged (cf. Chapter 6).

According to Gullestad, meaning and integration are established through our way of living, i.e. through our everyday life (ibid.p.103). Pakistani families' ways of living will consequently indicate what is conceived as meaningful and what creates integration within their lifeworld. In this respect this chapter is not a background chapter, but at the core of the research topic. A typical trait of late-modern Western societies is the increased importance of

lifestyle as communication of the symbolic aspects of our way of living: we create ourselves by demonstrating who we are through our lifestyle, which includes both material aspects and social activities. Lifestyle is a 'way of living as communication' (Gullestad 1989:104). Through our lifestyle we communicate both common cultural aspects and create and negotiate individual identity. Typical for our late-modern society is the increased weight of individual choices in this process. Gullestad's research focused on everyday life among ethnic Norwegians, especially women (1984;1989). The main conclusion in her study is what is called 'increased home-centredness'. Sometimes 'home' and 'family' are used synonymously, but very often Norwegian uses the word 'house' when, for instance, English would use 'family' or 'our place'. Gullestad establishes a link between this and the fact that more time and money than ever is used on home decoration, renovation and so on. Moreover, 'what makes the home into a key symbol of Norwegian culture, is its expression of the multiplicity of our values' (1989:57). Transferred to Ricoeurian terminology, and the methodological approach of this study, the home is 'deciphered' as a 'text' (Ricoeur 1971; cf. Chapter 2).

In accordance with Gullestad's research, the concept of 'lifestyle' will in the following discussion be used as an analytical tool, understood as *communication of meaning and identity through ways of living*. Cultural traits that are common for all respondent Pakistani families and traits that are different will be identified. A thematic comparison of family life will be presented through concentrating on the following themes:

- Migration patterns
- Settlement arealhousing style/home decorations
- Extended family patterns
- Social networks

Whether it is possible to identify a key symbol for the lifestyle of Pakistanis in Oslo (equivalent to the 'home-centredness' of ethnic Norwegians) will be discussed in the conclusion. Before the thematic discussion of similarities and differences between the five families, some comments will be made on the representativeness and bias of the 'sampling'.

3.2 Representativeness and Bias of the 'Sampling'

As stated in the introduction to the thesis and in the chapter on methodology, the aim of this research is not to present quantitative representative material. Representativeness has been sought in the sense of covering religious and socio-economic variety among Pakistanis in Oslo. The sampling of the five families is purposive, not random (Miles and Huberman 1994:22), but the following bias is traceable:

- three of the five families have an urban background whereas the majority of Pakistanis in Oslo have a rural background.
- three of the five families live in Oslo's suburbs whereas the majority of Pakistanis live in the inner city.
- the literacy rate and the educational background of the respondent parents are higher than average among first generation Pakistanis in Oslo.
- only one of the five families is affiliated to *Jama 'at Ahl-e Sunnat* whereas the majority of Pakistanis in Oslo regularly attend activities in this mosque.

The character of the sampling is typical for this kind of qualitative study. As underlined in the chapter on methodology, the research is to a great extent based on confidence between researcher and researched, and on communication. Factors like language competence, general knowledge, consciousness, openness for dialogue with mainstream society, as represented by the researcher, were easier found among people with an urban and educated background. There are respondents in my material who did not have this background, but the research could not have been based solely on this group without some change of method (e.g. more extensive use of Panjabi and Urdu). It is, however, important to keep in mind that these variables (urban/rural, educated/not-educated, class) cover a complexity of other variables which are not all equally transferable to Western terminology, as for instance Islamic affiliations and caste,³ kinship and family patterns.

More important to this research than quantitative representativeness has been the intention to cover as broad a spectrum of the social and religious diversity among the Pakistanis as possible. This breadth is combined with concentration on a just a few individuals, so as to produce an in-depth study

(Miles and Huberman 1994:27). The bias of the sampling has been compensated for by:

- increased frequency of visits to groups which are under-represented
- increased use of informants from under-represented groups
- awareness of the bias of sampling

3.3 Migration patterns

There are strong similarities between the families with regard to both emigration and immigration patterns, i.e. both the reasons for leaving Pakistan and the process of establishing themselves in Norway.⁴ All five fathers came as young labour-seeking immigrants at the beginning of the 1970s (cf. Appendix B). Their backgrounds vary with regard to education, regional origin, caste and class, but their reason for leaving Pakistan was the same: to create a better economic future for themselves and their families in Pakistan. They did not, however, represent the poorest families. As noted by Ballard: 'Migration is above all an *entrepreneurial* activity, in which success usually depends on making substantial investment, so that those with minimal social and financial assets cannot hope to get far' (1994:9). They came as single men, but nevertheless as representatives of extended families, and they were all met at the airport either by a relative, a friend or an acquaintance. The fathers' exact memories of the date of arrival and the persons meeting them at the airport are indicators of the importance of this event in their lives. All the respondent fathers got jobs (often more than one) and this first period was experienced as a time of especially hard-work. In Chapter I this was called 'Phase One' in the history of the families - though more precisely, it may be classified as a 'Pre-Family Phase'. 'Phase Two' was the first period after marriage and the arrival of the wives in Norway, i.e. a period of families being established (cf.12). The sojourners became settlers, as expressed by Ballard (1994:11). At the beginning of this period there were some expectations (especially from the wives' side) that this phase might come to an end and become 'Phase Three', a return to Pakistan (the 'myth of return', cf. Anwar 1979; Shaw 1994:35). However, Phase Three did not materialise as expected and even if all respondent families, twenty years later, still had strong emotional and economic links with Pakistan, they had more or less accepted that 'Phase Three' of family life would take place in Norway. Nevertheless, there remains a strong

consciousness of being part of an extended family based in Pakistan. 'Phase Three' might be characterised as a period of well-established family life, facing the future challenge of educating children and arranging marriages (cf. 1.2). Another characteristic of this third phase is the increased influence of second generation Pakistanis within the community. This phase is, of course, is the one covered by my fieldwork.

Despite different backgrounds (rural/urban, educated/not educated, *Sunni/Shia*, different *zats* and classes), the five families of this study, and most Pakistanis in Oslo, have a common migration history. Moreover, once established in Norway, the same phases of development can be traced in their lives. From the perspective of the mainstream society it is often taken for granted that this shared history implies a shared way of life (or a shared culture). According to respondents and informants of this study, other factors might, however, be more decisive regarding what Pakistanis in Oslo have in common and how their lives differ. A comparison of the lifestyles of family A and C, as presented in 3.6 below, will illustrate this point.

3.4 Settlement area/housing style/home decorations

All five families had first settled in the inner city. When the husband had managed to buy or rent a flat in this part of town, his wife joined him (only Family E already had a child born in Pakistan). One of the reasons for settling in this part of town was the low cost of housing. Another reason was to become part of the Pakistani community that already existed there. This was not necessarily a conscious choice, but was the result of a chain of immigration (cf. Shaw 1994:39) and a chain of information from friends, relatives or one of the mosques in the area. The result of this settlement preference was that *Desh Pardesh* (home from home/at home abroad)⁵ turned into a spatial, not only a social and cultural, reality (cf. Ballard 1994:8). Oslo developed its 'Little Pakistan' at Grønland/Tøyen/Grünerløkka in the same way that London has its Southall (cf. Puntervold-Bø 1980:64). The preference for settlement in the inner city during the first period of immigration was, however, later overtaken by the wish of some Pakistanis to leave this part of town. The move out of the inner city was equated by the respondent families with an upward social move (cf. similar viewpoints among Southall residents; Baumann 1995:33). That three of the five families had moved to suburban areas is an indicator of an

over-representation of families with a middle class background (cf. the section on representativeness) in my research.

This study does not focus on living standards or material frames of social life, but some data on housing style and homes will be presented because these issues are closely connected to an understanding of family life. In some ways, Pakistani homes⁶ communicate the opposite of what mainstream Norwegian homes signify. Whereas the tendency among mainstream Norwegians is an increased emphasis on house decoration, renewal etc. in order to make the homes appear 'nice, cosy and personal' (Gullestad 1989:56), Pakistani homes were not only different in style, but appeared generally more uniform and simpler although there were exceptions (see below). Painting and other forms of renovation were not high priority activities for either husbands or wives. Their homes were, however, well equipped with high-tech consumer durables such as TVs, video recorders etc., but very seldom were there, for example, fresh flowers or paintings. All homes had bookshelves, containing only a few books including the Qur'an, as well as many family pictures, plastic flowers and other typically Pakistani ornaments. Prayer carpets were kept in a corner of the living room or in a wardrobe, and provided an example of how 'reading' a house style reveals symbolic aspects of everyday life. Another quite different observation communicated aspects of women's lifeworld. In the winter time, the temperature in the rooms was often warm and the air was damp because the mothers ascribed their rheumatism to the cold climate. These women hardly left their flats during the winter months. (However, the diversity of lifestyles among the families can be illustrated by the fact that other mothers dealt quite differently with their health problems. Some of them participated in locally arranged physical training programmes or swimming groups for immigrant women. Within common cultural frames there was room for individual variety.)

Among the families that had moved to one of the suburbs, there was a tendency towards better material standards of housing. This was combined with a stronger influence from a modern Western style of decoration, for instance in the kitchen. Nevertheless, these homes remained predominantly Pakistani in style.⁷ Children's and young people's rooms generally, that is regardless of area of settlement, looked like typically 'Norwegian' rooms with writing desks, Barbie dolls, Michael Jackson posters etc.. Only occasionally were the rooms decorated with posters showing the great Faizal Mosque in

Islamabad, the Ka'bah in Mecca, some Urdu textbooks or audio cassettes with Indian/Pakistani music. Because of their size and their relatively small flats, all the families typically had siblings sharing bedrooms. Even so, children often objected to the idea of moving to bigger flats. At the very least, they preferred to stay in the same area, 'their area of town' (see Chapter 6). The habit of more people sleeping together in the same room or even in the same bed (gender segregated) was customary from early childhood, both in Oslo and in Pakistan. Babies and small children always slept with their mothers (cf Chapter 2 on fieldwork experiences in Pakistan; cf. Kakar 1992 [1981]:52ff).

There were no signs of strict *purdah* arrangements in the homes (for instance no curtains dividing the living room), but the kitchen or a bedroom functioned as a female area if there was a need to be separate from men, for instance for praying or chatting. *Dupattas* were put on in the presence of male guests. If the mothers kept too much 'in the background', for instance in the kitchen, while having visitors, they were often encouraged by their husbands to sit down and join the company in the living room.⁸

While it is possible to 'read' homes as lifestyles, i.e. as communicating identity and values (Gullestad 1989:54), the standard of housing and home decoration amongst the Pakistani families should not be interpreted in isolation from the social activities that took place in these rooms. Other research from Norway has stated that housing standard is not only a question of economy, but also of preference and style (Lien 1997:46). So, if 'home decoration' is 'deciphered' in isolation from the social activities taking place in the rooms, one might come to the conclusion that these families, in contrast to mainstream Norwegian families, 'lack' a material standard (or interest in material standards) or sense of style. However, if interpreted in relation to social activities, Pakistani homes communicate identity and values as arenas for social gatherings, the most important of which is a traditional meal. Whereas mainstream Norwegian women (and men) communicate their identity through the appearance of their homes, Pakistani women communicate their identity through a well-prepared meal and the being-together of the whole family (cf. Chapters 5 and 6). Meals served in a traditional Pakistani way, sitting on the floor, especially when receiving guests or celebrating an Islamic festival, communicated the values of the home. This was something shared by all the families regardless of socio-economic background or religious affiliation.

3.5 Extended Family Patterns

One of the male parents was a widower, one married (but later divorced) a Norwegian woman, the others remained single during the first years after immigration to Norway. After a few years, however, marriages were arranged for all of them in Pakistan. As shown in Appendix D, all the men married cousins or relatives within the *biradari* - in accordance with the preferred form of marriage (Ballard 1990:231) - except for one who married the daughter of a friend of his father (cf. Shaw (1993: 45) on the advantages of marrying *ex-biradari*).⁹

According to Pakistani tradition, the wife is supposed to move to her parents-in-law after the last of the wedding ceremonies (*barat*) (Ballard 1990:231). One of the respondent mothers admitted that the first period in the home of her in-laws had been especially hard because of the absence of her husband.¹⁰ She would have preferred to remain with her parents until she could join her husband in Norway, but this was regarded as inappropriate with regard to protecting the reputation/honour/respect (*izzat*) of the bride and the two families that had agreed upon the marriage (cf. Ballard 1994:15; Baumann 1996:103; elaborated below). For some of the respondent mothers, the first period after arriving in Norway was experienced as even harder. If they had any acquaintances here at all, these were either kin or friends of the husband and none of the respondent mothers had close relatives in Norway." However, there were strong emotional ties to both the paternal and maternal side of the family in Pakistan (see Chapters 6 and 8). Physically the respondents lived in nuclear families in Oslo, but emotionally, and partly financially, they lived as part of extended families (cf. Shaw 1993:45).¹² Frequent phone calls and visits to Pakistan, approximately every second year, nourished the attachment.

For families with a rural background (family B and E), *biradari* - and village networks in Pakistan - were experienced as fully integrated, at least from the perspective of children. When asked about relatives in Pakistan, one of them said: 'Our family, they all live in the same village.' (Cf the importance of village network; Saifullah Khan 1976:225.) Families with an urban background (family A, C and D) tended to have their family members spread in different parts of the country, mostly within the province of Punjab. Both rural village and urban backgrounds were, however, combined with a broad global

network. Relatives were found in England, Canada, the USA, Italy, Denmark, the United Arab Emirates — and in Norway (cf. Chapter 6). This global network was an active part of the extended family lifestyle. For example, it was common practice to let children stay with relatives (especially with sisters or brothers of parents) for a shorter or longer period. Two of the children in family D had, for example, spent one year with their aunt and uncle in England. The extended family system, and close relations with neighbours, facilitated the absence of one of the parents for shorter or longer periods, for instance, while the mother visited her parents in Pakistan.

Children's close relationship to their aunts and uncles is also expressed through kinship terminology. On the one hand, the differential terminology of kinship expresses the complexity of family relations where generational hierarchy, gender and paternity/maternity are distinguished especially. On the other hand, fraternal solidarity within each generation has resulted in the common use of the term *bha'i I bahan* for both brothers/sisters and cousins (cf. the use of *bhapa*, Kakar 1981:116).¹³

Even when tensions existed in the relationship between close relatives, these problems did not hinder a feeling of mutual dependence and responsibility towards each other. The reciprocity of kinship underlies not only the dynamics of chain migration, but also had 'a major effect on the subsequent development of Pakistani communities overseas' (Shaw 1994:40). To understand the extended family life as 'lifestyle' it is of importance to take both emotional and financial aspects into account. The reciprocity of kinship involved factors like housing and jobs, but also had a deeper social-psychological level related to the shame-honour complex (*laj-izzat*). From his study in Southall, Baumann draws this conclusion with regard to the importance of respect: 'Individuals will go to extreme lengths to safeguard and serve the *izzat* of their family, which can be tainted summarily by a single member incurring dishonour and thus shaming the entire family' (1995:103).

An aspect of the extended family lifestyle noted in my study was the discrepancy between the facade of unity represented to 'outsiders' (e.g. other Pakistani families or Norwegians) and the numerous negotiations and disputes within the family context. One increasing issue of conflict was the mimicking of the Norwegian way of life by second generation Pakistanis. Girls especially

were accused of being *be-izzat* — without honour (cf. Ballard 1994:15)." As Ballard notes, negotiations and disputes related to the protection of family honour are not, however, limited to the *Desh Pardesh* situation. Rather, families in Norway were also involved in the affairs of their extended families in Pakistan. The handling of duties related to their role in the family hierarchy (for instance being the eldest son) was felt by some of the fathers to be a heavy burden. For example, to a large extent holidays in Pakistan were dominated by family negotiations, for instance, the arranging of marriages.

Perhaps the most concrete connection between family members in *Diaspora* and those in the 'home country' was a financial one. Investment in property in Pakistan was inseparably linked to increasing emigrants' status and influence within the extended family and increasing the respect of the whole family vis-a-vis others (cf. Gardner and Shukur 1994:149-50; Lien 1993:21ff). More important than investment in a house in their town of origin, was the contribution that emigrants made to the finances of their parents, and occasionally, to other members of the *biradari*. (cf. Shaw 1993:43 who discusses the function of the 'myth of return' as a means by which the emigrants' earnings and savings for the benefit of the *biradari* was secured). This contribution enhanced the provider's status within the *biradari*, but often fathers preferred not to reveal that they took on extra jobs in Norway in order to send sufficient money back to Pakistan. Some of these jobs (e.g. taxi driver) were, from a Pakistani point of view, of low-status.

Given these emotional and financial links as part of the extended family system, Pakistan 'was not far away'. The 'Pakistan' of the lifeworld of the children was, however, not primarily a country or a geographical space, but a 'cultural space' within which they lived in Oslo. This will be further discussed in Chapter 6.

3.6 Social Networks

The social networks of the Pakistani families in Oslo were family-based, both in the sense that most of their social life took place within a family setting and because individual friendships tended to be integrated into a family structure. For example, this might show itself with regard to ways of addressing each other and sharing social life. When grown up friends or young people met on a Saturday night, they most often did so in a multi-generational family setting.¹⁵

Their 'primary relations' were represented by kin or Pakistani friends (Saifullah Khan 1976:224). However, neither kinship, ethnic nor religious barriers hindered close relationships arising across the majority-minority border. One example is a personal, close relationship between one of the families and their neighbour, a single elderly Norwegian lady. The family and the old lady had daily contact and exchanged presents and services in a grandmother-grandchildren kind of relationship (cf. the *lena-dena* system, i.e. the role of gifts in developing relationships; Shaw 1988:111-18;1994:46-48).

In addition to family and Pakistani friends, the children's *schooling* was a more dominant social network in Oslo than leisure activities or contacts in Norwegian dominated neighbourhoods. Both fathers and mothers showed an interest in the schooling of their children in the sense that they (mostly the fathers) attended parents' meetings, made enquiries concerning school activities and helped the children with homework. The educational background of the parents was found to be more decisive for motivational interest than their competence in Norwegian (cf. Chapter 7). Teachers and other pupils were talked about as parts of the lifeworld of the families, but not as part of their close social network.

The social networks of the fathers, established through their work, meant a lot to them, even if colleagues did not visit the families or vice versa. This social arena was, besides children's schools, the main direct source of information from mainstream society to the families, not least when the father had the capability of transferring new information and new codes of communication to his wife and children. Children frequently accompanied their fathers to their places of work and some of the eldest had even undertaken some part-time work. The fathers' attitudes to their jobs, and the steps taken to introduce their children (mostly their sons) to this part of their lives, is a typical trait of traditional attitudes to work, where 'affect' is not completely separated from 'role' (cf. Hsu's theories presented in Tesli 1990:473).

The differences between the families are clearly manifested in their social network *outside* the extended family. For example, the Sayed family (family E) participated in a *Sayed* network. Even the children of this family said that they knew all the *Sayeds* in Oslo (cf. Chapter 6). The parents had, however, little contact with their Norwegian dominated neighbourhood, except

through children's schooling and sporting activities. In contrast, the social network of Family B consisted of their Pakistani-dominated local community: family, Pakistani friends and neighbours, mosque, school, father's job. Family B lived in what has been termed by others a 'ghetto' (Eriksen and Sørheim 1994:92).¹⁶ The weak Norwegian language competence of all members of Family B was a sign of a dominantly Panjabi-speaking environment. The strongest continuity between mosque affiliation in Pakistan and in Oslo is found in this type of community. Two mosques within the same part of town belong to the same *Barelwi* tradition that dominated these families' local rural area of Punjab (cf. Chapter 1). The attitude of this group of Pakistanis may be characterised as a cultural and religious transference of Pakistan to Norway (Ahlberg 1991:23).

However, for parents of Family A who had moved to one of the suburbs, the mosque had got a new and different importance to them in *diaspora* (cf. Vertovec 1996). In Oslo the mosque (the Islamic Cultural Centre) had become the social and religious centre of their life in the sense that their mosque affiliation both compensated for the lack of presence of the extended family (cf. Geaves 1996:53; Lewis 1994:178) and symbolised a revitalised Islamic dimension in their lifeworld. How the children were socialised into this mosque-dominated Islamic life will be discussed in Chapter 7.

Differences in the lifestyle of families more than twenty years after the arrival of the fathers can often be traced back to the men's first affiliation to a mosque or to a later development of religious attitudes. Which mosque they saw as 'their mosque', and how much, or how little, they got involved in institutionalised Islamic life, had a decisive influence on the later life of their families (cf. Chapters 5, 6 and 7). In the first period, to a certain extent, which mosque the fathers visited was based on a number of contingencies. Often they just accompanied some friends to *their* mosque. This finding is in accordance with Ahlberg's statement that a change in the direction of sectarianism emerged after a first period of solidarity when Pakistanis helped other Pakistanis based on the principle of national solidarity. She says: 'As the group was growing the parallel disintegration into small groups based on traditional rivalry became dominant' (Ahlberg 1991:24). A similar process of sectarianism has taken place in Britain (Geaves 1995:44; Lewis 1994:76ff). However, boundaries among second and third generation British Pakistanis seem to have become

wider in the sense that they have oriented themselves beyond smaller groups, based on sub-ethnicity or caste (Jacobson 1995:152). As stated by many researchers, including Ahlberg, the presence of women contributed to the institutionalisation of religious life (cf. Lewis 1994:56). The findings of this study confirm this role for women, but modify Ahlberg's emphasis on women's function in establishing specific mosque affiliations (ibid. p.23). In the choice between local mosques (or Islamic organisations) the fathers were the decision-makers (cf. Chapter 8 for an elaboration of gender differentiated roles).

A comparison between the development of Family A and C is illustrative of the connection between mosque affiliation, integration strategy and lifestyle. Both fathers had, as mentioned, a very similar background with regard to place of origin, class and education. None of them had been actively practising Muslims before immigration. In Oslo they happened to attend *Juma* prayers and other activities in the same mosque (the Islamic Cultural Centre). Both men got personally involved and actively participated, for some years, in organisational aspects of mosque life. One of the fathers and his family (Family A) is still strongly attached to this mosque, whereas the other father, and his family (Family C), does not feel any affiliation to a specific mosque or to a specific group within the *Sunni* tradition. Both families are well integrated, but their strategies of integration and their ways of living differ a lot. The father of Family C has in no way broken with Islam or the *Sunni* tradition, but through reading he has gained a 'new insight' which made him 'break' with this specific mosque organisation. He experienced the break as a form of 'liberation' that made him more open towards mainstream Norwegian society without rejecting the Qur'anic authority of Islam.

The father of Family A, in contrast, experienced a personal Islamic revival and ongoing Islamic studies within his organisational tradition led him to distinguish between non-Islamic Pakistani cultural elements and 'pure Islam'. This distinction was also decisive for the family's way of living. From their point of view, *shari'a* was not negotiable, whereas Pakistani cultural elements were. (To distinguish between the two was, however, in practice complicated - and negotiable.) Family members were increasingly marking their Islamic identity in contact with mainstream non-Islamic society (e.g. by female members of the family wearing *burqah* or *hijab*) without isolating themselves from society (cf. the discussion of Chapter 8).

A change of focus from Family C to Family B is pertinent to the discussion of a connection between settlement area and lifestyle (cf. the discussion above about the Pakistani dominated social network of Family B). Despite the fact that Family B and C live in the same area of town (the 'ghetto'), their lifestyles differ a lot. This dissimilarity did not manifest itself in terms of material factors such as home decoration or living standards, but rather in the character of their social networks.

The social network of Family C consisted of three groups: the family in Oslo, the local multicultural community and a sports club. They were, like Family B, strongly involved with their local community, but for Family C this included a broader circle than their Pakistani neighbours. Local community involvement included activities connected to the life of the children: pre-school, school and leisure activities. Both the father and the mother played active roles on committees, taking on responsibility for school activities etc. The participants in these local activities were children and grown ups with multiethnic backgrounds, including ethnic Norwegians. In addition to the above mentioned activities, the father was an active member of a sports club. This club was open to all, but was dominated by South Asians. Some of the closest friends of the family were active in the same club.¹⁷

In the previous description of Family B, their area of town was presumed to be a community with little contact across ethnic borders. A comparison of families B and C shows, however, that there is room for variations of lifestyle even within 'the ghetto'. There is cultural variety within the community — and even amongst the Muslim members of this local community. This can be seen as parallel to Baumann's characterisation of the multi-cultural community of Islam in Southall. He says: 'Among Muslim Southallians, the disengagement of the equation between *culture* and *community* proceeds in two ways. One of these results from the vast cultural variety within this local *community*, the other from the global spread of the multicultural *community* or *ummah* of Muslim believers' (Baumann 1995:122-3). Formal, organisational connections to school, sport and other leisure activities contributed to a more heterogeneous social network for Family C. A comparison of the three families, A, B and C, therefore illustrates common cultural traits and individual lifestyle choices, typical of late-modern society (cf. Gullestad above).

The social network of Family D consisted, besides the extended family, of their Pakistani friends, who were their friends not because of ethnicity, but because of similar social background, mutual areas of interest and common attitudes to life. The family did not associate themselves with the majority of Pakistanis in Oslo. Their educational and urban background determined their social network - and lifestyle - rather than ethnicity or nationality.¹⁸ They were *Shia* Muslims, but their social network, both in Oslo and in Pakistan, included *Sunnis* (e.g. the mother's family was *Sunni*, but she had become a *Shia* long before marrying).

3.7 Conclusion

The differences between families have been explained in terms of the relative sharpness of social boundaries. Some boundaries have become permeable or semi-permeable, as documented by Jacobson in her research on ethnic boundaries amongst British Pakistani youth (Jacobson 1995:152). A sharply observed social boundary may be the result of either an isolated way of living (little contact with mainstream society; e.g. Family B) or by sectoral sharpness, for instance in what is defined as Islamic in contrast to a non-Islamic way of life (e.g. Family A). The permeability of boundaries may, as a parallel to the two different forms of sharpness, be caused either by a large degree of contact with mainstream society (e.g. Family C) or by a more internal change of lifestyle, influenced, for instance, by educational level (e.g. Family D) or material standard (e.g. Family E).

When it comes to weighing up the differences and similarities between the families (especially if the focus is changed from social boundaries to family life as lifestyle), there are far more similarities than differences in their way of living. Family life as lifestyle has been found to be a common cultural trait regardless of class, caste or educational background. Family life has been identified as a common cultural trait within which social and religious differences may be expressed. This means that kinship patterns and the dominance of extended family patterns are combined with other aspects of the social network in different ways. In contrast to what Gullestad states about mainstream Norwegians, 'family life', not 'home', seems to be the key symbol for Pakistanis. Family life expresses a multiplicity of values, like respect for

elders, the importance given to personal relationships, reciprocity, solidarity, respectability (*izzat*), and *purdah* (in a strict or liberal sense).

Materially the families' way of living in Oslo differed considerably from the kind of life they would have had within the extended family in Pakistan, but their 'lifestyle' was not radically different. Material aspects of the home and the character of the social network in Oslo communicated a way of living where meaning and identity were created mainly through family-based social relationships. However, one new aspect of everyday life in Oslo, compared to the life of the parents and their extended family in Pakistan, was the greater institutionalisation of Islam (to be further discussed in Chapter 8). The Pakistanis way of living communicated a strong family-based and religious identity connected to their 'membership group' (Jackson 1997:64) on the community level (cf. Introduction).

This chapter has given a thematic, biographical presentation of the five respondent families through partly highlighting the diversity within the 'sampling', and partly detecting common patterns or common cultural traits that organised the differences in ways of living. 'Family life' was found to constitute a key symbol as a parallel to the key symbol 'home', explored by Gullestad in her studies of mainstream Norwegian late-modern society. Pakistanis in Oslo communicate meaning and identity through a family-based life. Their 'family-based social networks' included extended family in Pakistan and abroad. In addition to this primary family network, which is equally important for all families of the study, each family was found to represent a supplementary form of social network: the mosque (Family A), the local multicultural community (Family B), the local Pakistani dominated community (Family C), selected Pakistani friends with the same educational and class background (Family D), a Sayed network (Family E).

Already at this stage of the study it can be stated that Pakistani children's lives are relational lives mainly within a family context; i.e. their lives are to a great extent dominated by family, both with regard to emotional ties and time spent with family. The family, especially siblings and cousins, forms the permanent group of people to whom a person throughout her/his life is emotionally attached (cf Hsu's theories of identity discussed in Tesli 1990:475; elaborated in Chapter 8). In the next chapter, however, it will be documented

that these aspects of children's lives do not imply an absence of individuality. The degree to which children themselves identify with family will also be discussed (of. Kakar 1982:120). The study moves a step further in the direction of letting the voices of children be heard. For this reason the heading 'self-presentations' is preferred in the next chapter, instead of 'self-representations'. It will deal with representations, but since most of these were made explicit through the way children, verbally and non-verbally, presented themselves in dialogue with the researcher, the term 'self-presentations' is considered more appropriate.

¹ *Islamic nurture* is regarded as distinct from both *Islamic education* and *Islamic upbringing* since the three concepts have different foci. Whereas the concept of Islamic education covers formal learning activities, like the recitation of the Qur'an, the concept of nurture emphasises the intentionality of learning activities and it includes non-educational elements, like fasting practices. Islamic education is part of Islamic nurture (cf. Chapter 7). Religious nurture is a more actor-oriented concept than religious socialisation (to be further discussed in Chapter 7). Nurture, as applied here, covers more than moral upbringing, and emphasis is both on the content and the purpose (intention) of the nurture. Religious nurture is always nurture within an identified specific religious context, and the aim of the nurture is to make children develop and grow within that specific lifeworld (cf. Hull 1994:38; Jackson and Nesbitt 1993). The relationship between religious nurture, a religious lifeworld and the social context might, in a minority situation, be rather complex. An example of such complexity is expressed in the subtitle of this thesis: *Islamic Nurture in a Secular Context*.

² There are at least three reasons for not using these terms throughout the thesis. First, children mostly used Norwegian terms to express kinship concepts in their everyday Norwegian discourse, even if these terms did not cover all nuances of the Urdu concepts. Second, there are, in the families studied, both Urdu and Panjabi speaking children and it would be rather confusing to switch between the two language terms in cases where they differ. Third, and related to the previous reason, the complexity of the terminology, for instance the diversification between referential and vocative terms (Vatuk in Aksos 1992; Barker 1962), makes Urdu terms more confusing than clarifying. Urdu terms are used only when of importance for the presentation of each family. If nothing else is stated, the Urdu terms which are used are the referential terms used by children when talking about their kin. A brother of the mother is, for instance, termed by the appropriate term for 'uncle'. Kinship is thus presented with a closeness to the perspective of children.

³ The families are not categorized according to caste (*zat*), except in the case of family E, because *the* families themselves did not expose this, partly for ideological reasons (they strongly opposed the caste system), partly because of undercommunication (they knew this was an aspect of their culture which was neither appreciated among mainstream Norwegian society nor from a purely Islamic point of view). This does not

imply a reduction of the importance of *zat* among Pakistanis in Oslo (cf. Lien 1997). It might be noted, for instance, that informants spoke of an increased use of *zat* names, resulting from the need to emphasise *zat* in connection with arranged marriages. *Biradari* and *zat* may gain new importance in the coming phase of immigration history (Chapter 1).

⁴ Since the following discussion is primarily a biographical presentation of the families, references to general research literature, already given in Chapter 1, will not be repeated.

⁵ The phrase 'Desh Pardesh', with the double meaning of 'home from home' and 'at home abroad', is applied by Ballard as a term familiar only to people speaking Hindi, Urdu, Panjabi, Gujarati or Bangla in order to underline how people in diaspora rebuild their lives on their own terms (Ballard 1994:5).

⁶ For a discussion of the problematic nature of using general abstractions like 'Pakistani homes' or 'Pakistanis', cf. Chapter 2.

⁷ A similar modern Western influence is found among the middle class in Pakistan.

⁸ As a female researcher I had the opportunity to join the women wherever they gathered (cf. Chapter 2).

⁹ In contrast to the general accuracy of dating arrival in Norway, ages were often approximate. This was not only caused by bad memory, but was probably a sign of the unimportance attached to exact ages.

¹⁰ This should not be interpreted as an unusual intermediary situation, but rather is confirmation that marriage is understood as a relationship between two families. The common pattern of extended family is that a woman moves to her husband's parents. She becomes part of their *biradari* (Kakar 1981:113; Saifullah Khan 1976; Shaw 1994).

¹¹ As long as wife and husband belonged to the same *biradari*, they were formally related.

¹² 'Extended family' is here used in a loose sense. More precisely, it means a form of family organisation defined as one 'in which brothers remain together after marriage and bring their wives into their parental household' (Kakar 1981:113). 'Joint family' may be used as an identical concept, but may be limited to mean 'two or more married brothers living together with their wives and children but without their parents' (ibid.).

¹³ Full terms for cousins, like '*taya zad bha'i*', are usually shortened to fraternal terms, like '*bha'i*'. If the cousin or brother/sister is younger, their personal names are used. In everyday modern speech among children and youth, personal names are used for all brothers/sisters/cousins, regardless of relative age.

¹⁴ None of the respondent children were affected by this accusation. For this reason the issue of *izzat* or *be-izzat* will not play an important part in this study.

However, more remote members of the families or their acquaintances were affected.

¹⁵ This family-oriented social life, which dominated the respondent families of this study, does not vitiate the fact that some Pakistanis, especially men, also developed friendships and a social life outside the family setting. However, the character and structures of such networks are not part of this study.

¹⁶ In Wallman's distinction between *homogeneous* and *heterogeneous* types of communities (1986:236), this community should be classified as the latter.

¹⁷ Most sports of interest to Pakistanis in Norway, such as cricket or field hockey, were of no interest to Norwegian mainstream society. In this regard, to be Pakistani in Norway differs from being Pakistani in Britain.

¹⁸ The relationship between ethnicity and nationality will be discussed in Chapter 4. The distinctions made by Saifullah Khan concerning ethnic/regional origin and class lines are supported. She differentiates between five main sections of the population: Pathans, Campbellpuris, Punjabis, Mirpuris and the urban-educated section from the cities in all of these regions (Saifullah Khan 1976: 224). Family D may be classified within the fast group.

Chapter 4

Self-Presentations

4.1 Introduction

How children presented themselves verbally and non-verbally in dialogue with the researcher will be in focus of this chapter. For this reason the concept 'self:-presentations', and not 'self-representations' is used (cf. Goffmann 1990 [1959]:13ff). An analysis of how children presented themselves conveys their self-perceptions (cp. Jackson and Nesbitt 1993:27). To avoid losing sight of individual expressions, parts of the dialogues will be reproduced, not only categorised answers, and some situations will be described) This way of presenting the data is influenced by the criticism advanced at Geertz that he concentrates on 'the whole'- the generic - and loses sight of individuals, including the presence of the researcher (cf. Chapter 2). Experience-near concepts (Geertz [1983]1993:57; Jackson 1997:34) are retained and ambiguities in children's ways of expressing themselves are not hidden.

In designing the fieldwork and conducting the interviews, it was almost impossible to approach the ethnic dimension without making contrasting pairs of concepts, like Pakistani - Muslim, Pakistani - Norwegian, Norwegian girls - Muslim girls etc. The conclusion will, however, not be based solely on verbal answers in relation to this choice of opposing categories, but will also take into consideration other non-verbal ways of signalling cultural and social identity. In this way my study deviates from the Identity Structure Analysis method (ISA) as developed by Weinreich, and applied by him and by Kelly (Weinreich

1989; 41-77; Kelly 1989; 77-116). In the ISA method, respondents are asked to rate entities (like groupings of people) by using a set of bipolar constructs (cognitive categories used to construe one's social world, for example ideologies or values). This method may be adequate for the study of identity processes among adolescents but is not applicable for research among children. Even if constructs and entities should be elicited from the respondents themselves, one cannot expect children to be able to rate entities using sets of bipolar constructs. Research among children needs another way of operationalising identity theories. The researcher will eventually have to transform constructs and entities into an everyday dialogue, and the researcher will have to interpret both verbal and non-verbal self-presentations.

Theoretically this chapter deals with aspects of 'social and cultural identity', especially 'ethnicity' and 'nationality' (cf. a conceptual clarification and theoretical positioning in the following sections). These concepts are operationalised by empirically close categories like 'I feel like...' (self-ascriptions), 'us-them dichotomies' (social boundaries), and language identifications? These categories arose as part of children's self-presentations.

4.2 The Ethnicity Debate

Within today's social anthropology and sociology there are at least three distinguishable approaches to ethnicity: *the primordialist approach, the boundary approach and the instrumentalist approach*. The problem with this categorisation is that the terminology is partly fixed not by the proponents themselves but by their critics. Instead of distinguishing between three groups, some differentiate between two sets of controversies: between instrumentalists and primordialists and between 'subjectivist' and 'objectivist' perspectives (Eriksen 1993:54).

The three theories will be summarised briefly and related to this study. A fourth approach, which combines elements from the three mentioned, will also be referred to and the position taken in this study will be clarified.

According to *the primordialist approach*, an ethnic group is characterised by a distinctive common history and culture. The theory claims that it is the content of the culture, shaped through historical ties, that distinguishes one group from other groups. The content is not regarded as unchangeable but the continuity of content is focused. The most extreme

version of this view is maintained by nationalists who present ethnic communities as 'natural'. According to such a view, culture is best preserved in its 'authentic, primordial form' when given the chance to develop isolated from other groups.

However, more flexible primordial variants distance themselves from any biological or naturalistic connotations. Their focus is on historical ties and/or the emotive power of ethnicity (Geertz 1973; Horowitz 1985; Shils 1980; Smith 1986). The differences within this more flexible primordialist view are extensive. Whereas Smith argues that modern ethnic ideologies have identifiable 'objective' cultural roots, Geertz is concerned with the members' own perceptions of their ethnicity. He argues that primordial attachment stems from the assumed 'givens' of social existence: mainly immediate contiguity and connections of kin, 'but beyond them the givenness that stems from being born into a particular religious community, speaking a particular language, or even a dialect of a language, and following particular social practices. These congruities of blood, speech, custom, and so on are seen to have an ineffable and at times over-powering coerciveness in and of themselves' (Geertz 1973:259). Horowitz regards ethnicity as 'a form of greatly extended kinship' because ethnicity, like kinship, is established through birth (1985:57). The most extreme form of this position has been criticised since at least the end of the 1960s (Barth 1969), but it is still dominant in everyday discourse (cf. Baumann 1996). The main criticism has focused on the primordialists' tendency to present ethnicity as static and 'natural'.

A flexible variant of primordialism is relevant for this study in two ways. First of all, it seems reasonable to put some weight on the common historical background of second generation Pakistani immigrants to Norway in the shaping of their ethnic identity (cf. Chapter 1). It is also in accordance with the general approach of this study to emphasise the viewpoints and emotions of the actors themselves. Findings presented in the following sections confirm that Pakistani children partly experienced their 'roots' to be of importance for their ethnic identity. However, other findings contradict this primordial view. The changeability of the content of their ethnic identity and the permeability of ethnic boundaries are more to the fore and in accordance with a boundary approach (cf. Jacobson 1995b).

The boundary approach originated as a criticism of what was regarded as static, content-oriented viewpoints. In contrast, ethnicity was seen as a way of organising a social group. Representing this position, Barth characterised ethnic categories as 'organisational vessels that may be given varying amounts and forms of content in different sociocultural systems' (1969:14). Social boundaries are accordingly regarded as more constitutive for the group than the cultural content. Barth argues against primordial viewpoints thus:

In other words, ethnic distinctions do not depend on an absence of social interaction and acceptance, but are quite to the contrary often the very foundation on which embracing social systems are built (Barth 1969:10).

According to this theoretical approach it is 'the ethnic *boundary* that defines the group, not the cultural stuff that it encloses' (Barth 1969:15). This understanding of ethnicity may also be called *situational ethnicity* to underline the changeability of both social boundaries and cultural content according to context. There are, however, a variety of approaches within this theory as examples from recent research will illustrate.

Another main criticism of primordialism is *the instrumentalist approach* (Cohen 1974; Glazer and Moynihan 1970). According to Cohen, 'ethnic identities develop in response to functional organisational requirements' (quoted from Eriksen 1993:55). Followers of this approach focus on explaining the underlying economic and political reasons for the establishment and change of ethnicity. Cohen accuses even Barth of promoting a static view of ethnicity because the latter regards ethnic categories ('the organisational vessels') as constants which may be called upon when needed. Instrumentalists study ethnic groups as interest groups. As Nash says 'Ethnicity becomes a call to action when such a group organizes for political and economic ends' (1989:127).

As may be clear from this short summary, such an approach is of little relevance for this study which does not focus on ethnicity or nationality among large-scale groups and their political or economic interests, but on the management of ethnic identity among individual Pakistani children. Like Jacobson's study, this work 'seeks to understand from the participants' perspectives the meaningfulness of apparently long-standing ethnic and religious affiliations' (1995a:84).

A fourth approach to ethnicity, promoted by Lithman, is of special interest to this study, not least because it is based on micro-oriented empirical studies. This position may be characterised as a situational approach within boundary theories but, since it is markedly distinct from, and even explicitly critical of, Barth's theory, it will be presented separately. Lithman criticizes Barth's categories for being too functional. They have, what Barth calls, imperative status which means they are decisive for the way people act in order to reach their goals. According to Lithman, ethnicity is not only a way of social organisation, but *a language or idiom*:

As an organizational device, ethnicity also has some very specific features relating to freedom of organizational forms and continuity over time. These features, in turn, are interrelated with the idiomatic properties (Lithman 1987:3).

Ethnicity is regarded as one among other dimensions of 'the great cultural discourse'. The great cultural discourse is the expression of culture understood as a configuration of shared and condensed knowledge derived in a dialectic between earlier knowledge and experience in the on-going flow of social life. Ethnicity is part of this discourse but not necessarily a very important dimension. Long-term ethnic processes show that ethnicity at one point in time may be of no relevance for how a person acts but then later on may become highly significant. This is explained by ethnicity being a metacontextual idiom existing as a potentiality without being supported by everyday interactions (Lithman 1987:8). This is comparable to viewpoints of Rex: '...the theory of ethnicity should recognise that collective ethnic organisation may often lie dormant and only become activated by the emergence of shared interests' (Rex 1986:81).

For this study it is of importance to discuss what role ethnicity as an idiom plays in the lifeworld of children and which social boundaries are decisive for their ethnic identity. The presence of ethnic idioms does not in itself 'prove' that ethnicity plays a role in their identity management. Rather, they are indicators of the potential importance of ethnicity. A change of social situation may give ethnicity a new significance. Wallman's approach to ethnicity is closely related to Lithman's emphasis on ethnicity as idiom. In her study of the interaction between ethnic groups in two different areas of London, individual and communicative dimensions are focused (1986). In Battersea, a

heterogenous/open community, ethnicity was undercommunicated, whereas in Bow, a homogeneous/closed type of local community, it was overcommunicated. The social situation was decisive in shaping the form and function of ethnicity. In an earlier article, Wallman underlines the importance of context in understanding ethnicity in late-modern society by claiming that 'individuals have a more or less extensive repertoire of identity options which they call upon or engage with in different contexts and for different purposes' (Wallman 1983:70).

The position taken here is to regard ethnicity as one aspect of the total identities of the children. Ethnic identity is not regarded as having a fixed content shared with all other Pakistanis, but rather being a complex of processes by means of which Pakistanis construct and reconstruct their lives (cf. Weinreich 1989:45). The approach of the study is therefore within a boundary theory modified by Lithman's and Wallman's emphasis on individual, communicative and idiomatic dimensions.

4.3 Ethnic and religious identity — a theoretical positioning

The following discussion of ethnicity and nationality³ as aspects of social and cultural identity is a clarificatory discussion as a preliminary to identifying what Islam meant to the children studied in terms of meaning and social belonging. The relationship between religion and ethnicity as significant sources of social and cultural identity is an underlying theme of this work and a central theme in many recent research studies on second generation immigrants (e.g. Geaves 1996; Gilliat 1998; Jacobson 1995a,b; Knott 1992). Geaves says:

The future of Islam in Britain obviously lies with the present and future British-born generation. They will need to resolve the problem of citizenship as negotiated between nationality, ethnicity, sectarian membership and identification with the worldwide Muslim ummah (ibid.p.2).

British research has documented a tendency of giving Islam priority compared to ethnicity as a provider of a broad and complete frame of reference for most aspects of life among second and third generation immigrants from the South Asian sub-continent (e.g. Gilliat 1998).

Jacobson, on the basis of her research on British Pakistani youth (the age group 17 to 27), draws the following conclusion:

My suggestion is that the specific contents of the identities are such that whereas the ethnic boundaries are becoming increasingly permeable, the religious boundaries are remaining clear-cut and pervasive and thus serve to protect and enhance attachments to Islam (1995a:2).

In a paper from 1996 Jacobson developed this analysis further in a discussion of how British Pakistanis understood 'Britishness'. The distinction was made between three boundaries of 'Britishness': a 'civic' boundary, a 'racial' boundary and a 'cultural' boundary (1996:9).

Gardner and Shukur (1994) discussed context-dependent ethnicity among the new British Bengalis; how some of them developed a *creolised* cultural identity - a Bangla music oriented youth culture - and some of them developed world-wide oriented Muslim identity. 'More and more young Bengalis now identify themselves first and foremost as Muslims rather than as Bengali or Bangladeshi' (ibid.p.163). The blanket category 'Bangladeshi' was for both groups obsolete and both attitudes were 'a reaction to, and a defence against, the experience of racial exclusionism' (ibid.).

Knott and Khokher analysed young women's testimonies in terms of religious and ethnic orientation rather than in terms of the two cultures of home and school. Through a perceptual map of four religio-ethnic orientations (*religiously orientated, not religiously orientated, ethnically orientated, non ethnically orientated*) it was clarified how these young women negotiated religious and ethnic factors, and perhaps gave preference to one over the other, according to context (Knott and Khokher 1993). (References will be made to the above mentioned research as part of the following discussion.)

The next section deals with children's expressions of what they felt themselves to be. It is, however, important to keep in mind that these utterances are reflections on how they felt and not necessarily the feelings themselves. The vocabulary at their disposal will, for example, be decisive in their capacity to express feelings. Their vocabulary is also shown to be decisive when it comes to children's social classifications and expressions of

social boundaries (4.5). Children's discourse is here analysed in relation to the discourse of mainstream society.

The material will be presented in three sections in accordance with the three mentioned, partly overlapping categories (self-ascriptions, social boundaries and language identifications). These experience-based categories combine what Jenkins has called processes of 'group identifications' which take place within the ethnic boundary and processes of 'categorisation' which take place outside the boundary (Jenkins 1986:177). The theoretical foundation for this way of operationalising the identity complex is theories of 'situated identities' (Weinreich 1989:63-64) and also the viewpoint 'that ethnic groups are categories of ascription and identification by the actors themselves' (Barth 1981:199). Ethnicity is regarded as a part of the totality of identities and it 'changes situationally and can never be fixed or static' (Jackson 1997: 85). As Weinreich says, 'people's ethnic identity is not a "thing". It is rather *a complex of processes by means of which people construct and reconstruct their ethnicity*' (ibid. p. 45). This construction and reconstruction takes place in a dialectical process combining internal and external factors (Jacobson 1995b:89). The following sections will explore how individual children expressed and classified themselves and thereby constructed and reconstructed themselves.

4.4 Self-ascriptions (I feel like...)

Ethnicity was not an emic or experience-near category for children (cf. Chapter 2). Self-ascription as Pakistani, however, was. This section will explore how children used this self-ascription, for example if this term for them was an ethnic or cultural category or both (cf. Jacobson 1995a:2). It will also be of interest to consider whether the vocabulary at their disposal worked in expressing their feelings and values, or whether they were limited by concepts imposed on them by the mainstream society or by the minority community (cf. Baumann 1996). An analysis of their self-ascriptions is one among a number of other ways of understanding their self-perceptions. Especially relevant to this discussion will be Weinreich's distinction between *ego-recognised identity*, *alter-ascribed identity* and the *metaperspective of self* (Weinreich 1989:62). One's ego-recognised social identity may not be in accordance with the ascription imposed by another (an alter-ascribed identity). Sometimes one does not have direct access to another's view of oneself and in such cases one forms a metaperspective of self, i.e. one's interpretation of alter-ascribed identities.

Alter-ascribed identities may be regarded as parallels to 'coercive' (as opposed to 'voluntaristic') boundaries; boundaries imposed upon a person by fellow-members of the group or externally (Jenkins 1986; Jacobson 1995a; 1995b).

Tajfel also touches on the problem of cognitive categorisation in relation to value differentials. He says: 'Categorization is a guide for action in the sense that it helps to structure the social environment according to certain general cognitive principles' (Tajfel 1978:62). The categories used by the children will accordingly structure their social environment. This is also in accordance with Berger's statement: 'The individual realizes himself in society - that is, he recognizes his identity in socially defined terms and these definitions become reality as he lives in society' (Berger 1966:107). This does not exclude men's capacity to create new concepts or, as Weinreich says, men's power of reason and innovative thought which also includes the ability of 'changing definitions of themselves together with altered lifestyles and value systems' (Weinreich 1987:43).

The emotional, pre-theoretical character of children's self-ascriptions are underlined by focusing on what they *felt* to be.⁴ In the elaboration of the answers a diversified set of arguments was presented, from the more formal classifications like citizenship to 'racial' or 'cultural' distinctions. These distinctions were, in practice, partly overlapping or they were used side by side in a sequence of arguments. For analytical purposes, it is therefore more important to focus on the linkages and the transitions than to find distinguishable categories. Illustrative examples and longer sequences of dialogue will be given to contextualise the categories and to demonstrate the overlaps (cf. Chapter 2).

Most children answered that they felt *both* Pakistani and Norwegian. Typical of these answers, however, was that most of them ended up by giving priority to the feeling of being 'a little bit more Pakistani'. The following dialogue with Nasir (m 13) may illustrate this transition. In a context where we were talking about RE (*livssynskunnskap*; cf. 1.4) at school, Nasir mentioned that identity had been one of the recent subjects. We then had the following conversation:

I: Have you ever reflected on that subject in relation to yourself...who you are?

N: Who I am?

I: If you are Pakistani, if you are Norwegian, or if you are just....?

N: I do feel both. I do feel Pakistani. I do feel Norwegian.

I: Mmm

N: But surely I say that I'm not Norwegian, even if I am born here.

I: Why so surely?

N: I don't know. I feel a little bit more Pakistani.

I: Yes.

N: I am a Pakistani citizen, you know.

I: OK

N: I may change citizenship at any time.

I: Do you see any advantages connected to that?

N: No, I don't see any advantages except that we now have to have a visa to go to other European countries.

I: OK, there might be that kind of practical thing... like the right to vote....

N: Yes, dad is not allowed to vote, except at the local elections.

It is interesting to see how he started by saying that he felt both, but at the same time had no doubt as to ascribe himself as Pakistani. As an explanation for this self-ascription he first referred to his feelings (they were, after all, more in the one direction), and then referred to more formal categories such as citizenship. Citizenship may express or symbolise emotional attachments, but may also have a more practical side. Nasir rapidly underlined the fact that he might easily change citizenship, but that would hardly imply anything for his self-ascription. This is in accordance with what Jacobson states about British Pakistanis. To have British citizenship 'entails a kind of membership of British society that is official but not truly meaningful' (Jacobson 1996:10). In the same way Nasir does not feel Pakistani because he has Pakistani citizenship. I asked him to tell me more about why he felt Pakistani. He said:

Our social surroundings are both...Pakistani and Norwegian. Both are together, keep together. The Norwegians, of course, call themselves Norwegians. And the Pakistanis call themselves Pakistanis. But when they are together, then they don't say they are not Norwegians. You don't say you are not Norwegian, even

if you are not, in that social setting. When we have lived here our whole life, we don't say we are not Norwegians. We call ourselves Pakistanis like our parents...in the way that we have our own culture.

Nasir distinguished between:

- Which groups actually existed in his social surroundings.
- What people called themselves.
- The importance or non-importance of ethnicity in the social interaction.

For Nasir it seemed self-evident that there were two different ethnic groups, and what these two groups called themselves was in accordance with what they were called by 'the others' (ego-recognised and alter-recognised identity; cf. Weinreich above). Most important, however, was his observation about the indifference of these ascriptions when people did things together or lived in the same community. Then ethnicity was clearly undercommunicated (we don't say we are not Norwegians'). This is in accordance with Lithman's statement:

...ethnic labels may be of no relevance at all, as, e.g. in certain work situations involving individuals drawn from different immigrant ethnies (sic) (Lithman 1987:15).

Nasir's way of ascribing himself is typical for most respondent children. Their identities were clearly situated; they expressed a tendency of undercommunicating their double or multiple identities in everyday social life, but at the same time had a clear opinion of being culturally different from other groups.⁵

Hyphenated identities

Some children had problems in conceptualising a double or multiple identity. In Norway, as in America, it is possible to form *hyphenated concepts* such as Norwegian-American, Norwegian-Pakistani etc. The category Norwegian-Pakistani was, however, non-existent in the vocabulary of the children. There was a discrepancy between what the children expressed concerning plural identities and the ethnic vocabulary at their disposal. They seemed to be caught in a conceptual trap of dichotomies (cf. Knott 1993:607) (to be further

discussed below). According to Wallman it is 'this conceptual failure of the majority culture that puts so pessimistic a gloss on multiple or marginal identity patterns' (Waltman 1983:75). Saifullah Khan underlines that hyphenated concepts do not exist in English. She says: 'These concepts and classifications and the lack of them tell us more about our ethnicity or the dominant ethnicity than about the minority culture' (Saifullah Khan 1981:16).

The question raised by Saifullah Khan, Waltman and by this study is whether hyphenated concepts would better express children's plural identities (cf. Chapter 8). When it is absent as part of everyday speech, the reason may be that neither majority nor minority has accepted the idea of 'plural identities' (cf. Kumar 1997). Thus the purpose of a hyphenated conceptualisation of identity, such as Norwegian-Pakistani, would in this study be to express the integrated plurality of identities (elaborated as grounded theory in Chapter 8), and not to characterise identity as 'something in between' or 'split'.

Shifting terms

From time to time I tried to 'lead' interviewees into answering that they felt Norwegian by stressing that they were born in Norway, spoke Norwegian etc., but this never led to answers that went beyond the feeling of being both Norwegian and Pakistani. Aisha (f 9) said:

A: I feel like both.

I: Yes, OK.

A: I feel mostly like Pakistani.

I: Yes.

A: But when I am outdoors and that sort..., I do not feel like an outsider.

I: No, it is perhaps possible to be both. It may be difficult, but can you tell me why you feel mostly to be Pakistani?

A: Yes, because we *are* Pakistani, you know. At home when we speak Urdu...

These self-ascriptions are apparently inconsistent. Aisha first explicitly states her double identity (Norwegian and Pakistani), then conveys that her feelings are more in the one direction (Pakistani), and ends up by a taken-for-granted assumption (we *are* Pakistanis). Language is mentioned as the marker of a specific Pakistani identity. However, 'to be Pakistani' implied neither a

culturally distinct content, except the speaking of Urdu at home, nor a social boundary (she did not feel like an outsider); it was rather an idiom as part of the everyday discourse (cf. Lithman 1987:3).⁶ An ethnic idiom may, under other circumstances, be revitalised to have a culturally distinctive content or to mark a social boundary.

Another way of speaking about ethnicity is to reflect on how you feel in relation to 'the others' ('I don't feel like an outsider'). When Aisha initially said she felt she was both Pakistani and Norwegian, she expressed a feeling of 'multiple cultural competence' (Jackson and Nesbitt 1993:175). If this utterance is combined with her own language practice and lifestyle (cf. the description of Family E, Chapter 3), the taken-for-granted Pakistani identity is seen to have a content that is increasingly dominated both by Norwegian language and the Norwegian way of life. The ethnic boundaries were fluid and permeable in the way documented in Jacobson's study of the London Borough of Waltham Forest (Jacobson 1996) (elaborated in the next section). If the concept Norwegian-Pakistani had been at Aisha's disposal, it might have covered her identity in a more accurate and descriptive sense. A descriptive concept like Norwegian-Pakistani, might, however, not be adequate to convey children's *feelings* of identity.

According to the theory of situational ethnicity (e.g. Waltman 1986), the context is decisive for which ethnic labels are used. A diversified and shifting terminology might therefore be more congruent with children's plural identities than a hyphenated concept (cf. the discussion of integrated plural identity, 8.5). Even those children who had Norwegian friends, spoke Norwegian fluently and participated in social arenas of the mainstream society (such as sporting activities), still described themselves as Pakistanis (cf. Jackson and Nesbitt 1993:27). Rashid (m 14) is an example of this category and his answer contains some typical explanations for this type of self-ascription.

I: Do you feel Norwegian or Pakistani?

R: Pakistani.

I: Why?

R: First of all because I am a Pakistani citizen, you know.

I: Yes.

R: Plus that I have dark skin and black hair.

I: Mm

R: Mum and dad are too.

I: So you are quite sure about these things...but you were born in Norway? You are maybe a Pakistani in Norway?

R: Mmm

I: But when you are in Pakistan, do you long to be back home in Norway?

R: Then they all say that I am very Norwegian. They say: there are the boys from Europe.

In this dialogue there is an interesting sequence, from simply stating a feeling to listing distinctions like citizenship, physical features and the origins of parents. There is also an acceptance of a situational ethnicity in the way Rashid 'accepts' the ascription by others as Norwegian (or European). He not only accepted the ascription given to him by others, he seemed to enjoy the temporary status it gave him.

The reference to parents as Pakistanis is given by most children as the main legitimisation of their own Pakistani-ness. As Yasmin (f 14) expressed it: 'I have Pakistani parents. My whole family is Pakistani, and...I feel Pakistani.' Yasmin's utterance is typical and interesting because the reference to parents is not presented as something formal or mechanical but combined with a subjective emotional expression: 'I feel like a Pakistani.'

As a conclusion of this section's discussion it might be stated that the self-ascriptions given above may all be classified as expressions of ethnic identity as Pakistanis in the sense of *situational ethnicity*. The feeling of being Pakistani is strong, but the content of this self-ascription varies according to the situation or, as expressed by Eriksen, 'ethnicity is essentially *conditional* pertaining to persons-in-situations and not *categorical* pertaining to persons-as-such' (Eriksen 1995:432). The term 'Pakistani' was connected to citizenship, parent's country of origin, cultural distinctiveness, distinctiveness caused by colour of skin and hair, attachment to a specific social environment (including family relations) or simply an idiom within children's everyday discourse. The children ascribed themselves partly by reference to cultural content distinctiveness, partly by reference to social boundaries. Their problem of conceptualising the double message of feeling Pakistani and at the same time regarding Norway as their home country, both of which were expressed equally clearly and without any contradiction, exemplifies the insufficiency of relying

solely on self-ascriptions in order to understand children's social and cultural identity. The next section will discuss social boundaries as part of their self-presentations.

4.5 Social Boundaries (Us-Them)

The focus of this section is on how Pakistani children spoke about themselves (us) in relation to others (them). This dichotomisation was partly implicit in the self-ascriptions presented above. Eriksen distinguishes between dichotomisation, complementarisation and we-hood (Eriksen 1995:434).⁷ Dichotomisation refers to the establishment of a distinct identity through contrasts vis-à-vis the other. The contrasts are often of a negative character. Complementarity, however, refers to the creation and reproduction of a comparative terminology for dealing with cultural differences. The development of a shared language is often necessary for conceptualising these differences. We-hood presupposes some kind of internal solidarity or cultural commonality and is often a condition for both dichotomisation and complementarisation.⁸ Theoretically it is of interest to distinguish what constitutes we-hood (we as subject) from what constitutes us-hood (we as object), but every empirical context seems to encompass both aspects of social identity (Eriksen 1995:429).

In this section the conceptual pair 'us-them' is not used as dichotomisation, as opposed to a complementary pair 'we-you', in the sense of marking a mutual demarcation process (Eriksen 1993:27), but simply as opposing terms within an ethnic context marked by interethnic relationships. The analysis will, however, discuss children's use of the dichotomy, to explore whether it inclines more in a direction of mutual demarcation or complementarity. In Chapter 8 the distinction between 'we' and 'us' as two modes of group identification will be thoroughly analysed in connection with the discussion of ethnicity and religion as sources of identity. It will be of interest to relate the role of ethnicity and religion to we-hood and us-hood respectively.

The respondents used the dichotomy 'us-them' in a variety of ways. They made a distinction between:

- Pakistanis and Norwegians.
- Themselves and Pakistanis in Pakistan.

- Family/*biradari*/those among whom marriages might be arranged and others.
- Themselves as born in Norway (and well established in the local community) and 'newcomers' (like refugees etc.).
- Asian and Westerners.
- Muslims and non-Muslims.

A key issue in the following analysis is the discussion of the context and content of these distinctions: which of them should be classified as ethnic, cultural or religious categories and whether there are different layers of ethnicity, culturality and religiousness in each distinction.

Gender and gender roles were often mentioned by both boys and girls as explicit markers of ethnic or cultural group identification. This is in accordance with other studies (which often combine a discussion of gender as a marker of ethnic and Islamic identity, e.g. Brah 1996; Saifullah-Khan 1976; Sandborg 1990). Gender is generally 'deeply implicated in the complex of societal processes' (Weinreich 1989:58) and in the following discussion the gender dimension will be illuminated from the viewpoints of both boys and girls as it manifested itself as an aspect of each of the six distinctions.

Pakistanis versus Norwegians

As the previous section has shown, most children said they felt they were both Pakistani and Norwegian. However, they frequently used the dichotomy 'us-them' when speaking about Pakistanis in relation to Norwegians. This 'us-them' dichotomy was a dominant part of their everyday vocabulary, mostly used complementarily to conceptualise cultural distinctiveness without necessarily implying conflicting identities. There were, however, children who articulated a feeling of conflict. Rifat (f 17) was one of them. She said she felt 'divided'. When asked to elaborate that saying, and also to reflect on eventual differences between her way of being Pakistani in Norway and for others to be Pakistani in Pakistan, she said:

When I am in Pakistan, it is always like this: I can't be just like them you know. They know a lot of things I don't know, for instance. It means I feel a little bit like an outsider there as well. It has to do with language and habits, what they know about history and so on. In Norway too, I don't know that much about

Norwegians, about Norwegian people. Here I am not completely Norwegian, and there I am not completely Pakistani, you know.

Rifat here speaks about two sets of dichotomies: Pakistanis vs. Norwegians and Pakistanis like herself, from Norway, vs. Pakistanis in Pakistan. She expresses a feeling of belonging completely to neither the Pakistanis in Pakistan nor the Norwegians in Norway. I tried to turn her argument around, suggesting that she had a double competence, knowing something from both sides, but she said:

I actually do feel stupid. At home, I am something quite different from what I am when I am out. Some Pakistani persons I know are more like Norwegians, being more together with Norwegians and that sort of thing, but then they don't know anything about their own country, about their religion and that sort of thing. You have to be on one side!

Rifat's point of view seems to be quite distanced from what was written above about hyphenated and shifting identities. Her terminology, however, may be questioned. One of the examples she gave of feeling like an outsider in Pakistan was her own lack of knowledge of *Shia* history and rituals. One of her cousins in Pakistan was a *Shia* Muslim, and Rifat had felt rather strange when observing the bloody *Muharram* ritual (see Chapter 6). For Rifat this exemplified her split between a Pakistani and a Norwegian identity. Many *Sunni* Muslims in Pakistan would, however, feel the same way as Rifat did, watching this *Shia* ritual for the first time, but they would not at all connect these negative feelings with a deviant ethnic identity. What Rifat experienced was a cultural distance between 'us' and 'them', but this cultural distance was not necessarily an ethnic one. Whenever she felt herself to be an 'outsider', she seemed to ascribe the feeling to a divided ethnic identity, what she experienced as a Pakistani-Norwegian dichotomy. These ethnic categories were the only concepts at her disposal. She was caught up in what Baumann calls the dominant discourse, namely that an ethnic group shares a specific culture (Baumann 1996: 22). Within this kind of discourse all members of an ethnic group are supposed to share 'a culture' and it is taken for granted that social and cultural boundaries run along ethnic lines. Rifat's 'problem' was one among many examples of conflicts, diversities, 'us-them' dichotomies being interpreted as ethnic conflicts without actually being so.⁹

When explicitly talking about cultural differences between Pakistanis and Norwegians, Nasir (m 13) said:

Most differences [are] for girls actually. Girls here are more open. But in Pakistan... A lot of people here call that discrimination. Actually there is no discrimination. Just that girls are somewhat different from boys. It was like that in Norway some years ago.

Nasir transferred the difference between the two ethnic groups in Norway to a difference between Pakistan and Norway. His group identification ('us' as opposed to 'them') was broadened by including Pakistanis in Pakistan. He spoke about here and there, and in this way he gave the differences a more permanent and comprehensive character. Simultaneously he relativised the Pakistani way of gender segregation by comparing it with similar attitudes in Norway some years ago. His utterance illustrates a typical comparative terminology aimed at explaining cultural distinctiveness.

I asked him if he had experienced any change from primary to secondary school level with regard to the degree of interaction between Pakistani boys and girls. He answered:

I have never been together with Pakistani girls. We don't have any in our family. They are all older than me. We call them sisters in a way. But Norwegian girls...me do talk with them, have fun.

It is interesting to note how he operated with three groups of girls: 1) girls within the family, called sisters, with whom you may have contact, 2) Norwegian girls with whom you may talk and have fun, and 3) Pakistani girls outside the family with whom you do not have contact. His answer is in itself a confirmation of the cultural difference he referred to earlier.

In some of the Pakistani girls' development from childhood to adolescence there had been changes in lifestyle, and these changes had increased differences between being Norwegian and Pakistani. The girls insisted, however, that these changes were not forced upon them. Rifat (f 17) said:

I haven't really thought about it, but...nobody has forced me not to do things, except myself. It is not that mum or dad have instructed me. I realised all these things by myself.

The 'things' she, and other girls, talked about all concerned their relationship to boys.

I: Do you feel that you are kept under stricter control?

R: No. I don't think so, or I withdraw by myself.

Their attitudes may be said to express internalised values but, at the same time, a consciousness (an increased reflexivity) about these values. They were not taken for granted, because the girls were aware of the fact that these values made the distinction between 'us' (the Pakistanis) and 'them' (the Norwegians) sharper. It is too easy to characterise these internalised values, more or less consciously chosen by the girls, as a total female submission (cf. Brah 1996:77). Most girls combined the attitude of female withdrawal from some specific arenas of young people's socialising with a strong emphasis on the importance of 'making something out of your life', for instance to study, not only marry. Most girls wanted to pursue a career, for instance to become lawyers, and *then* to marry. Even if social identification with one group (the Pakistanis) seemed for some to be strengthened with age, the same girls' cultural identity had changed in the sense that aspects of 'meaning' expressed through gender roles had become more complex (this will be elaborated in Chapter 8).

The girls accepted, adjusted to and negotiated values. This 'identity work' (Ziehe 1989) is possible to understand, from one point of view, as part of their Pakistani-ness, as a process within the Pakistani community, without taking into consideration any possible influences from the Norwegian mainstream society. From another point of view however, the lifeworld of Rifat and other girls crossed ethnic borders, and their values were most probably influenced by different sources. Whether or not changed attitudes were influenced by sources outside the Pakistani community, there seemed to be room for many adjustments within the existing 'us-them' dichotomy.

There were, however, situations in which Pakistani children experienced not the 'cracks in the ethnic wall' (Ehn 1991:133), but borders which were impossible to cross without losing one's social, cultural and religious identity:

'When it is a barbecue at the sports club, the only thing they serve is hot dogs, and then you feel an outsider' (Nasir m 13).

Some children admitted that they sometimes avoided going to sports club parties or to Christmas balls at school. In most social situations, they were active and well integrated, but occasionally there were limits to their participation. These boundaries were connected to gender roles and food restrictions. Children tried to undercommunicate the importance of participating in such events, but from what is known about youth socialisation in Norway generally, these arenas are important elements of mainstream enculturation.

Children talked about Pakistan and Pakistani culture both as outsiders and insiders, and they compared their own categories with Norwegian characteristics in a differentiated way. Despite their diverse views on Pakistani identity, they also had a view that Pakistanis in Norway should be positive models for Norwegians, thus making a sharp distinction between 'their group' and Norwegians.

Pakistanis in Norway vs. Pakistanis in Pakistan

As noted above, Rifat, like most of my respondents, operated with different 'us — them' classifications. Besides the Pakistani - Norwegian dichotomy, Rifat talked about the Pakistanis in Norway (us) opposed to the Pakistanis in Pakistan (them). This was an explicit part of her experience of feeling 'divided', as discussed in the previous sub-section, and it was also present when she talked about marriage:

R: I would like to marry someone who lives here more than someone who lives in Pakistan.

I: You don't think you will go to Pakistan?

R: Not forever. Holiday is something else, different from staying there forever.

When she talked about marrying someone who lived here, she meant marrying a Pakistani who lived in Norway. (Marrying a Norwegian was not even a theme of discussion. [cf. the next sub-section].)

The opposition Pakistanis in Norway vs. Pakistanis in Pakistan was a typical situationally experienced dichotomy. It was not recognised as a dichotomy in their discourse in Oslo. On the contrary, we have already seen how children conceptually included Pakistan and Pakistanis generally in their 'us'-categorisation. When children (and adults) visited relatives in Pakistan, however, they often unexpectedly met 'the others'. They felt like strangers and easily talked about 'us' (Pakistanis from Norway) in contrast to 'them'. The content of this dichotomisation was, however, not unambiguous. First generation Pakistani immigrants often experienced 'them' (Pakistanis in Pakistan) as far more modernised and culturally changed than expected: 'We had not changed as much as they had,' was a common utterance. Children and youth coming from Oslo to rural areas in Punjab, however, often experienced 'the others' as un-modern or old-fashioned. In this context, more important than the characteristics in themselves is the experience of dichotomisation.

Family / *biradari* / those among whom one should marry vs. others.

The Pakistani tradition of marrying a cousin or another relative is a strong factor, not only in keeping the family together, but in maintaining Panjabis, Kashmiris etc. as ethnic groups (Ballard 1990).¹⁰ The 'us-them' dichotomy established through marriage practice is not clear cut and impermeable (and it is contradictory to prescribed Islamic doctrine), but it is still strong and influential, even in a minority situation. The relatively small number of Pakistanis in Norway, however, causes problems for the practice of this system (cf. Chapter 1). It is difficult to find a suitable partner within the *biradari* in Norway, and even within broader groups, like *zat* or the wider Panjabi Muslim population. Partners have to be found in Pakistan (or occasionally among relatives in other European countries). From a male perspective, this is not regarded as very unusual or problematic, but for Norwegian Pakistani girls this represents a rather traumatic experience, since they are expected to move to their in-laws after marriage (Ballard 1990; 1994; Lien 1993; Shaw 1988). Within a traditional setting this would imply staying with relatives already known ('us'-group). For Norwegian-Pakistani girls, however, it increasingly implied moving to someone unknown in a 'foreign' country far away (to 'them')." A consequence seems to be the trend to have bridegrooms move from Pakistan to Norway to stay with their bride and her family. From one point of view, this may be regarded as a demonstration of the conservatism and pertinence of the old system of arranged marriages.¹² From another point of view, the new practice may be regarded as a consequence of the girls' increased influence. Families have to accept that their Norwegian-Pakistani

daughters neither want to stay, nor are 'trained' to stay, with their in-laws in Pakistan.¹³

Marriage practice was not a direct subject of my inquiries, except in collecting data tracing the biographies of each family. Nevertheless, discussions about marriages and weddings were part of children's everyday life and, as such, part of the research.¹⁴

Asian vs. Westerners

The distinction 'us — them' was also present when children spoke about music or film preferences. In these contexts the distinction 'Asian'-'Western' was sometimes used, but the most striking finding was a notion of distinctiveness combined with a confusion of terminology. When Yasmin (f 14) was asked what kind of music she liked, she said:

It is something in between. It is Pakistani or Indian or Norwegian,
I mean American, like Whitney Houston (Yasmin f 14).

The interesting thing here is not that she listened to both Asian and Western music, but that Whitney Houston was first categorised as Norwegian music. Likewise her favourite programme on Norwegian TV was Santa Barbara, but she also watched Asia Channel with great pleasure.¹⁵

For most respondents, as for Yasmin, it was easily accepted that Whitney Houston and Santa Barbara were absorbed as part of the Norwegian and not as part of the Pakistani youth culture. For Yasmin they were both part of her lifeworld, on the same line as the pop music on Asia Channel, and this shows that the content of the youth culture might be the same, regardless of which ethnic terms are used. Whitney Houston and Santa Barbara were part of the common popular youth culture and created a culturally 'neutral' 'bridging' arena of interaction, whereas Pakistani pop music as part of Yasmin's world was kept 'concealed from public life and restricted to families, relatives, churches, and ethnic associations' (Ehn 1991:144). The pop music on Asia Channel might be said to come closer and closer to the common youth culture, but as long as it is watched, and listened to, only by those who subscribe, and that means only by Asian minorities, this music is far from being transferred to the common youth culture. Ehn concludes from his research in a multicultural suburb of Stockholm:

All of the non-Swedes have been more or less acculturated into Swedish habits and values, but there are few examples of cultural exchanges the other way around (ibid.).

There are, however, some new tendencies that suggest 'ethnic' inspired pop music (e.g. bhangra music) might win general popularity (Ballard 1994; Baumann 1990; Gardner and Shukur 1994; Gillespie 1989).¹⁶ It is, however, still too early to say if, and how, this might influence the 'identity work' of Norwegian-Pakistani children.

The greater variety of people with Asian backgrounds in Britain compared to Norway seems to lead to a more extensive use of the term 'Asian'. Young Norwegian-Pakistani informants who have stayed temporarily in London, expressed relief at the broader spectrum of identifications offered by this term compared to 'Pakistani'.

Local community members vs. 'newcomers'.

One variant of the 'us — them' dichotomy was expressed when children identified strongly with their school or local community and felt a distance from 'newcomers' regardless of their ethnic background. Rashid (m 14) illustrates this attitude. He was born in Norway, and had lived at his present address for as long as he could remember. He expressed a strong social belonging to this local community, his school and especially his football club. His weekdays were fully booked with homework and sports activities, and even at the weekends there might be football or handball matches. Otherwise the weekends were a time for receiving visitors or visiting family or Pakistani friends of the family. Rashid's personal friends at school and at the club were mainly Norwegians, and he regarded himself as one of them: 'I was born here and I speak Norwegian'. He often spoke of himself as different from the others, those coming from abroad. When talking about being part of a 'gang', he said:

The foreigners at our school, they are rather calm, and they are not like rowdies and that sort of thing. But there are a lot of Pakistanis. you know, who behave like a mob, who do things like that. you know.

When I asked him to explain that kind of behaviour, he said:

I am not quite sure, but...maybe when you come to Norway, you know, having no friends, and not knowing Norwegian very well, and you have to get some friends in one way or another, and then they get someone, but it turns out to be on the wrong side. You start to smoke and all that... But me - I have lived here in this flat. I know what kind of friends to have, not to participate in gangs and that sort of thing.

Muslims vs. non-Muslims

This sub-section will not deal with the implications of being a Muslim (see the discussion in Chapters 5, 6, and 7), but will focus on how children *spoke* about themselves as Muslims in contrast to others. Some recent British research, presented in 4.3, has concluded that Islam has priority in relation to ethnicity in the lives of young adults. This implies that young adults increasingly use the dichotomy 'us-them' in the meaning of Muslims vs. non-Muslims. Ethnic boundaries seem to be much more permeable than religious ones (cf. the increased use of 'Asian' among British Pakistanis, Bangladeshis etc.) and young adults distinguish clearly between what they call Pakistani-ness (or Asian-ness) and being a Muslim (Jacobson 1995a).

In the casual language of my respondents, however, terms like Muslim and Pakistani were overlapping. Three reasons may be found for this difference in findings between Jacobson's research and my own. First of all the difference in age between her respondents and mine is decisive (her respondents are between the age of 17 and 24). At an early stage of a child's development the child does not feel any need to distinguish herself or himself from their parents, e.g. when it comes to ethnic self-presentation (cf. Larson 1990:57). Secondly, the longer establishment of Pakistanis in Britain may have led to a stronger enculturation. Thirdly, the Islamic Movement has in Britain and elsewhere attracted Muslim youth from a variety of ethnic backgrounds (Lewis 1994).

When talking about the custom of wearing a veil or eating *halal* food, most children mixed the use of ethnic and religious terminology. Iqra (f 9), for example, used the term Pakistani as interchangeable with Muslim: 'Some Pakistanis must wear the veil before boys'. Talking about *halal* food, she used

the term Muslim: 'Muslims may eat it.' This shows an inconsistency of terminology, or it shows that *halal*, for Iqra, is more connected to Islam, whereas wearing the veil is more connected to a Pakistani custom. I asked her if she felt a relation to Norwegian Muslims, or if she felt different from them. She answered 'No, I...They do have the same religion, but they maybe have another way of living'.

The children seemed to feel a problem in dealing with, for them, conflicting categorisations. This conversation between Tariq (m 9), Iqra and the researcher illustrates the point:

T: In our class there are nine different countries, I think.

IQ: There is only one Pakistani

I: OK

IQ: But, you know, she is Christian. She speaks Urdu, but she is Christian.

I: OK, Christian Pakistani?

T: She can speak Pakistani....she speaks that at home and....But she is Christian.

I: Are there any other differences between her and you, except that she is Christian? Is she like you?

IQ: She is Christian.

They first categorised people according to countries, and accordingly they also recognised the Christian Pakistani girl as Pakistani, but at the same time they seemed to be somewhat confused about it. She did not fit into the known pattern of common country = common language = common religion, but they reluctantly had to accept her as one of their own ethnic group. Another girl also talked about how confused she had been once she had met some Christian Pakistanis. They had looked just like herself 'with long hair, real pigtail and Pakistani clothes', she said. She had asked: 'Are you really Christians?'

In interviewing children about the division between the subjects 'Knowledge of Christianity' (kristendomskunnskap) and 'Knowledge of Worldviews' (livssynskunnskap)¹⁷ in Norwegian schools, they often ended up by categorising which pupils attended which classes. Saima (19) said:

In our class there are different children who are Muslims and some Christians. We don't have 'Christianity' and 'Worldviews' in the same class. All those Christian children, those who are Norwegian, they go to our classroom, and those who are Pakistani and Muslim, they go to another classroom.

To understand Saima's terminology it is important to know that there were Muslims in her class with another ethnic background than Pakistani. She operated with two categories of pupils attending the 'Worldview' class: Pakistanis *and* Muslims. I asked her if there were any Norwegians who attended this class, and she said: 'Yes, there is one called Bjørn Harald'. He was a person she knew by name, but he did not fit into her categories.

The data of this study clearly shows that even if the dichotomy Muslim - non-Muslim was known to the children, this categorisation was not as dominant in their way of thinking as was the dichotomy Pakistani - Norwegian.

Conclusion

In this section the distinction 'us-them' has been presented both as sharp, like a Pakistani-Norwegian dichotomy, and looser, as with the distinction between 'established immigrants' and 'newcomers'. This flexibility of social boundaries is also expressed in the way children created something new, acceptable to themselves and different to 'others'. When children used the term 'in between' in such cases, it did not necessarily mean falling between or having to choose between opposites, but it meant adjustment to the mainstream youth culture without losing one's integrity. Yasmin (f 14) was one of those who used the term 'in between', both when she talked about music and about how she dressed: 'If I am going to a party, I wear such clothes that look almost Norwegian...it is in a way in between. I wear long dresses or a skirt'.

Some children experienced being caught up in one social group, and they were not capable of practising the flexibility they wanted to. Yasmin (f 14), among others, had this experience:

I: Do you have mostly Pakistani friends?

Y: Yes

I: Yes...with whom are you together at school?

Y: The Norwegian girls in my class....they don't like to be together with us, to put it that way.

I: Do you think they are somewhat racist?

Y: They are not quite like racists, but... it seems as if they don't like... Sometimes they talk to us.

I: Mmm

Y: But I would like to be with them....if I was not together with these other girlstypical in a way!

I: OK, so it means there are differences among Pakistanis as well? Y: Yes, there are some differences.

She spoke about 'us' (the Pakistanis) and 'them' (the Norwegians), but at the same time she distanced herself partly from the group she was ascribed to belong to. She would like to move in and out of the different groups, but was not 'allowed' to because the 'alter-ascribed identity' was not identical with her 'ego-ascribed' one (Weinreich 1989:61). She experienced herself as a 'skilled cultural navigator' (Ballard 1994:31), and demonstrated by what she said and her way of life a 'multiple cultural competence' (Jackson and Nesbitt 1993:175).

This section has shown how the 'us-them' distinctions are situationally dependent. The degree of permeability of boundaries has also been discussed. Within these social classifications only the first (Pakistani vs. Norwegian) may be said to be an ethnic classification in a strict sense 'since ethnicity presupposes an institutionalised relationship between delineated categories whose members consider each other to be culturally distinctive' (Eriksen 1993:18). The others are, however, in this context related to ethnicity. Gender roles, food restrictions, music preferences, clothing and marriage practices have been seen to be markers of both ethnic, cultural and religious boundaries. Some of these markers will be thoroughly discussed as part of Chapters 5, 6 and 7.

Children have been seen to be caught up in conceptual and social quandaries, but also seen to handle these quandaries in their daily life through a diversified and flexible set of 'us-them' dichotomies. The next section will look into how children presented themselves directly and indirectly through languages.

4.6 Language and identity (My tongue speaks...)

In the previous sections language use was an implicit aspect of both self-

ascriptions and some of the 'us-them' dichotomies. Language was, for example, often referred to by children when they were asked to explain their immediate self-ascriptions as Pakistanis. Using Urdu or Panjabi¹⁸ was experienced as a sign of belonging to a culturally distinct community. For some children, this was primarily part of a sector of their lives that linked them to parents and grown-up relatives. For others, this language use dominated most sectors of their lives (cf the differences between Family B and C, Chapter 3). When it comes to competence in Urdu or Panjabi, one has to distinguish between these languages as mother tongues and Urdu as the national language¹⁹ and between oral competence and literacy²⁰

One of the main themes to be discussed in this section is whether practical skill (oracy and/or literacy) in a language (the mother tongue or a second language) is a presupposition for language's role as an identity marker. Another question to be discussed is whether the symbolic aspects of Urdu and Arabic compensate for a lack of practical skill in the maintenance of these languages as identity markers. (The importance of formal training in Arabic as part of Islamic nurture will be discussed in 6.2 and 7.2). Socio-linguistic, psychological and sociological approaches are combined in the way that use of languages are discussed - both attitudes towards, and identifications with, them (cf. Skutnabb-Kangas 1981; Ozerk 1992). It should be emphasised, however, that my focus is not on bilingualism as such, but on the role of languages in Pakistani children's presentation of themselves.

For Pakistani children who lived in the central parts of Oslo, the daily language situation was characterised by an extensive use of their mother tongue (cf. Chapter 3). Children were surrounded by Urdu or Panjabi speaking people at home, in the neighbourhood and even at some schools. Norwegian was spoken in the classroom, but Urdu or Panjabi (or Pakistani as some of them called it) in the breaks. Omar (m 10) is a typical boy within this category. He was Panjabi speaking, but did not feel any difficulties combining Panjabi and Urdu, for instance, when he was out playing with other children.²¹ At home all conversation between family members was in Panjabi, even in my presence. Omar said:

O: All those who don't speak Panjabi, they know Urdu. They understand what I say.

I: Do you feel it's more natural to speak Panjabi or to speak Norwegian?

O: Panjabi. I always speak Panjabi.

Omar said that all his friends knew some Urdu.

Why do they know that?

O: It is Pakistan, you know! In Pakistan they cannot speak Norwegian.

A recognition of Urdu or Panjabi as a strong identity marker might, however, be combined with a feeling of distance from Pakistan as a country, as the following example illustrates. Jamshed (m 9), like many children, thought of sickness when he thought of Pakistan. One of his first memories from visits there was that watching a sheep being slaughtered as part of the *Id al-azha* celebration, made him feel ill. He had never seen animals being slaughtered before. At other times he got head lice, he broke his leg, and he took medicines which he hated. He said he did not like the hot climate either, and I teased him by saying:

I: You are Norwegian, you know.

J: Yes, but not that much Norwegian.

I: No? What do you think you are, Norwegian or Pakistani?

J: Pakistani.

I: Mmm, how can you say that without hesitation?

J: I feel it.

I: How do you feel to be Pakistani?

J: Emmm, my tongue speaks Urdu most easily.

I: Does your tongue speak Urdu more easily than Norwegian?

J: Yes.

I: In your dreams in the night....do you speak Urdu or Norwegian?

J: Both. In the middle I come to Norwegian and sometimes I come to Urdu.

Jamshed's self-ascription expressed a pre-theoretical consciousness. He felt it as something he had not chosen or controlled, but just something that was there. He did not say: I speak Urdu or I prefer Urdu, but 'my tongue speaks Urdu'. This is a bodily expression of language identity, and his experience

may be said to convey 'deep-structures' of identity. Such deep-structures connect the child to its parents and their common lifeworld of sensibility and meaning (Kakar [1981]1992:52ft). The mother tongue is developed as the language of primary communication and interaction within the family. This is often called the popular (or common sense) approach to native language: native language is the language learnt from the mother, the language in which you dream and think.²² Most psychologists and educationalists stress adolescence as a particularly important phase for the development of identity, but they also underline the gradual integration of identification elements made during childhood, not least through the mother tongue (Erikson 1963, 1968; Hoëm 1978; Kakar 1981; Mol 1976; Skutnabb-Kangas 1981; Vygotsky 1988, Weinreich 1989).

Whereas the children whose families had moved to one of the suburbs experienced a problem in the lack of opportunity to practise Panjabi or Urdu, the respondents who lived in the central part of town often lacked the opportunity to practise Norwegian. The exceptions were those children who - despite living in areas dominated by immigrants - participated in leisure activities like sports, music, scouting etc. together with Norwegian speaking friends (e.g. Family B). Another important factor for the Norwegian language training, besides the training through schooling, was attending a kindergarten.²³

One advantage of the family approach of this study was the possibility of comparisons between elder and younger sisters and brothers within one family. Differences between elder and younger siblings indicated some lines of development (a quasi-longitudinal approach). Jamshed's little brother (aged 4) spoke far better Norwegian than his older sister and brother, which might be explained by the fact that he went to the kindergarten, but might also be caused by a gradually greater exposure to a Norwegian speaking environment. When he talked about his playmates in the kindergarten, he did not distinguish between Norwegians and Pakistanis. No doubt his mother tongue was Urdu (as it was for his sister and brother), but 'his tongue' did not 'object' when he spoke Norwegian. The difference between the brothers in their attitude to language, and distinguishing categories as Norwegian and Pakistani, might be caused by their difference of age - or might be an indication of a development within the Pakistani community towards a greater identification with the second language.

For some children, Urdu or Panjabi seemed to be less decisive for their identity, but was still a part of what made them culturally distinctive. For these children, and their parents, Urdu or Panjabi competence was constantly a question of concern. This was typical for children whose parents had moved to one of the suburbs in order to get away from the 'ghetto-like' situation in central Oslo, not least to increase their children's training in Norwegian. Rashid's (m 14) language competence - and lack of competence - may illustrate some of the consequences of this socially upward move. Rashid claimed to speak Urdu fluently in Pakistan. There he also had to speak Panjabi with his grandmother. At home in Oslo Rashid spoke Urdu with his parents and with his grown-up relatives, but increasingly he spoke Norwegian with his sisters and brothers and younger relatives. If they spoke Urdu, they mixed in a lot of Norwegian vocabulary. They identified themselves with Norwegian language, but were identified by others (including their parents) through speaking Urdu (cf. Skutnabb-Kangas 1981). Rashid would like to learn Urdu properly, including how to write and read, but he was not motivated to work hard to achieve this competence. Urdu competence was a 'qualifying capital' within the Pakistani community, but the same 'capital' gave no qualifications for improved status within mainstream Norwegian society (Lien 1997:141,148). For many children an 'investment' in Urdu was felt to be a waste of time.

Rifat (f 17), Rashid's sister, spoke Urdu, but not perfectly. She too mixed a lot of Norwegian into it. Rifat and her sister and brothers had a 'problem'. Because they lived far away from the mosque and had few Pakistani neighbours, they lacked the opportunity to practise Urdu (and to learn to read the Qur'an). Rifat said about her nine year old sister:

My sister has just recently started to read (Urdu). After all it is important to know...it is our language. I do help her sometimes. I nag her, insisting she has to learn the Qur'an and learn Urdu.

Even those children who spoke Norwegian with each other spoke Urdu with their parents. Nasir (m 13) said:

Dad always insists: speak Urdu, speak Urdu, speak Urdu. It is in a way a rule. We, the sisters and brothers, often speak Norwegian, and we mix Norwegian words into Urdu.

What is expressed above is typical both as a description of the language situation for many children and as a value statement from *their* point of view:

- They know oral Panjabi or Urdu, but very little written Urdu.
- To learn to read and write Urdu is regarded as important within the Pakistani community, but gives no status in Norwegian society.
- To learn to read the Qu'ran (in the meaning of recitation in Arabic) is important as part of being a Muslim.

The concern about protecting their mother tongue did not contradict a wish to improve their Norwegian language competence. Quite another thing was, however, how to do that. Most children, and their parents, felt this to be the responsibility of the school and, again, the socio-economic background of the families was decisive in explaining their attitudes. Educated parents, mostly with an urban background, gave a lot of positive feedback on children's schoolwork generally and Norwegian language competence in particular. Even mothers who themselves had very little competence in Norwegian were often enthusiastic about the success of their children. Among my respondents the attitudes of parents seemed to be more decisive for children's school success (including practical skill in Norwegian) than their own language competence.²⁴ The following example illustrates this.

Saima (f 9) lived in a part of town where the majority of neighbours and classmates were ethnic Norwegians. She spoke and wrote Norwegian fluently and was very proud that she attended what was called Norwegian 1 class. (Norwegian 2 was for those who needed to learn Norwegian as a foreign language). Saima had learnt Norwegian in the kindergarten. She spoke Norwegian at school, but Urdu at home, especially with her youngest brother and with her mother and she spent most of her leisure time at home. The mother had very little knowledge of Norwegian, whereas the father spoke fluently. Both parents were well educated. Saima's Norwegian language competence was combined with an identification with Norway as a country and an adoption of school values. She was, for example, proud of some essays and a poem she had written at school about peace, and she was also pleased with Norway's role in the peace process in Israel during the winter 1994/95. The consciousness she had about Norwegian language and her identification with Norway as a country signalled that this was not taken-for-granted, but was nonetheless part of her identity. Urdu as her mother tongue was, however, taken-for-granted, even if she had some problems in writing and reading it.

After a visit to Pakistan she was rather ashamed to discover that much younger children were more skilled than her in writing and reading Urdu. The shame and confusion she felt has to be understood against the background of her pre-theoretical identification with Urdu.

Even for children like Saima, Aisha or Rashid who had a double language competence when it came to practical functional skills, language use was contextually dependent. Some life situations were dominated by their first, some by their second language. This underlines the importance of language as an identity marker. Not only were some social arenas, like school, mosque or home, dominated by a specific language, but certain themes required a specific language. Often when religious or cultural issues were focused as part of interviews, children used Urdu terms and did not know how to translate them.²⁵

The religious aspects of Urdu should not be neglected. Not only in Pakistan, but all over the Indian Sub-Continent, Urdu is an identity marker for Muslims both in contrast to Hindus and Sikhs and to the rest of the Muslim world dominated by Arabs²⁶ (Lewis 1994:65). Some of the most central Islamic literature is written in Urdu²⁷ and some Pakistani parents in Oslo felt a special responsibility to make this literature available for their children. A presupposition for active participation in the Pakistani dominated mosques in Oslo would also be a certain knowledge of Urdu, both oral and written. Even if this situation changes over time, in that Norwegian is likely to become the language spoken in the mosques (cf. the tendencies in England as recorded by Lewis 1994), it is almost as difficult to imagine a complete absence of Urdu in the Pakistani-dominated mosques as it is to imagine an absence of Arabic in the Islamic world.

All respondents between 8 and 17 had some formal training in reading the Qur'an in Arabic, but Arabic was never mentioned by children when they listed language competence. The recitation of the Qur'an belonged to another context, not associated with language as practical skill. (For a discussion of the role of Arabic and recitational skills, see 6.2 and 7.2). When confronted with a lack of knowledge concerning reading in Arabic children might, however, argue quite rationalistically, as Rashid (m 14) did. He knew how to read the Qur'an in Arabic, but he had not practised regularly.

But I don't think it matters much... I think it is more important to read Urdu. I am not very good at that. To read Arabic...it is seldom I will go to Arabia. It is more Pakistan. Writing to relatives and all that.

This section has discussed the interrelatedness of language as practical skill, identity marker and symbol. At all levels practical skills achieved through formal and informal training were found to strengthen the symbolic aspects of language and thereby the role of language in the management of identity (cf. Chapter 7). Even if competence in Urdu and, even more so in Arabic, was declining, the importance of these languages as identity markers seemed to persist. The reason is the multiple symbolic meanings of these languages in relation to religion as well as to ethnicity, nationality and social status within the Pakistani community. Norwegian language seemed to gain importance as an identity marker among second generation Pakistanis, first of all in relation to their daily social life (communicative competence), but also in relation to national identification and social status in Norwegian society.

4.7 Conclusion

This chapter has analysed how Pakistani children presented themselves by referring to social networks, parent's country of origin, citizenship, language use, physical features (colour of skin, hair), cultural specificities, religious affiliation, and the country or local community where they lived. The focus of the analysis has not been the classifications in themselves, but to understand how children spoke about these issues, what they felt and thought, and how they handled social boundaries in daily life. The interpretation of the diversity of their self-presentations, verbally and non-verbally, has led to an understanding of their self-perception and ethnic identity.

The ethnic dimension of their social and cultural identity may be summarised as follows: the respondents called themselves Pakistanis or both Pakistanis and Norwegians. They regarded themselves as a group ('us') with a common origin (parents immigrated from Pakistan) and a common language (Urdu). They regarded Panjabi or Urdu as their mother tongue, but they increasingly spoke and wrote in Norwegian. Urdu was, in addition to being a mother tongue, a symbolic expression of Pakistani-ness. Arabic (and to a certain extent Urdu) was a symbolic marker of Islam. Norwegian language competence was a practical skill and an expression of attachment to Norway and to their own

lifeworld as distinct from the lifeworld of their parents. Their attitudes to Pakistan were marked by ambiguity. On the one hand, they regarded it as their country of origin, and even more as the homeland of the joint family of which they were a part, the source of their culture and Islam. On the other hand, they experienced it as a foreign country characterised by corruption, dirt, poverty and, for some, deviation from *shari'a*. When they spoke about holidays in Pakistan, they spoke about a foreign society, except for their family connections. They imagined their future in Norway, and they regarded Norway as their home country (cf. 6.5). They were Muslims, and they regarded this as a fundamental part of being Pakistani (as will be elaborated in the following chapters).

Their way of living (housing, dress code, food habits, social interaction) had a higher degree of similarity than difference (despite the socio-economic variety within the group) and was partly distinctive from the way of life of ethnic Norwegians, partly distinctive from the way of life of their parents and even more distinctive from the way of life of Pakistanis in Pakistan (cf. Chapter 3). This also implies that, to a great extent, they also shared a way of life with other Norwegian children and young people.

Their self-presentations included this broad complexity - and they seemed, overall, to have developed what Jackson and Nesbitt have called 'multiple cultural competence' (Jackson and Nesbitt 1993:175). This, despite pressure from mainstream society which ascribed to them a well-defined static and limited identity. Pakistani children's comprehension of being Pakistani in Norway exhibited a complexity that included both aspects of cultural and social distinctiveness and a periodic, situationally dependent denial of that distinctiveness.

Their ethnic identity may be described as a situated identity (cf 4.2) and covered a spectrum from Punjabi-, Pakistani-, Norwegian-ness to 'youth-nicity' (Ballard 1994:32; Fonlas 1991:16; Gardner and Shukur 1994:163). Social boundaries were shifting and layered. No single and fixed boundary existed, but rather a 'series of dichotomies' and a 'set of boundaries' were found as part of the identity process (cp. Jacobson 1995; Hutnik 1985,1986; Jenkins 1986). Like Jacobson in her study of British Pakistani youth, this chapter has focused upon 'actors' perceptions of identity and difference' (Jacobson 1995:87), and this approach has made it necessary to modify a strictly Barthian 'boundary

approach'. The reasons given by children for some of their feelings, and children's own social classifications, revealed deeper layers of their thoughts. Through some of these reflections, combined with observations of their actual everyday life, new patterns of meaning emerged. Some of these will be further analysed in the three following chapters as patterns related to Islam.

¹ The interview guide operationalised this issue by dealing with self-ascriptions, places and language (Appendix E). The analysis is also based on data from other parts of the interview material, where the theme emerged in different contexts, and from observation data

² The related topic 'attachments to global and local communities' will be discussed in Chapter 6. 'Being a Muslim' was also part of children's self-ascriptions and 'us-them' dichotomies, but will be dealt with in-depth in Chapters 5 - 8.

³ Nationality, in this context, means a personal self-identification with a nation state. It may, or may not, imply nationality in a technical sense, i.e. citizenship.

⁴ These self-ascriptions may be called conceptual boundaries (cf. Jacobson 1995:152) but in order to underline that the affective aspects were stronger than the cognitive ones, this terminology is avoided.

⁵ This is also the topic of two newly published books, written by two young Norwegian Pakistani girls: Ali 1997; Kumar 1997. Both defend sharply Norwegian Pakistani youth's right to be fully accepted as both Norwegians and Pakistanis. Kumar applies the term *bindestreksbarn* (children of hyphenated identities) as a positive attribute. Cf. the next sub-section.

⁶ "Idiom" here refers to the fact that ethnicity can be seen as a language, a mode of communication, in which certain things are expressed' (Lithman 1987:3).

⁷ The terms *dichotomisation* and *complementarisation* were first used in Eidheim's study of interethnic relationships between Sami and Norwegians (Eidheim 1971; Eriksen 1995:434).

⁸ This is a modification of a strict boundary approach to ethnicity.

⁹ This saying does not imply that some of the value conflicts experienced by children may be connected to tensions between ethnic groups.

¹⁰ Concerning the problems of reckoning Pakistanis as an ethnic group, see 3.6, endnote 17.

¹¹ In this perspective the importance of regular visits to Pakistan becomes evident.

¹² There is some evidence that arranged marriages may be used as a strategy for immigrating to the West.

¹³ There are, of course, examples of girls (and boys) who reject the whole idea of

arranged marriages. Some tragic incidents of young people being forced to marry by their parents have been reported and even taken to court (Karim 1996). Studies of this issue in Norway are needed.

¹⁴ Among the Pakistanis in Oslo I came across, there were cross-cultural marriages between Pakistani men and Norwegian women (Christians or Muslims) but not the other way round. Cf. Islamic Law, which does not allow a Muslim woman to marry a non-Muslim man (Al-Bukhari VII: 62; Glassé 1989).

¹⁵ Yasmin's father had just cancelled the subscription because he found it too time consuming. There is a need for research on the influence of Asia Channel and Indian/Pakistani videos on second generation Pakistanis in Norway.

¹⁶ The Norwegian-Pakistani pop artist Deepika may serve as an example.

¹⁷ See 1.4 for an explanation of the terms and the two-model RE in Norwegian schools and Chapter 7 for a further discussion of RE.

¹⁸ The thesis uses the writing form 'Panjabi' even if the form 'Punjabi' is more common in British literature (e.g. Lewis 1994) since it is more in accordance with a correct pronunciation and transcription system (Thiesen 1988). Like Nesbitt (1995) this study differentiates between Panjabi (language) and Punjab (province).

¹⁹ For a discussion of Urdu and Panjabi as mother tongue and national language, see Thiesen 1988, Lewis 1994.

²⁰ There is not a necessary link between ethnicity and the use of ancestral language (the Irish may have an Irish identity even if they speak English, see Weinreich in Liebkind 1989:58). To the respondents, however, language seemed clearly connected to ethnicity both as function and as symbol.

²¹ For a discussion of the relationship between Urdu and Panjabi, see Kristiansen 1990; Thiesen 1988.

²² For a further elaboration of different approaches, cf. Skutnabb-Kangas 1981; Øzerk 1992,

²³ For a broader discussion of the bilingual situation in Norway, see Hvenekilde 1994.

²⁴ This finding contradicts what is often maintained in the media and in public debate in Norway (cf. Wikan 1995). However, it is in accordance with socio-linguistics' emphasis on the importance of a linguistically rich environment in early childhood, regardless of the use of first or second language (Skutnabb-Kangas 1981).

²⁵ Some knowledge of Urdu, oral and written, on the part of the researcher was found useful in such situations.

²⁶ There is no questioning of the unique position of Arabic as a holy language in this attitude, but a strong sense of complementarity, of contributing to the Islamic tradition (see 6.2 and 7.2).

²⁷ For example: Mawlana Maududi (1903-1979).

Chapter 5

The Purity-Impurity Complex

5.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter the interwoven nature of ethnic, cultural and religious elements in Pakistani children's self-presentations was discussed. Whether to classify an experience, a habit, a social action or an institution as Islamic or Pakistani seemed, from the children's perspective, to be contextually dependent, and a sharp boundary between religious and ethnic identity was not found. The aim of this chapter (and the next two), however, is to move beyond children's self-presentations and their own codifications by interpreting some patterns which emerged from the empirical data (cf. the principles of data analysis, 2.4). These are patterns that in specific analytical ways address the two main research questions concerning the transmission of religious and cultural traditions (see the Introduction). The patterns which were found (i.e. the purity-impurity complex, the time-space complex and the educational complex) are not fixed, limited patterns, but are theoretical complexes linked to each other, linked to Islamic doctrine and grounded in children's lifeworlds.

The purity-impurity complex will be illuminated through an analysis of four aspects of children's everyday life: prayer, dress codes, food and fasting. The discussion will refer especially to theories developed by Mary Douglas (1966) and Peter Berger (1967).¹ Douglas emphasises the notion of purity and impurity in modern as well as in traditional societies, as based on a need to create order

through categorisation as well as through ritualisation. Elements or events that do not fit into established, recognised categories are regarded as 'unclean'/'polluted' and have either to be avoided as taboos or to be purified. In this chapter the overall theoretical complex is termed purity-impurity, but in the analysis a distinction will be made between impurity and pollution. Pollution is a term that can be contrasted with purity, most especially in cases where there is not a permanent state of impurity (cp. the differentiation between pollution and impurity within the Hindu caste system; Weightman 1978:19).² Many rituals aim at increasing purity in society, i.e. re-establishing a lost mien.³ This view of the aim of purifying rituals is in accordance with Berger's general theory of the role of religion in the 'world-constructing' process (Berger [1967]1990).

Religion has, according to Berger, a pre-eminent role in cosmifying the process by turning 'anomy' into 'nomos'. Here, cosmifying means giving what, in Berger's terminology, is called 'the nomization', permanence and transcendence (ibid. p 22-25). Neither of these studies deals specifically with Islam, but Douglas' theory of purity and impurity has been elaborated by some researchers in their studies on pollution within an Islamic context, especially focusing on women and pollution (Buitelaar 1993; Marcus 1984). These studies are relevant to the discussion in this study, especially with regard to the issue of gender. The study has, however, a broader child-oriented focus. It is not primarily concerned with purity-pollution on a public community level (e.g. how the Pakistani community is ritually re-established or renewed), but the role of purity-impurity on an individual and family level (a micro-level study). Concepts like 'purity' and 'impurity/pollution' are not exclusively drawn from the above mentioned researchers, but are also terms within an Islamic context. Both Arabic and Urdu concepts of purity and impurity/pollution (and related terms like *halal-haram*) will be discussed in this chapter and in Chapter 8.

5.2 Prayer and purity

Introduction

Children's prayer practice and their reflections on this practice will be discussed in this chapter and in Chapters 6 and 7. The aim of this analytical approach is to understand the ritual complex of prayer as part of children's everyday life and does not imply any splitting up of prayer as integrated experience and Islamic institution (cf. S.20:14; 4:103; 5:7, Al-Bukhari 1979;⁴ Abdalati 1978;⁵ Sarwar 1994:50,51).

In Islamic sources prayer is presented as a gift given to humankind. It is a way for Muslims to order their lives in accordance with the natural rhythm of day

and night, sunset and sunrise, work and rest. It gives men and women an opportunity to be reminded of God's presence and their own dependence on God. It may, of course, also be experienced as a heavy burden. Having implications both in this life and the hereafter, it is an obligation that must be performed correctly. For a practising Muslim there is theoretically no contradiction in this. Praying is both an education in discipline and a commitment to God. Children are not obliged to pray, but 'should be advised by their parents to start practise at the age of seven and strongly urged by the age of ten' (Abdalati 1978:64).⁶

The following aspects of prayer will be analysed as they arose from observations during the fieldwork: place and direction (prayer rug, mosque and *qibla*), timing (the five daily prayers *fajr*, *zuhr*, *asr*, *maghrib*, *'isha'*) and frequency (how often and on which occasions children prayed), bodily aspects (ablution, head covering and *raq 'at*), mental⁷ aspects (intention and feelings) and the words of prayer (the recitation). This section will concentrate on bodily and mental aspects related to the purity-impurity complex as explained in the introduction to this chapter.

Ablution and prayer

The Islamic prescriptions on purification of body and mind before praying are clear (S.5:8-9; Al-Bukhari 1979, vol.1, book 4 and 5; Sarwar 1994:45). When it comes to bodily purification, the *Hadiths* differentiate between *wudu'* (Urdu: *wuzu*), the minor ritual purification, and *ghusl* (Urdu: *ghusi*), the major ritual ablution, which has to be performed after periods or situations of major pollution, like menstruation, child birth or sexual activity. An outwardly correct bodily ablution and an outwardly correct prayer is, however, worth nothing without the right *niyya* (intention, spirit). Prayers in Islam are mainly ritual obligatory prayers, but this does not mean they are just physical movements or spiritless declamation from the Qur'an. From an Islamic point of view, *salah* 'is a matchless and unprecedented formula of intellectual meditation and spiritual devotion, of moral elevation and physical exercise, all combined' (Abdalati 1978:63).

From observations of children's practice and from their way of speaking about ablution, this knowledge seemed to be internalised and taken-for-granted, but often difficult to explain in words. Bushra's (f 12) reflections may illustrate this type of knowledge:

I (showing a picture of a fountain in front of a mosque): Is there always water at the mosque?

B: I don't know

I: No?

B: Not always anyhow, maybe sometimes.

I: But what do you have to do when you come to a mosque?

B: You have to take off your shoes, and then you have to wash in a special way...before praying.

After this she went on demonstrating in detail how one has to wash. She said that she had acquired this knowledge in the mosque and from her aunt, her Qur'an teacher (cf. Chapter 3). That she did not associate the picture of the fountain outside a mosque with the prescribed ablution, may be ascribed to the fact that she had never visited an architecturally traditional mosque. Neither had she reflected on the issue of whether water was always available or not. What to do when entering a mosque for prayer was, however, self-evident.

Most children prayed at home only when they had the time, and then often together with elder siblings or other relatives. However, those who attended Qur'an schools at the mosques in the afternoons, performed prayers quite often - and ablution was part of this experience. Anwar (m 13) said: 'We have to wash before praying. We may wash at home before leaving or at the mosque.'

Children had been taught by Qur'an school teachers, relatives or parents not only that they had to wash before praying, but how to do it. In addition to the formal teaching, they had observed others washing before prayer, either at home or in the mosque. In the homes both individual prayers and common prayers by family members were observed. Most of the time children did not attend. Individual prayers were performed by parents or relatives who washed in the bathroom, found a prayer rug and performed prayers in a corner of the room or in an adjacent room - without anyone taking notice of him or her. Praying was almost always a ritual performed together with others or in the presence of others. This explains why even small children, who did not pray regularly themselves, had an amazing accuracy in demonstrating how to wash.

The washing was not so much experienced as coming before prayer, but as part of the prayer ritual. Bodily cleanliness was associated directly with the act of praying, and this underlines the bodily aspect of Islamic prayer. However, from observation of everyday prayers (including ablution), it was difficult to tell whether the children had a sense of being unclean before praying. Even more

difficult to tell was whether children's eventual sense of uncleanness-cleanliness had a character of ritual pollution-purity (cf. Douglas [1966]1992:7ff).

The clue to an understanding of what ablution and prayer meant to children came through data on when and why children were mostly inclined to pray. The data concerning incentives for prayer were seen to highlight the general meaning of prayer for children! When, for example, Yasmin (f 14) was asked if it happened that she did pray, she said that she did 'when she felt like it'; '...after I have taken a bath and feel clean.... after my monthly period for instance...then I try to keep on to pray in a way.' What Yasmin said may be interpreted in different ways (cf. the next subsections), but in this context the focus is on the close connection between the feeling of being clean (after a period of impurity) and the motivation to pray. After her menstruation period, Yasmin, like other young girls and women, performed full ablution, *ghusl*. The cleanliness Yasmin felt - and which motivated her to perform *namaz* - was a ritual cleanliness. In this case the ablution was not performed in order to pray, but praying was felt as a natural consequence of being ritually purified. Marcus underlines, on the basis of fieldwork among women in Turkey, the difference between hygienic washing and ritual purifying by saying: 'The essence of purification, then, whether total or partial, is that the *entire surface* of the specified parts of the body should be touched by the purifier; that the purifier should *flow*; and that on no account may the purifying agent enter into the body' (Marcus 1984:206). She also says: 'For legally valid prayer the body must be both clean and purified' (ibid.p.208; Al-Bukhari, Vol.1, book IV; Brandel-Syrier 1960:5ff).

Other cases, elaborated in the next subsection, will show how purification may be interpreted both as motivation for prayer and as a result of prayer. Body and mind have to be purified before praying, and at the same time praying has a purifying and healing effect.⁹

Purification, praying and new beginnings

Islamic ritual prayer (*salah/namaz*) is something you are supposed to perform regularly at specific times, and there is theoretically no need for incentives. It is more a question of skill and discipline or good habits. However, most children - and some adults - had irregular prayer habits, and it might therefore be of interest to see what influenced them to pray.¹⁰ It was seen in the previous subsection how bodily purification (*gin's?*) in itself was an incentive to perform *namaz*. A question for the researcher was therefore to find out in what other situations they 'wanted to pray' or what reasons they gave for praying.

A consequence of praying was to be forgiven, i.e. given a new opportunity, a new beginning. Iqra (f 9) said:

Sometimes I don't want to, but sometimes I haven't anything special to do...and I just might do it because maybe our God will be happy. He is so happy then that even if we have done something bad, he says it is OK.

Iqra meant that forgiveness was caused by the act of praying itself (because God was so happy), not because they had asked to be forgiven.

The month of *Ramadan* was another incentive for daily prayers, both for children and for adults (see Chapter 6). *Ramadan* was not only a month when adults performed the fast, but a month of great purity that affected the whole of family life. As Buitelaar says in her study of Morocco: 'Especially during Ramadan, Moroccan perceptions concerning purity become manifest' (1993:105).

Frequency of praying did not increase with age among the respondents (except during *Ramadan*). The young girls between 15 and 17 demonstrated, however, a more personal, individual attitude towards prayer in the sense that they sometimes prayed when they felt unhappy. They were, however, conscious about the difference between this type of individual prayer (*du'a*) and the prescribed *namaz* which 'counted' in the way that it gave merit (*ajr*). Psychologically there might, however, be a link between children's way of 'using' the ritual prayers and more spontaneous individual prayers. This link may be expressed as a connection between purification, prayer and new beginnings. Visits to Pakistan seemed to have the same effect.

When we returned from Pakistan for instance, then I started to really pray. After some time it became less and less. There was so much to do (Rifat f 17).

Interestingly enough Rifat did not start to pray more often while in Pakistan, for instance by joining her cousins when they prayed, but the change took place after she returned home. This feeling of a new start in life was also expressed by the fact that she then, for a shorter period, wore *shalwar qamiz* all day. Later on she was back to 'normal': jeans at school and *shalwar qamiz* only at home, and praying just now and then (cf.5.3).

A 'new beginning' might also imply being cured from an illness. Reading the Qur'an or performing prayers gives *barakat* (blessing), and a grandmother was convinced that her grandson recovered because they had read the Qur'an to him. 'To perform the religious duties is considered beneficial for both the body and the mind' (Buitellar 1993:107).

Both in Oslo and in Pakistan J observed the practice of coming together to pray (perform *du 'a*) after someone had died. Even if a long time had elapsed since the person had passed away, it was common to visit the home of the deceased.¹¹ Children seldom took part in these prayers, but they were present in the room where such prayers were performed, or they knew why parents had to pay visits to friends and relatives who had lost someone. The stated aim of this tradition was to honour God and to pay respect to the deceased. It may also, in accordance with Douglas and Berger, be interpreted as a ritual which regulated the relationship between the mourners and the rest of society. A state of marginalisation (unformlessness) was transformed back to normal (nomisation) through praying together (cf. Berger 1990 [19671:21; Douglas 1992 [1966]:38). Praying had a purifying effect.

Gendered aspects of prayer

Distinctions will be made between three gendered aspects of prayer: gender homogenised commonality (with whom you are performing the prayers), dress code (covering the head) and exclusion caused by pollution. From early childhood prayer is performed in single gender groups. Girls and boys join their mother or father respectively (unless they are very small and have accompanied one of the parents of the opposite sex to the mosque).¹² The feeling of being a group sharing the practice of praying was strongly expressed by the respondents. Yasmin (f 14) told me how she, at *Id*, prayed at home together with her mother and sister while her father and brothers went to the mosque:

At *Id* we take a bath - a real bath, not only a shower - and then we pray.

We, the women at home, pray in a different way that day, different words. I can't say it by heart.

Iqra (f 9) not only said that she sometimes joined her mother in praying, but she emphasised gender by starting to talk about the obligation to cover your head while praying. The covering of the head was, according to Iqra, voluntary on other occasions, but when praying 'you have to wear it'. There are prescribed dress

codes for both men and women while praying, of which general modesty and the covering of the head is obligatory (cf. 5.3). However, even if men are supposed to cover their head when praying and reading the Qur'an, one can hardly say that covering the head while praying is a mark of malehood. For men and boys, the covering of the head, was a marker of being in a place or state of purity. For women and girls, the covering of the head had the same symbolic meaning, but was also a marker of gender since the covering of the head was required in other contexts as well. Putting a scarf on (while praying or reading the Qur'an and when being in the same room as men) is generally a sign of female status. The scarf (*dupatta*, *hijab*, *burqa'* etc.) is supposed to hide female beauty, but will often function as a key symbol of femininity (Cf. Sandborg's study of identity management among Malaysian women; 1990:93). The act of praying can be seen as one among other indicators/markers of gender.¹³ Bushra (f 12), for instance, who never dressed in *shaiwar qamiz* and *dupatta*, was aware of the obligation for girls to cover their head while reading the Qur'an and praying, and she kept a head scarf at her aunt's place to use when reading the Qur'an.¹⁴

The question of gender is linked to prayer, both through the practice of segregation (*purdah*) and through an experience of female companionship in performing the ritual together. Gender is also connected with prayer in terms of exclusions prompted by ideas about pollution. All girls were open about the fact that they were not allowed to pray during menstruation. Rifat (f 17) said:

Girls do not pray or fast or read the Qur'an when they have their periods. Their bodies are not clean. You have to take a bath afterwards to be clean.

There is, of course, an ambiguity in this practice: on the one hand your monthly period is the opposite of cleanliness, and places you, as a woman outside the God-man relationship in prayer. As Marcus says:

Prayer is the way in which the individual is drawn into the community of believers, all of whom are equal before God; but prayer is also the means by which women are given secondary status in the world of men and are regularly excluded from the male community through pollution (Marcus 1984:209).

On the other hand, the monthly period enhances the ritual need for purification and thereby gives another dimension both to womanhood and to the

act of praying. Since Islamic prayer is mostly a public act, a ritual act performed together (gender segregated), *not* participating during monthly periods creates strong feelings of being excluded, but also feelings of companionship among women.¹⁵ This was observed on numerous visits to mosques, especially because it also facilitated my role as a female researcher. As an observer in women's sections of mosques, I just had to join the group sitting along the wall. Everyone knew why somebody sat there instead of joining the lines of those who performed prayers. In an already gender segregated context, there were no feelings of exclusion from having to sit along the wall. Womanhood was, however, made explicit and visible.

This visibility and experience of womanhood was also the most striking feature when girls who had reached puberty, talked about prayer. This may, of course, be caused by the fact that they had recently reached puberty and were actually more concerned about this than about other aspects of prayer, but this consciousness also seemed to initiate a renewed need for prayer, as exemplified through Yasmin (f 14) above.

An event in one of the homes expressed strongly both female companionship and the visibility of gender and sexuality connected to prayer. According to Islam it is compulsory to take a shower or a bath (the major purification) after intercourse (S. 4:46, 5:9, Abdalati 1990; Sarwar 1994; Triton 1987). One respondent girl was in her room studying maths for a test the next day. After a while she entered the living room and laid her prayer rug at the angle between the two parts of the room. She put on a white scarf and started to pray. Meanwhile I continued the interview with other members of the family, but still kept an eye on her. After some time, it seemed as if she was going to stop praying. She said something to her mother, and they both laughed. I asked if she had changed her mind, but the mother said laughingly that her daughter had only asked if the mother was not supposed to take a shower. This was said in a peculiar way, and I got the feeling of something hidden being revealed. It remained a somewhat unclear situation for me until this dialogue between mother and daughter was connected to the fact that the mother and father had come out of the bedroom together just as I arrived.

This sub-section has emphasised not only how women through pollution ideology are deprived of full participation in religious practices, but has included data on how pollution restrictions contribute to girls' and women's positive self-image as women. As Marcus says: 'Pollution does not alter a woman's religious

obligations, but it alters the way in which she carries them out' (Marcus 1984:213).

Conclusion

For all respondent children prayer was something familiar, a taken-for-granted part of their lifeworld, especially connected to Qur'anic teachings and the celebration of *Ramadan*. They had a rather relaxed attitude to prayer as a duty, in the way that they did not worry much about their own lack of skill or practice. Prayer was not an integrated part of their own daily routine, but a possibility at hand either for personal purposes or as part of social settings at home or in the mosque. I have argued that the study of special incentives for prayers among children gave a clue to understanding the general meaning of prayer. The purification of body and mind was found to be both a key incentive for the performance of prayers and an expression of **the** meaning of prayers to children.

5.3 Dress codes

Introduction

In the previous section purity-impurity was interpreted as expressing the dichotomies of order — disorder (nomos — anomos / cosmos — chaos) and ritual purity (cleanliness of body and mind — pollution caused by minor or major defilements). These two dichotomies are strongly connected and should be regarded as aspects of the same theoretical complex (cf. Douglas 1991[1966]). Prayer, in the world of children, was found to be a ritual expression of both these two notions of purity. The gendered aspects of prayer practice were essential to this discussion. In addition to the ablution of body and mind and *purdah*, understood as segregation from men, dress code manifested itself as an important part of the purity aspects of prayer. This will be further analysed now in this section. Dress codes will, however, not only be discussed as part of ritual practice, but also as communication and self-presentation in a broader sense.

The term *dress code* here means how children (and parents) dress (including clothes, hair style and make up) in different social settings. The aim of the analysis is to decode the meaning of dress codes among Pakistani children in Oslo, not to present Islamic prescriptions or Pakistani customs. The section aims at an understanding of dress codes as self-presentation in the sense of constructing and marking of identity (cf. Goffmann 1990 [1959]; Sandborg 1990; Tranberg Hansen 1995). Dress codes as part of lifestyle are constructed from different sources. This study has identified *Islamic prescriptions*, *Indo-Pakistani aesthetics* and *Norwegian/Western youth fashion*. The way children dress is that part of their lifestyle which 'communicates' most to non-Pakistanis (cf. Chapter 3). Other

aspects of their lifestyle (like food habits, home decoration, prayer practice, reading the Qur'an etc.) are not visible outside the Pakistani community to the same extent.

How one dresses is not a way of presenting a fixed identity but a way of expressing those aspects of a person's self-picture that one wishes to have confirmed by others (Gullestad 1989:104; cf. Chapter 4). Dress is a marker of identity as well as a constructor of identity. Children and youth are, of course, not independent individuals in this negotiation process. There are 'negotiations' going on both within families (see below) and between the Pakistanis and mainstream society. The meaning of dress is, in other words, not a given entity consisting of culturally fixed elements, but rather the meaning of dress, or dress combinations, emerges and has to be studied in specific contexts.¹⁶ *Shalwar qamiz* and *dupatta* had a different meaning for Pakistani children in Oslo compared to Pakistani children in Pakistan. Pakistani dress also had a different meaning for children who had grown up in Norway than for their parents.

In the discussion above, the public, communicative aspects of dress codes were emphasised. The public character of dress codes is, however, inseparable from intimate aspects of identity connected to bodily feelings, nakedness, sexuality and gender (cf. the previous section). It is the combination of public and intimate aspects which is decisive for making dress codes strong and sensitive as symbolic expressions (cf. Ortner 1973; Sandborg 1990:92ff). In an Islamic context this is not only religiously legitimised (by referring to Qur'anic precriptions on chastity), rather dress code (especially female dress code) has increasingly become a symbol of Islam itself. Within the movement of Islamic revival (*al-haraka al-isiاميyya*), Islamic female dress code is no longer just an expression of modesty. Instead, it can be a manifestation of political Islam (Gilliat 1998:100; Vogt 1993:238).¹⁷

The combination of the intimate and public character of dress will in this section be further explored within the double understanding of the purity-impurity complex, as explained above. In the same way that rituals of purity and pollution (especially connected to bodily expressions) were regarded as appropriate to work out and display symbolic patterns of society (cf. Douglas 1991[1966]:2), dress codes may be seen as having both an expressive and an instrumental side. However, the combination of public and intimate aspects of dress code was difficult to study in-depth in terms of a reliance on interviews and participant observation alone. In Oslo there was only limited access to the most intimate spheres of life. However, the stay with families in Pakistan contributed positively

in this matter, for instance habits concerning what was worn in bed (cf Chapter 2).¹⁸

Dress codes of Pakistani children in Oslo will be presented as related to Islamic modesty, Indo-Pakistani aesthetics and Norwegian/Western youth fashion. In all these relations, the purity-impurity complex has been found relevant to express the meaning of dress codes. This means that the purity-impurity complex is seen to be applicable both within a religious and a secular context (cf. Douglas 1991[1966]:29ff). The empirical material will, in the following subsections, be presented within this theoretical framework. Dress habits, and children's reflections on dress codes, were not chosen at the initial phase of research as a key subject (cf. the interview guide), but emerged as a theme during the research process (cf. Chapter 2).

Islamic modesty and manifestation.

The Islamic prescriptions concerning dress code may be summarised in one word: modesty (*haya'*). Islamic commentaries differentiate between an external and an internal *hijab*. External *hijab* applies to dress code whereas internal *hijab* concerns attitude and ways of behaving 'which is the ideal behaviour of the Muslim woman. This is the attitude of *haya'* (modesty, shyness, bashfulness) which the Prophet (SAAS) described as being a part of faith' (Khattab 1993:18). How this ideal is to be practiced is, however, an issue for discussion within Muslim communities and has a far more comprehensive meaning than the question of veiling (*hijab*) (cf. Mernissi 1985; 1991; Dahl 1992).

It is important to note that the Qur'anic prescription for modesty is given to both men and women, in order to increase their purity (S.24:30-31; S.33:59). Women are, however, given additional prescriptions concerning how to cover themselves when outdoors and with men other than their father, grandfather, son, brother, father-in-law, nephew or uncle. They are also given guidance on how to behave in such a way so as to conceal their beauty and ornaments (*zinat*) (Doi 1993:12). Stricter regulations concerning female, rather than male, dress codes are legitimised by referring to 'the difference between men and women in nature, temperament, and social life' (Doi 1993:11). *Surah* 7:26 summarises the double aspects of clothing, an expression of beauty and a means to conceal what is regarded as shame or impurity: 'O, children of Adam, we have revealed to you clothing to conceal your shame and as a thing of beauty but the garment of *taqwa* (piety) is the best of all' (Sarwar's translation, 1994:183).¹⁹

In all practical guidelines there is, in addition to the prescription of modesty, a clear underlining of clothes as a marker of the difference between sexes: 'The clothes should not resemble men's clothing' (Khattab 1993:16). Gender based distinctions are regarded as an essential part of the right 'order'(nomos). *Purdah*, in the sense of a different dress code for men and women, is in this sense an expression of purity. These aspects link dress code to basic Islamic ideas concerning sexuality, gender and family life. As such, they influence children's life even before they reach puberty. For respondent children, especially girls between 12 and 17, dress code emerged as a topic of special interest. It was no longer just part of informal socialisation or Islamic formal teaching, but became a topic for reflection, conscious negotiation and decision-making (cf. Chapter 8).

With regard to Islamic dress code connected to praying or reading the Qur'an, all respondent children not only knew what was required, but they observed the prescriptions. Boys and girls covered their heads, either with traditional Pakistani *topi* and *dupattas*, or with baseball caps back to front and scarves.²⁰ None of the children expressed any problems with this custom. An episode among the women and girls in one of the mosques was, however, an indicator of a possible change of attitudes concerning dress code. One young non-Pakistani woman wearing a thick scarf which covered all her hair, criticised the Pakistani women around her for wearing transparent *dupattas*, not fully covering the hair. A rather intense discussion arose among the women and girls of what Islam actually required. Some felt provoked by not having the traditional Pakistani female dress code recognised as Islamic. The discussion concerned the boundaries of Islamic purity, i.e. the right to be recognised as proper Muslim.

None of the respondent girls covered their heads (except when praying), even on occasions where they wore *shalwar qamis*. Small girls were, however, seen covering their head with pieces of cloth, like a *dupatta*, when playing, and they showed great elegance in knowing how to wear it. The strongest Islamic manifestation (exceeding the general modesty), was women's practice of wearing *burqa* and men being bearded.²¹ The mother in Family A was the only respondent mother who wore a black silk overcoat, a *burqa*, when outdoors. Within a year after the fieldwork period, her daughter Saima (then 11 years old), started to wear *hijab*, even at school.²² The mothers, however, always wore *shalwar qamis*, which partly may be interpreted as an expression of Islamic modesty, partly as Indo-Pakistani style (see next subsection). Some of them covered their head with *dupatta* when outdoors or when foreign men came as visitors; some never did. One mother said she used to cover her head, especially in the years after the death

of her mother, but that she now preferred to be uncovered. She admitted laughingly that she enjoyed exposing her beauty.

This last example shows that for some, the question of veiling was not primarily a public manifestation, but an expression of inner feelings. Wearing *hijab* was by some women felt natural in periods of withdrawal from the world, e.g. when mourning or in situations of insecurity, but as a hindrance if they wanted to participate in a broader social arena than the inner family circle. Most respondent girls had an attitude to *hijab* which included this type of consideration. Yasmin (14), for example, had the following reflections after stating that she did not wear *hijab* outdoors:

I: But when you pray at home...

Y: Yes, when I read the Qur'an...

I: „then you put it on

Y: Then one also uses it.

is Do you think you will use *hijab*?

Y: Yes, ...maybe when I get a bit older.

I: Yes? You have thought about it?

Y: Yes, I have thought about it, but I don't know.

I: Why do you think you will want to wear it? What are the points for and against?

Y: I don't know...I get better....it is more to Islam maybe...There is a reason for wearing *hijab* you know...

I: Yes?

Y: Because of men. They are not all equally good.

I: No...to protect yourself in a way?

Y: Yes to protect yourself.

I: What speaks against your wearing of *hijab*?

Y: Against? I am not quite sure.. I want to be a little modern too...

I: So you are not quite sure?

Y: I think I will start wearing it some day...

Most girls underlined that there was a choice whether to veil yourself or not. Looking at pictures as part of focused interviewing, Saima (f 9) said:

This is from Saudi-Arabia. There, all girls, even small ones, have to wear *[burcial]*. There is a great difference between Norway and Saudi-Arabia and that sort of thing, but in Pakistan...one may decide by oneself, when one is young, to wear it or not.

As part of focused interviews, girls in pictures were identified as Muslims because they wore *shalwar qamiz*. This is another example of children's experience of the interwoven nature of being Pakistani and being Muslim (cf Chapter 4). In the following dialogue with Bushra (f 12), it is interesting to see how dress code is part of her self-ascription as Pakistani and Muslim:

I: Do you feel yourself to be Norwegian or Pakistani?

B: Both

I: Both. In what way do you feel to be Pakistani? What is Pakistani about you?

B: That I am Muslim

I: That you are Muslim. What else?

B: That I celebrate Id and fast

I: Yes

B: To celebrate Id and use these kind of clothes

I: Yes

B: And to go to Pakistan from time to time and that I have Pakistani parents.

In this context it is important to have in mind that Bushra (f 12) never wore *shalwar qamiz* at school and, in contrast to most girls, she also did not change when she returned home.

More data from observations in schools will be presented in the following sub-sections. However, in relation to the discussion of Islamic modesty, some comments should be made on how girls dealt with Islamic dress codes in connection with physical education or swimming lessons.²³ All respondent girls participated in these activities at school. None of them was at these times dressed in *shalwar qamiz* (which, however, was observed in other classes of physical education), but in track suits or tights and full T-shirts. Tights and T-shirt even served as a bathing costume. Some of them avoided taking a shower afterwards (because they did not want to be seen naked), or they had been permitted to finish the lesson some minutes earlier than the rest of the class to be able to take a shower alone.²⁴ As part of schooling, Pakistani parents were never heard to have any objections concerning the teacher's gender, but when it came to girls' participation in sport activities after school, a demand was often made to have girls trained by female instructors. The lack of gender-segregated training groups was experienced

as a hindrance for girls' participation in such activities (cf. the sub-section below on Norwegian lifestyle and fashion).

Dress codes connected to festivals and celebrations will be discussed in the next sub-section, but since new clothes were often mentioned by children as an important element of *Id* (especially *Id-ul-fitr*), this aspect should not be 'reduced' to Indo-Pakistani lifestyle and aesthetics. New clothes, for both boys and girls and men and women, strengthened the purity aspect of a festival. Observation of men, old and young, dressed up in brand new white *shalwar qamiz*, walking in groups through the streets of inner Oslo on their way to the mosque was a strong expression of this purity aspect of *Id*.

Indo-Pakistani lifestyle and aesthetics

As some of the respondent children were fully aware, the Islamic prescriptions concerned a principle of modesty expressed in the demand to cover your body instead of exposing it in nakedness or through ways of dressing.²⁵ *Shalwar qamiz* was the customary, accepted Pakistani way of keeping these prescriptions, but it was not the only way. Jeans and T-shirts, pullovers or coats might serve the same purpose (Khattab1993:17).

The wearing of *shalwar qamiz* was a dress habit that generally had a strong position among Pakistani girls in Oslo. Some said they wore it because their parents regarded it as obligatory according to Islam. Some seemed to wear it unreflectively, just because they were used to it (and maybe because all grown up female relatives did). Among the respondent girls, *shalwar qamiz* was not used regularly at school, but was the preferred dress at all kinds of parties and sometimes what they preferred to wear at home. For respondent boys, it was only part of the dress habit for festivals or other celebrations within Pakistani contexts.

Both as party dress and as home dress, the wearing of *shalwar qamiz* expressed a certain lifestyle and an aesthetic preference (cf. Chapter 3 on home decoration). The style of dress was inseparably linked to style of hair, make-up, jewellery etc. which again were expressions that should be interpreted as part of gender roles, caste hierarchies, status etc. The strong position of *shalwar qamiz* as party dress may, for example, be attributed to the strength of wedding culture within the Pakistani community. This study does not aim to analyse the whole complex of dress code as part of the social order, but wants to focus on two aspects. On the one hand there is a coherence between an Indo-Pakistani and an Islamic dress code (partly discussed in the previous sub-section) in the way that

even a moderate Indo-Pakistani style of dress (e.g. without *hijab*) in Norway distinguishes you as a Muslim. Both from the perspective of the non-Muslim mainstream society and from certain social layers within the Pakistani community, Indo-Pakistani dress is regarded as a sign of being a 'true' Muslim. On the other hand, aspects of the Indo-Pakistani style (its extravagance in colourful silks, jewellery and make-up, including *mehndi* decorated hands and feet), according to orthodox Muslims, are not congruent with Islamic prescriptions for modesty. The strength of Indo-Pakistani styles of dress among Norwegian-Pakistani children and youth, as the preferred style for celebrations, may therefore be seen as an indicator of intense cultural attachment rather than religious affiliation. Within the preferred Indo-Pakistani style there are of course possibilities for creativity and adjustments as will be illustrated below. However, there are certain boundaries which make it appropriate to apply the categorisations 'pure' and 'impure' within this cultural frame.

Shalwar qamiz was not only the main expression of femininity and a topic of informal conversation amongst Pakistani women,²⁶ it was also a common gift, a part of formal occasions like weddings, and often a spontaneous gift to visitors. Respondent girls were all eager to stress the variety of styles within the category of *shalwar qamiz* and to demonstrate their own creativity in finding ways of combining Pakistani and Norwegian fashion with Islamic modesty. Commenting on girls' way of dressing in some pictures, Yasmin (f 14) said that she found them old-fashioned: 'Nowadays we like them (the *qamiz*) to be longer. Now we wear different kinds of trousers. We take something from the fashion in Europe you know.'

The following dialogue shows Yasmin's consciousness of the role of dress as part of social adjustment and also the role of dress as expression of identity.

I: Do you wear *shalwar qamiz* daily?

Y: Yes, at home I do. I change when I come from school. And I wear them for parties. If I am going to a Pakistani party I wear those clothes. If I am going to be with Norwegians, I use clothes that look almost Norwegian, like long dresses and shirts.

I: Does it happen that you feel like: this is not me, or do you feel the same, wearing jeans or whatever?

Y: Yes, I feel it is the same.

I: It is the same. You just have different clothes?

Y: Yes, I just have different types of clothes.

Later on in the same interview she mentioned clothes in connection with listing what made a stay in Pakistan nice:

Y: I have my relatives there, cousins, and it is not that often we meet each other... I feel quite at home there, it's kind of..same colour of skin, same clothes. There, I may wear Pakistani clothes outdoors in the town.

I: You find that lovely?

Y (laughing): Yes, I do!

In the previous sub-section, *burqa*' was discussed as part of the Islamic dress code. The idea of *hurqu' is* to cover your body and beauty as much as possible when outdoors (i.e. the *purdah* system transferred to dress). That some women managed to look elegant wearing a *burqa*`, either by the style of it, the quality of the black silk, or by the way they put it around their face, was a striking feature of female dress code.

There was no consciousness of transferring dress codes as fixed parts of their culture, but Indo-Pakistani dress codes seemed to be a taken-for-granted part of everyday life and changed only gradually in accordance with other changes in their lifestyle. What was found was a contextual purity and an underlining of the informal character of the transference of Indo-Pakistani cultural elements, partly as an aesthetic style, partly as a question of lifestyle.

Norwegian/Western lifestyle and fashion

As was evident from the previous sub-sections, all respondents wore jeans or track-suits at school, but some of the girls changed to *shalwar qamiz* at home, especially the eldest ones, like Rifat (17) and Yasmin (14). Pakistani girls wearing jeans at school, were dressed in the same style as their Norwegian class mates.²⁷ Especially in classes where some Pakistani girls were dressed in *shalwar qamiz* and some in jeans, dress was a strong indicator of where or with whom they wanted to associate themselves. According to Bushra (f 12) dress code was the only factor that distinguished between Norwegian and Pakistani girls.

Some aspects of Norwegian lifestyle influenced the issue of dress code among the respondent children. The practical side concerned all activities that had to do with a cold climate, winter, skiing etc. In many Pakistani families there was a lack of equipment (including proper clothing) for activities like skiing or winter camps. However, the principal issues were bound up with Islamic prescriptions.

Dress code related to physical education and swimming lessons has already been discussed, but leisure activities like playing in a school orchestra might also be influenced by these prescriptions. One girl commented upon the low number of Pakistanis participating in the music orchestra at school by saying: 'I don't know, but I think it's because of the uniforms...because the skirts are too short.'

Purity-impurity has, in the previous sub-sections, mainly been discussed within an Islamic or Pakistani context. These categories are presumably foreign to a Norwegian setting. However, the strong emotional reactions which have been observed among Norwegians (e.g. teachers) when they are confronted with Islamic prescriptions of modesty, may be an indication of implicit notions of 'order' or 'cleanliness'. Douglas says that 'our idea of dirt is compounded of two things, care for hygiene and respect for conventions' (Douglas 1966:7). The practice of going swimming dressed in clothes, or of not undressing in the heat of summer, evoke feelings of 'disorder' or 'dirt' in both senses.

Conclusion

Dress code has in this section been discussed both within cultural and religious frames. Dress code was for Pakistani children part of ritual practice, but also a key factor in their self-presentation and communication within a Pakistani and a Norwegian context. Individual choices and creativity were balanced with religious prescriptions and social adjustments. How they dressed, and how they reflected on dress codes, are strong indicators of their plural identities (cf. Chapter 8).

The idea of purity in the sense of 'order' was found to be a key factor in understanding the meaning of dress code in non-religious contexts. Dress code communicated 'order' in distinguishing between child-adult, male-female, pious-not pious, Norwegian-Pakistani.²⁸ Only with regard to Islamic prescriptions connected to ritual purity, was dress code part of formal instruction. As part of cultural and religious traditions, dress codes were transferred as integrated aspects of lifestyles. The next section will approach the discussion of food and fasting within the same theoretical framework.

5.4 Food and fasting

Introduction

Food and dining habits are taken-for-granted parts of everyday life and, at the same time, parts of a symbolic universe. Food is a language to be deciphered (Barthes 1979; Fischler 1988; Goody [1982]1996; Kramer og Kramer 1979; Lévi-Strauss 1963;1979) and a reminder that cultural meaning is not only something

seen or heard, but also 'frequently known through touch, smell, or taste, if not through some combination of senses' (Hannerz 1992:3).²⁹ The study of food as cultural expression includes the study of both preparation and consumption (Goody 1996:119821:2). Since the focus of this study is on food as part of the lifeworld of children, this chapter will, however, concentrate on the last phase. Both phases contain two aspects: food as substance and as symbol. These two aspects may be called the ambiguity of food (Furst 1993:79-80).³⁰

The symbolic aspect of food is not limited to food as part of a religious context, but is an aspect of food in all social settings: food is always more than nourishment; food has a meaning (Kramer og Kramer 1979). Some food is eatable, some food is not, and this is not determined primarily by biology or hygiene, but culture. Douglas' analysis of Leviticus shows that animals regarded as unclean by the Jews were animals which did not fall into one of the culturally acknowledged categories (Douglas 1966:55; Sawyer 1996).³¹ This was the reason for regarding them as impure (cp. marginalised persons or anomalous situations). To keep these food taboos is, for Jews, a way of keeping within the God-created order and a sign of being a Jew. Likewise, food taboos within Islam are explicitly stated, and manifest themselves through Islamic food and drinking regulations (the *halal* - *haram* dichotomy) and through the role the observance of these regulations plays as a marker of being a Muslim (Al-Bukhari 1979, Vol.VII:219; Mawdudi 1985:106; Qur'an 5:4-5).³²

This section combines the study of fasting and food within the complex of purity and impurity. Fasting is related to food in two ways: as renunciation of food and as a preparatory phase leading up to meals. The empirical data on *Ramadan* made clear how strongly fasting³³ was related to other activities of that month, especially to the daily breaking of the fast, the *iftari* meal, and to the meal as part of *Id-ul-fitr* (cp.Buitelaar 1993:59). A combined study of food and fasting will not only shed light on the two aspects of children's lifeworlds, but will also contribute to a better understanding of the theoretical complex of purity and impurity.

Food as part of everyday life

The *halal* - *haram* dichotomy was as much part of everyday life as part of Islamic festivals and Pakistani celebrations. Likewise, fasting was both a religious duty and part of everyday life during *Ramadan*. The symbolic universe will, in this sub-section, be understood in a much broader sense than the Islamic *halal-haram* pattern. The symbolic universe of food and meals encompasses the social and cultural *nomos*, related to a diversified set of identities.

Pakistani, Norwegian and Islamic elements were all discernible in everyday food habits, and the following examples aim at exposing some aspects of the underlying social order expressed by food and meals, i.e. food as lifestyle (cf. Chapter 3). The substance of the food, the way of sitting close together (mostly on the floor or around the living room table), eating with your right hand instead of using cutlery etc. - all this expressed a Pakistani lifestyle where religious and social order and values manifested themselves, especially the central position of family and hospitality.

Pakistani children shared some mainstream Norwegian customs, like taking sandwiches to school for their lunch and attending birthday parties and barbecues. Compared to Pakistani traditions practised by first generation immigrants these institutions were new. Likewise, British research documents that families from the Indian sub-continent, who had no previous tradition of marking their children's birthdays, began to do so in Britain (Baumann 1992:106; Larson 1989:98; Nesbitt 1995b:35). However, no general opposition to these institutions was expressed by the respondents, as long as Islamic food regulations were respected. Birthday parties and barbecues are nowadays increasingly practised among some social layers in Pakistan too (Østberg 1996).

One aspect of the social order mostly expressed through, and influenced by food and meals, was gender roles. In the respondent families all family members (and eventually guests) had dinner together, whereas in most families visited in the countryside in Pakistan, men and women ate separately.³⁴ The preparation of food was, however, in all families, the task of the mother, only assisted by other members of the family and by daughters in particular.

The cultural meaning of food and meals, briefly described above, contains both social and religious aspects in addition to the sensory ones, e.g. taste, which are culturally determined too (Furst 1993: 96; Bourdieu 1986:79). The change of taste among children compared to their parents is illustrative. Generally, children preferred less spicy food than was customary in the Pakistani kitchen, and all families had broadened their food repertoire by making pizza (*halal* pizza) and spaghetti. Visits to McDonalds were part of the lifeworld of these children, even if their menu was restricted to fishburgers. None of the families had introduced traditional Norwegian food habits.

Food and meals in a Pakistani Muslim context, were primarily an expression of communality, i.e. the act of *sharing* of food was of particular importance. On

special occasions, such as *Id* celebrations for women, or receiving *Sufi* leaders from abroad, sharing a meal was part of celebrations in the mosques. Both the food, and the way it was served in the mosque, were similar to the everyday practice in the home, and the meals had primarily a social ummah-strengthening function. Within this frame of understanding, social classifications and stratifications were pertinent (with whom you shared a meal, where and how). The social and cultural order was expressed and strengthened through meals, both in a Pakistani family setting at home (the micro level), in the mosque (the macro level of *ummah*) and to a lesser extent, in the social setting of mainstream society (the micro level of school and neighbourhood or the macro level of the Western fast food industry). Meals, as part of the last mentioned category, were also potential occasions for conflicts or exposure of differences, as will be discussed in the next sub-section.

Food as a marker of being a Muslim

From the very beginning of a child's life, food and holy words are combined in the ritual of *Tahniki*, i.e. the custom of giving the newborn child something sweet to taste and at the same time whispering a prayer in its ear (Aijaz 1991:41). The *Hadith* tells how the Prophet chewed a date and put the juice in the mouth of the child (Al-Bukhari, VoLVII:272). Among the Pakistanis in Oslo it was customary to put honey in the mouth of the new born child. Rifat (f 17) said:

One reads a prayer immediately after the baby is born; one puts some honey in the baby's mouth and prays into its ear...

The custom was explained by the respondents as a way of welcoming the baby by letting it taste the sweetness of life. The ritual was not essential to identity as a Muslim, but within an Islamic context, it linked food as substance and symbol to one of the main aspects of Islam: the word of God. The sweetness of the word of God in the newborn's ear was like the sweetness of honey on its tongue and vice versa.

In the Qur'an there are two types of sayings concerning food. The one is a positive formulation: 'O, ye people! Eat what is on earth, Lawful and good; And do not follow the footsteps of the Evil One, for he is to you an avowed enemy' (S. 2:168).³⁵ The other type of Qur'anic teachings lists the prohibited (*haram*) kind of food and drink (e.g.S 2:173; 5:2-6, 6:145;16:115).³⁶ Islam forbids eating the meat of the following: dead animals and birds (i.e. those which died 'naturally'), animals slain without invoking Allah's name (without pronouncing the *takbir*),

animals strangled to death, pigs, carnivorous animals, animals devoured by wild beasts. Islam also forbids the eating of the blood of an animal, and this is the background for the prescribed way of slaughtering (Sarwar 1994:181). All kinds of alcoholic drinks are prohibited (S. 2:219; 4:43; 5:93).³⁷ The regard for the health of human beings and societies is given as a reason for these prohibitions in the Qur'an and in Islamic literature. 'Islam aims at establishing a healthy society' (Sarwar 1994:181; Abdalati 1978:122).

The above mentioned Islamic prescriptions and ways of argumentation were well-known to the respondent children. Especially when it came to the prohibition of alcohol, Pakistani children readily referred to health arguments. Yasmin (f 14) defined *haram* food/drink as follows:

What makes you drunk, beer...You are not the person you are. When you drink, you get a little bit...It's dangerous for the body and for the human being.

Because of the young age of the respondent children, alcohol was not a central subject. However, some of the oldest mentioned attitudes to alcohol as a distinguishing factor between Norwegian and Pakistani youth. The other food regulations were not as easily defended or understood in a health perspective (cf. Douglas 1966). Some of the children argued though with reference to health or hygiene: 'Someone has found out that it is more hygienic to eat *halal* meat. When the blood runs out, it is more hygienic to eat that food' (Yasmin, f 14).

This way of arguing is common both among Muslims and non-Muslims concerning food taboos in most religions (Kramer and Kramer 1969). Yasmin also presented the widespread common sense 'theory' about trichinae in pork meat:³⁸ 'I have heard that when one cuts the pork, small white...come out. Can't remember what they are called...'

Other respondent children just accepted the rules.

I don't quite know why it is prohibited. There are some rules, some fixed ones that have been decided, and even if we wonder...we can't always get an answer (Nasir, m 13).

Some children gave a more complex set of explanations, like Rifat (f 17) who said:

It's no difference when it comes to the meat itself, but it is the way of slaughtering that is different. It's not that we can not take *haram*, but we cannot take blood. And then we pray or say the profession of faith before we kill the animal...to say that we respect the animal and don't just take it.

To eat *halal* food, and to refrain from what was *haram*, was one of the main markers of Islamic belonging which distinguished Muslims from the non-Islamic mainstream society. Also internally, this distinction functioned as a criterion for the right to be called a Muslim. Quarrels on this issue between small children were often settled by the last and decisive question: 'Do you eat hot dogs?' For most children, the *halal-haram* dichotomy was taken-for-granted. When asked to explain the food regulations, some gave more or less rationalised answers as mentioned above, but more common was reference to a feeling of what was 'natural', which can be interpreted as an answer demonstrating successful socialisation (Berger 1990 [1967]:30-31). The internalisation of pork meat as impure (and therefore *haram*), was so strong that Pakistani children often expressed negative feelings just by looking at pictures of a pig. Yasmin told me that many Muslims actually ate 'ordinary' meat, not *halal*. Some even ate pork, she said. When asked if she would do that, she answered: 'No, I don't like it. I don't know...I have this feeling....No, I wouldn't like to do it.'

The *halal-haram* dichotomy was not a topic of daily discussions. Children ate what they were served and were not responsible for observing food regulations at home. Only when pizza or hot dogs were on the menu, was it stated explicitly that it was *halal* pizza or *halal* hot dogs. Discussions were overheard between grown ups concerning the extent to which one might trust Pakistani or Turkish shopkeepers selling *halal* meat. One father said: 'When they say they are selling *halal* food, we have to trust them. That's all we can do. I don't bother.' This was an attitude where the *halal-haram* dichotomy was a marker of boundaries, or a social convention, more than a spiritual concern of impurity. The *haram* boundary was respected by all respondent families in the sense of avoiding pork meat and alcohol, and eating other kinds of meat, slaughtered in the prescribed way. Only a few avoided food products which might contain prohibited animal fat, for instance chocolate. This shows that there are degrees of purity within the *halal-haram* dichotomy. The boundary distinguishing between Muslims and non-Muslims is, however, quite clear and runs along the *haram* line. This might be called a purity-impurity border in an absolute, permanent sense. The fact that it is possible to increase the degree of purity through more detailed observances of food

regulations, shows, however, that the differentiation between *halal* and *haram* should also be understood within the framework of purity-impurity. The next subsection will discuss how, and why, fasting fits into this framework as an expression of the highest degree of purity.

Fasting and meals of Ramadan

For children, fasting was an unpleasant but necessary prelude to good meals, like the daily *iftari* or the meal to break the fast during *Id*. However, it was also a question of discipline, of proving oneself to be grown up. It was an exciting new experience. Nasir (m 13) expressed the connection of fasting and festival in this way:

I think like this: when we have fasted, we should get something back...and the *Id* celebration in a way is...the goal. But just for children. Grown ups don't think like this. They don't have the *Id* celebration as a goal. Just like Christmas is better for children than for grown ups.

Most of the children looked forward to the evening meals (*iftari*) and *Id*. These events gave *Ramadan* a positive flavour. The morning meal (*sehri*) did not play a major role for children, but fasting was often experienced as 'something in between meals'. Jamshed (m 9) described *rozah* in this way:

We must wake up at about four, five or six o'clock, and then we shall eat, we shall eat food then in the morning, and then we are not supposed to eat again till the sun goes down. Then we shall eat again.

For some, however, the fasting was such a hard experience that even *Id* was not exclusively a positive event. Rashid (m 14) said:

No, I dread it a little bit, because before *Id*, then you have to work hard. The fasting!

In theory fasting is obligatory for those who have finished growing and have reached puberty, usually around 14 years old. Younger children should be encouraged to start fasting in a less strenuous way in order to prepare for what is expected from them as adults (Abdalati 1978:103). The two most striking features in my material concerning fasting were the flexibility of practice and the positive attitude among children. All respondent children fasted or had tried to fast. Even

if some of them found it hard, they talked about it in positive terms. The smaller ones expressed an eagerness to start, often against the will of their parents. The following conversation with Tariq (m 9) is very typical:

T: This time I will try to celebrate.³⁹

I: Why do you want to try?

T: It is very cool.⁴⁰

I: Is it cool...why is it cool?

T: Sometimes I feel satisfied (not hungry) inside myself.

His sister Iqra (f 9) added: 'Sometimes it is exciting to say that you are hungry...to feel it.' Besides the joy of an extraordinary experience, the children would like to fast because 'the others' did it. Fasting was also regarded as being tough, as coping with difficulties. Children chatted about it and made it competitive. Parents often had the role of preventing their children from fasting or finding easy ways of doing it, like fasting only on Saturdays, fasting half day or one week etc. A child might be said to have, for example, 'two *rozahs* a day'. In Urdu this was called *chiri rozah*, meaning a bird's *rozah*, i.e. a very little fast. On the other hand, parents' own practice encouraged children to start. Fasting was, more than anything, part of informal socialisation (cf. Chapter 7). However, some specific traditions existed which aimed at encouraging children to try. For example, the first time a child fasted, it was customary to have a celebration in the family and to give presents.

Children learnt to appreciate food through the exercise of fasting. Indirectly the renunciation of food said something about its meaning. Children were also aware of the element of developing solidarity with the poor and hungry through the experience of fasting.

Fasting may also be understood as a kind of sacrifice to God. Human beings give to God what belongs to God, i.e. food as the source of life is given back. The daily breaking of the fast gives life back through the *iftari* meal. Such thoughts were not explicitly expressed by children, but their verbal and non-verbal expression of enjoying *iftari* pointed in that direction. The special character of this meal was experienced by all family members, even the young ones who did not fast. 'Come, *iftari*, *iftari*!', a 4 year old boy shouted. Some families prepared just ordinary food, while others made something special, like chicken or samosa. 'Mum does it to make us happy,' Nasir (m 13) said. This interpretation of the fast is also influenced by some of the explanations given by children concerning the

prescribed way of slaughtering. Rifat (f 17) said, for example, that blood was not for human beings because it belonged to God.

In the year that the fieldwork was conducted, *Ramadan* fell in January/February which made fasting in Norway easy because of short days. Some children, however, had bad memories from an earlier period. Nasir (m 13) remembered his first period of fasting in this way:

I began when I was in the second class (8 years old). I fasted for seven days. It was really bad. I think it was during summer or spring, and then the days are very long here in Norway...longer than in Pakistan, and it was really bad. I remember I was hungry, and I asked mum and dad all the time: can't the time come soon? Once I lay down under my quilt and ate my goodies.

Nobody had discovered his breaking of the fast, and actually his father did not want him to fast at all. In a flexible way parents managed to combine religious observance and adjustment to school demands and training activities - all for the benefit of their children. (Teachers' attitudes to fasting will be discussed in Ch,7.)

Fasting is as much *ibadah* for adult women as for men, and among the respondent parents, the mothers fasted as much, and maybe even more, than the fathers (cp. Marcus 1984:208). Girls seemed to be encouraged - and discouraged - to fast in the same way as the boys. Girls were, however, not allowed to fast when they had their monthly period. They had to fast *after Ramadan* to catch up for the days lost. Menstruating women are not allowed 'even if they can and want to' (Abdalati 1976:104). This prohibition is not legitimised with reference to health, but to the lack of purity.

Ramadan also affected the lives of women in being a busy month for them at home (cp. Buitlaar 1993:55). They had to prepare food for those in the family who did not fast, and *iftari* for everyone. *Ramadan* was not only a month for fasting, but for social gathering, and quite often the families got visitors who stayed late at night.

According to Islamic teaching, fasting is a personal, individual act, something between you and God, because God is the only one who will actually know if you have kept the fast or not. (cf. Ghazzali in Grunebaum 1992:57; Mawdudi 1985:185). From a doctrinal point of view it was therefore said not to

matter whether one was a Muslim in Norway or in Pakistan with regard to fasting practice. However, *Ramadan* was a month for common experiences and community building, through the experience of shared fasting, and through enjoying the meals breaking the fast. This may be understood mainly as an internal ummah-building activity, but it was also seen as an opportunity to get acceptance for a 'Muslim space' in a secular society (cf. next chapter).

Conclusion

Fischler says of cookery that it 'helps to give food and its eaters a place in the world, a meaning' (Fischler 1981:286). The preceding analysis has shown how food and fasting give Pakistani children in Oslo more 'places' in the world within a broad Islamic-Pakistani-Norwegian context. The order constructed by food and fasting was inseparable from other aspects of their lifeworld and in accordance with the varieties and priorities of the self-presentations as discussed in Chapter 4. Food seemed to be 'a good way of thinking' about Islam (Lévi-Strauss quoted in Kramer and Kramer 1979:2) (especially the *halal-haram* dichotomy within a purity-impurity complex). This may be an indicator of Islam's role in the continuing process of identity formation and management.

5.5 Conclusion

This chapter has discussed prayer, dress codes, food and fasting as different aspects of Pakistani children's lifeworlds. Through a combination of Douglas' theory on purity-impurity and Berger's theory on socialisation as 'nomization', all aspects were interpreted within the complex of purity-impurity. Purity was accordingly understood both as 'ritual purity' and as 'order', and purity as 'order' was found both within a religious and a secular context. Within all these four aspects of life (prayer, dress codes, food and fasting) degrees of purity and purification practices were central, and in some contexts 'pollution' was therefore found more appropriate than 'impurity' as a contrasting term. Only within the complex of food, sharp, permanent borders between purity and impurity were discernible as the *halal-haram* dichotomy.

The practices of prayer, dress codes, food and fasting have been found to be deeply related to bodily and sensory experiences of children and are especially related to the constitution and expression of gender. One of the key findings of this chapter is the recognition of the bodily foundation of the purity-impurity complex as decisive for establishing Islam as 'meaningful' to children. A comparison of these findings, which are mainly based on anthropological theories and methods, with Islamic doctrine on purity and impurity will be presented in 8.4.

The next chapter will concentrate on the time-space complex, but will also discuss the extent to which, and how, the purity-impurity complex is linked to qualitatively different time and space.

¹ The use of Douglas's theory on purity-pollution in this study does not imply a general support for her overall system-functionalistic framework, for example expressed in Douglas (1975:67).

² Weightman draws on Dumont's theory of caste, cf. Dumont ([1970]1980). For an alternative theory of caste, cf. Berreman (1979).

³ Related to Douglas' theorisation of anomalies as unclean and Berger's theory of anomy is Turner's theory of the different phases of the ritual process, especially his concept of liminality (Turner 1989[1969]:95).

⁴ Dr. Muhammad Muhsin Khan's Arabic-English edition of Al-Bukhari.

⁵ In what follows, references will be made especially to Abdalati because his Islamic handbook was translated into Norwegian and is known to parts of the Pakistani community.

⁶ There is a terminological problem attached to the translation of *salah* / *namaz* because English terms like 'prayer' and 'to pray' (equivalent to Norwegian 'bønn' and 'å be') have Christian connotations. On the other hand it would be artificial to maintain Arabic or Urdu terminology throughout the study, not least because most of the time respondents used Norwegian terms. There is also a problem connected to the combination of Arabic and Urdu terms in respondents' Islamic vocabulary. When referring to information given by Pakistani respondents or key informants, their terminology will be kept, whether in Urdu, Arabic or Norwegian (Norwegian terms will be translated into English). Terms associated with Islamic festivals etc. will be rendered in the language form most commonly used, e.g. Ramadan instead of Ramazan (Urdu) because this form was part of children's Norwegian vocabulary. Occasionally, and especially when referring directly to Islamic doctrine, transliterations from Arabic will be used.

⁷ The terminology 'spiritual' is avoided here since the spiritual aspect of prayer is expressed both bodily and mentally.

⁸ This mode of argumentation, from the special occasion to the general pattern, is parallel to Berger's argument, from the marginal experiences of individuals to an understanding of social existence in general (Berger 1990 119671:20).

⁹ An interesting parallel is found in Buitelaar's description of the double character of purity associated with *Ramadan* in Morocco. *Ramadan* requires purity, but at the same time 'Ramadan is considered to render a person 'healthy' in an all-embracing way' (Buitelaar 1993:107).

¹⁰ Reference is made to Abdalati (1978:92) for lists of occasions when Muslims are encouraged to express their gratitude to God, such as: birth, weddings, going to bed, at meals etc. These utterances of gratitude are rather similar to modern Christian prayers, but they are not what Muslims first think of as prayers. During my fieldwork, such forms of utterances were heard (e.g. during travels), but not among children. Abdalati also refers to three occasions when prayers were highly recommended by the Prophet: times of too much rain, times of drought, times of solar eclipse.

¹¹ In addition to the practice of praying at home, there were, of course, prescribed prayers at the funeral: *salatul janazah* (Abdalati 1978:89; Samar 1993:61). All ceremonies in the mosque primarily involve prayers.

¹² Boys entering the female part of a mosque often caused discussion among the women: 'what is he doing here? how old is he? wait outside!' Small girls were, however, observed praying and playing beside their fathers in the mosque without anyone taking notice.

¹³ The act of praying may be an indicator of other aspects as well. For example, one child mentioned the way the hands are held as being the only factor distinguishing Shias from Sunnis (in addition to the mode of celebrating *Muharram*).

¹⁴ However, she marked her individuality by correctly putting the scarf on when she got there, but after a while tied it back at the neck instead of under the chin.

¹⁵ Cf. Turner's (1989 [1969]) discussion of liminality and communitas.

¹⁶ Cf. Tranberg Hansen's (1995) study exploring how used clothes from Western countries imported to Zambia change meaning in the new context.

¹⁷ This was strongly demonstrated at a visit to the headquarters of the political party *Jama'at-i Islami* in Lahore.

¹⁸ These observations may, however, not be completely transferable to a Norwegian setting.

¹⁹ See commentary by Ali Yusuf, note 1008 to S. 7:26 and the Norwegian translation by Einar Berg, S. 7:25: 'fromhetens klær'.

²⁰ Cf. how Bushra tied her scarf, mentioned above, as an example of how children expressed their individuality even within these strictly prescribed forms.

²¹ In a Pakistani context, a beard is a sign of being strongly religious. Pakistani men in Oslo with a beard were often called '*molvi*' by other men.

²² She was very proud when she showed me for the first time and expressed both a consciousness of being 'a big girl' and a true Muslim. It was her own decision to wear it (she wanted to because a friend wore it), but her decision was strongly supported at home.

²³ Interesting material from Sweden presented in Otterbeck (1993).

²⁴ There has been a strong debate concerning these issues in Norwegian schools for many years. Cp. a similar debate in Britain (Parker-Jenkins 1995). It now seems as if flexible solutions are more easily found, taking into consideration both Islamic ideals of modesty and educational ideals of equality.

²⁵ In the Qur'an, dress is given a double function: to cover and to beautify (S.7:26).

²⁶ Cf. the characteristic hand movements/gestures developed by Pakistani women because they were preoccupied with keeping their *dupattas* on their heads.

²⁷ The influence from advertising, TV commercials, fashion magazines and trend setters are topics outside the scope of this study.

²⁸ In addition to these categories, there were distinctions based on class and status made

visible through the quality of dress fabrics and design and style of clothes.

²⁹ This also *has* implications for research methods. Sharing of meals was a substantial part of the fieldwork for this study, both as part of the domestic sphere (in the homes) and as part of the public sphere (e.g. in the mosques). More than any other shared activity, enjoying a Pakistani meal made my observations participatory. Cp. Buitelaar's experience of fasting during Ramadan in Morocco (Buitelaar 1993:80).

³⁰ 'As a phenomenon of both matter and consciousness, food is part of processes of mediation, where borders are crossed, broken down and re-established' (ibid.translated into English).

³¹ Lévi-Strauss's explanation of the Jewish pork-taboo is that pork, on the one hand, and ox and sheep, on the other hand, represented different ways of life. Pork represented the way of life of 'the enemy' (Lévi-Strauss 1979:15).

³² Compare the role of food regulation as an identity marker among Hindus (Jackson and Nesbitt 1993:57-75).

³³ An Urdu word for fast, commonly used by children, was *rozah*, to fast= *rozah rakhna* (literally means: to put/lay the fast).

³⁴ As a female researcher and guest, I enjoyed the privilege of sharing meals both with men and women (Cf. Chapter 2).

³⁵ Halal=lawful; Taiyib=pure, clean, wholesome, nourishing, pleasing to taste (Ali Yusuf's translation of the Qur'an, footnote 169).

³⁶ The food distinctions are part of a broader categorisation of human activities into obligatory (*fard*), recommended (*mandub*), silent (*mubah*), disliked (*makruh*) and forbidden (*haram*) (Sarwar 1994:164).

³⁷ For a discussion of what is implied by the Arabic word *khamr* and its analogous terms, see Yusuf Ali's translation and commentary of The Holy Qur'an, note 240.

³⁸ Yusuf Ali's translation of the Qur'an, footnote 174.

³⁹ By using the verb 'to celebrate' (Norwegian: å feire) he characterised what fasting is about.

⁴⁰ Cool is used as an English/American loanword in Norwegian. It is a slang expression among children and youth. Sometimes it is written 'kW' in Norwegian.

Chapter 6

Qualitatively Different Time and Space

6.1 Introduction

The previous chapter revealed a variety of practices, which in different ways and to different degrees expressed aspects of the purity-impurity complex. This complex was not interpreted as entirely religiously based, but was found to be grounded partly in Islamic doctrine and ritual practices, and partly in social and cultural 'world-constructing' processes (Berger 1990 [1967]). Bodily and sensory experiences and gender issues as aspects of Islamic nurture were emphasised.

This chapter focuses on a related theoretical complex, the experience of qualitatively different time and space. It is related to the purity-impurity complex in that purification was often connected to specific times and places, i.e. through being situational. Situational purity presupposed the shift from states of defilement to states of purity as a parallel to the shift between qualitatively different time and space. The term 'qualitatively different time and space' is related to, but not identical with, the conceptual pairs, *sacred time-profane time* and *sacred space-profane space* (Eliade 1966 [1949]; 1971 [1958]). These concepts and the relationship between them will be discussed below.

Like the purity-impurity complex, the time-space complex emerged as a theme during the fieldwork, especially through combining everyday observations with the

study of Islamic rituals. The pattern emerged through the presence of Islamic ritual as part of everyday family life and as part of the Islamic festivals. This pattern was combined with the presence of the mainstream Norwegian rhythm of the year experienced through schools, media and neighbourhood. So, two sets of qualitatively different time and space were discernible, one within an Islamic setting and the other within a secular setting. The two spatial and temporal patterns were not uninfluenced by each other. Some of the rituals and experiences implicated 'others', i.e. they 'aimed as much at a symbolic statement to outsiders as at the consolidation of internal values and meanings' (Baumann 1992:100) (discussed below).

This chapter will combine a focus on time with a focus on space and will analyse children's experiences of the time-space complex. The time-space complex in relation to Pakistani children's lives in Oslo includes Islamic and non-Islamic elements in a way that is decisive for an understanding of Islamic life in a secular context. The chapter also relates the experiences of qualitatively different time and space to the identity management of children, i.e. to the establishment, maintenance and negotiation of identity within a multiple set of spatial and temporal contexts.

6.2 Prayer related to time and space

Even if children did not perform *namaz*, the prayers prescribed five times a day, they had a consciousness of time (and timing) connected to prayer. This will be analysed in this section combined with a discussion of prayer as spatiality. According to Parkin, all rituals 'presuppose phasal movement, directionality, and positioning' (1992:12). How this manifested itself in Pakistani children's praying practice will also be highlighted in this section. Performing *namaz* or observing others performing *namaz* contributed **to** a qualitatively different time and space dimension in their lifeworld. The qualitative difference was visually present through the ritual purification, the prayer rug, the covering of the head, the observance of the *qibla*, the right timing and the performance of *raka'at*. The first sub-section will focus on the aspect of time.

Prayer and the aspect of time

Whether children prayed regularly or occasionally, a time-dimension was attached to the ritual. This time-dimension had both symbolic and pragmatic aspects. The symbolic aspects were connected to the consciousness of the existence of qualitatively different time. *Fajr*, *zuhr*, *'asr*, *maghrib*, *'isha* were 'sacred times' interrupting the profane flow of time (Eliade 1966:45; 1971:388).¹ The totality of day and night is split up into units of different lengths and qualities. This rhythm of time is

strengthened by the Islamic combination of the lunar and solar cycle. The qualitatively different time-dimension is attached both to the specific time for praying (the ritual itself) and to the periodic system created by prayers prescribed for particular times.

When asked about the possibility of praying more spontaneously, not at fixed times, children confirmed that this was a good practice, that one might do that, even if it 'didn't count'. Rashid (m14), for example, explained one of the main Islamic ideas about prayers, namely that you can never substitute prayer at a given time by praying extra in advance. The idea of prayers counting towards merit is an essential trait of Islamic doctrine, at least according to some law-schools.² Prayers counting in this way may be interpreted as an expression of the duty of prayer. By performing certain duties (like the prescribed prayers), one may earn *ajr* (merit).³ Key informants, like *imams* in Oslo, as well as authors in the secondary literature (Abdalati 1978:66; Mawdudi 1985:164; Sarwar 1994:74), also emphasised that praying at set times during the day is a wise system prescribed by the Prophet himself. It is intended to keep the life of Muslims in line with the rhythm of day and night, work and rest, and to create a daily time-space as a reminder of God and an opportunity to experience God's presence.

The pragmatic aspects of prayer times had to do with children's frequency of performing *namaz*. Children had the knowledge of when and how to perform the daily prayers, and they were frank about why they did not pray, even during *Ramadan*: 'So when the sun rises, then you have to get up early...but I can't manage to get up that early' (Nasir m 13). And his brother Rashid (14) said; 'When you are seven, then you are supposed to pray five times a day - but I don't do that.' Both the practice and the attitudes of Nasir and Rashid are typical for most respondent children. During *Ramadan* children were more likely to pray. However, fasting seemed to mean a lot more to them than praying.

Very little was written in children's diaries about prayers. Only extraordinary events like visits to the mosque or receiving presents after the first day of fasting were mentioned. Prayers were regarded as taken-for-granted parts of everyday life, not worth mentioning.⁴

When children said they did not have time for praying, they meant to give an acceptable answer aimed at legitimising an irregular practice. Iqra (f 9) and Tariq (m

9) admitted the irregularity of their own prayers, and at the same time confirmed that they were not led to perform prayers by observing the correct time, but by being influenced by their parents.

I: Do children usually pray? Do you pray?

Iqra: Yes.

Tariq: Yes, sometimes when we have the time.

I: When you get the time... how often is that?

Iqra: When Dad is reading (*i.e. reading the Qur'an or reading his prayers*).

I: When Dad is reading?

Tariq: Or when our big brother is reading.

I: Yes.

Tariq: Then I read too. Once I did not read the whole day, and then I had to read it all.

Saima (f 9) said that she did not have to pray yet, not before 'let's say 14'. She said that she usually prayed 'maybe twice, maybe just once a day, not always.' I asked her if she prayed because she wanted to or because it was her duty. She said:

You always want to do it, but...you do it when you have the time.

Sometimes we don't do it all together because my little brother is disturbing, and someone has to look after my little brother.

This underlines the everyday context of prayers and leads to a shifting focus from temporal to spatial aspects of prayer.

Space aspects of prayer.

Individual prayers, and prayers by family members and friends together, were occasionally performed at home. Conversation and playing tended to go on while someone unrolled their prayer rugs. The place for prayer was nothing extraordinary, it might be a corner of the living room, but the prayer rug, the observance of *qibla* and the covering of the head created a special space within the room, a hallowed space of purity. Whereas ablution and prayer rug guaranteed the purity of the place, the observance of *qibla* and the performance of *raka'at* transformed the place into a sacred space. This was spatiality on a micro-level, i.e. expressed in that room or the corner of the room through bodily positioning, and on a macro-level, i.e. connecting the individual praying to the centre of the Islamic world, Mecca.

The following event is an example of how prayers were performed as part of the home context, thereby establishing a temporary sacred space in the middle of the profane world. At the time of the skiing World Championship, I visited Khalid (m 12) and his family. The TV was on, showing the latest sports news, and we were eating and talking. As it was time for prayer, the father, a friend of the father and Khalid found their prayer rugs and put on their small white caps. The mother went into another room with her rug. I remained sitting on the sofa, the smaller children jumping around, and the TV still on. Khalid led the prayer, and he did so with energy and enthusiasm. All my research observation was focused on the act of praying. In the middle of the prayer, in a little break between postures (*raka 'at*), Khalid turned around saying eagerly: 'How is Bjørn Dæhlie doing?'^s I was not able to answer, and the prayer went on. The confusion that I felt, of being torn between two 'worlds', was not shared by Khalid. For him, prayer and sport were two aspects of life, and at the age of twelve, he had no need to rank them or to put impermeable barriers between them. The collision between the two events was just a question of bad timing (cf. a similar conflict about watching football during *Ramadan*, next section).

In addition to the home arena, Qur'an classes, mostly in the mosques, were places for prayers in children's lifeworlds. The mosque was, at least for boys, also a place for prayers as part of *Id-ul-fitr*. When talking about *Id* celebrations, Jamshed (m 9) said: 'I do go to the mosque - all boys do. My uncle does it... my brother has come too, and my cousin.' Prayers as spatiality were, however, not primarily attached to the mosque as a holy site, but to what was referred to above as the bodily positioning of oneself within a temporal and spatial cosmos regardless of place. The mosque as a place for daily *Qur'an* classes was as much a part of profane everyday life (a place they spent the afternoons) as a holy room. This experience might be linked to the lack of architecturally designed mosques in Oslo or to the frequency of children's attendance.

None of the respondent children were able to pray in a prayer room at school. If praying facilities had been introduced to them at school, and if they had used these, this would of course have increased the frequency of praying. This would have been in accordance with Islamic norms (Parker-Jenkins 1995), but would not be in accordance with the actual habits of Norwegian-Pakistani children. They did not pray more often during their holidays, not even when they visited relatives in Pakistan.⁶ Moreover, there is no indication from my research that they actually missed rooms for prayer at school. On the contrary, there is reason to believe that praying facilities at

school would cause problems for Muslim children, stigmatising them in the eyes of non-Muslim children and splitting them into Muslim sub-groups of those performing prayers and those who do not.

Conclusion

For children, praying was most of all a ritual performed in the mosque or a ritual performed by adults at home. As a child you might join them, do as they did. In this way, praying was part of what was expected of you as a grown up. It was something you were supposed to learn, both what to say and what to do. Knowing these skills seemed more important for children's management of identity than practising regularly (cf. 5.2; will be elaborated in Chapter 7). What prayers also established in children's lifeworlds, was an experience of qualitatively different time and space. To perform prayers there had to be a time and a place to do it. These places were not limited to permanent sacred places like the mosque or the tomb of a *pir*, but were established in the middle of everyday life, literally in the living room. The sacred times were not limited to special occasions like *Id*, but might be experienced daily or only occasionally. The character of Islamic prayer in itself was seen to express temporality and spatiality. Initially (6.1) there were some reservations concerning identifying the qualitatively different issues of time and space with the conceptual pairing sacred-profane. There are two reasons for this. First of all, sacred-profane were not experience-near concepts or distinctions expressed by the children themselves, although they did experience a qualitative difference between the two. Secondly, the experience of qualitatively different time and space was not limited to the Islamic sphere of life, but encompassed aspects of their non-Islamic lifeworld (see 6.4). The next section will discuss Islamic festivals as they were experienced by Muslim children in a non-Muslim society.

6.3 Islamic festivals

Introduction

One reason for having a fieldwork period that lasted a full year was to understand the role of Islamic festivals in the lives of children (cf. Chapter 2). The focus was on each festival as a separate event, but also on festivals as signposts of the year and ways of creating periods of life. The latter aspect made it necessary to study the relationship between Islamic and non-Islamic festivals or celebrations (see 6.4). By definition a festival calendar has to do with a rhythm of time, linked to a solar or lunar cycle, to the shifts of seasons, agricultural or historical events, or more commonly, to a combination of these factors (Borressen 1996; Eliade 1971:388). Within social

anthropology and sociology it has long been accepted that such rhythms of time are cultural products (Johansen 1989:89; Sorokin 1962:681). In addition to temporal aspects, spatiality may also be part of festivals. Cosmic time and space are often inseparably linked (Eliade 1971). In a multicultural society there are likely to be distinguishable calendars, time sequences and ritual systems side by side or interwoven (cf. Parkin 1992). An interesting aspect of rituals in multicultural societies is the degree to which they implicate 'others', as expressed by Baumann (1992). This will be part of the discussion below. The impact of rhythms of time on Pakistani children with special regard to the creation of meaning and social belonging will be examined. This section will concentrate on the impact of Islamic festivals, especially *Ramadan* and *Id-ul-fitr*⁷, in a Norwegian-Pakistani context.

New moon, authority and sense of time

As the Islamic year is divided into 12 months following the lunar cycle, the months actually move through the seasons. For example, *Ramadan*, the 9th month of the year, will come about 11 days earlier each year (Grunebaum 1992:53).⁸ In Chapter 5 it was discussed how this affected children's fasting experiences. The new month, e.g. *Ramadan*, starts when the first sign of the new moon, the sickle moon, is observed in the evening sky as a white thread (S.2: 189; Al-Bukhari, Vol.III: 130).⁹ Despite the fact that astronomical surveys all over the modern world give the exact timing for the start of a new month, *Ramadan* has to be officially proclaimed by a trustworthy person who has observed the new moon (Grunebaum 1992:56). Because of this rule, *Ramadan* may be proclaimed at slightly different times in different parts of the world. To avoid chaos in the Islamic world, 'someone' has the authority to proclaim the starting point of the month of fasting." In this way the question of timing is not only attached to the lunar cycle, but to a structure of authority, i.e. to a cultural system. In Islamic countries the starting point of *Ramadan* is nowadays proclaimed through television and radio (Buitelaar 1993:52).

The right to proclaim the start of the month of fasting opens up sectarian differences. Of these, the most important and most relevant in our context is the difference between the *Deobandi* and the *Barelwi* tradition. The *Deobandis* follow the Saudi-Arabian proclamation, which they consider to be the correct one, whereas the *Barelwis* start *Ramadan* from the time it is proclaimed in India, Pakistan and Bangladesh. Because they start on different days (it will usually be just one day's difference), they will celebrate *Id-id-fir* on different days. Even if the two groups start the fast on different days, there is the theoretical possibility of celebrating *Id* on the

same day since the fast may last for 29 or 30 days (Al-Bukhari, Vol.III: 130-137). An awareness of this fact was found among informants in Oslo, but it was not strong enough to lead to any practical results with regard to the actual timing of *Id-ul-fitr*. The recognition of the Saudi-Arabian method for proclaiming the start of *Ramadan*, pronounced in a *Juma* sermon by an *imam* in one of the *Barelwi* dominated mosques in Oslo, was interpreted as a step towards reconciliation (cf. a similar discussion among Muslims in Britain recorded in Lewis 1994:171; Geaves 1995).

From one point of view, the issue was regarded as rather unimportant and the differences were accepted as local variations. From another point of view it demonstrated a lack of unity among Muslims. This lack of unity had theological, practical and emotional implications. The theological implications will not be analysed here," but rather how this split was experienced by key informants and respondent families. The problem was linked to their relationship towards mainstream non-Islamic society, to feelings of solidarity towards the practices of their countries of origin and to sectarian affiliations, not least towards sister and brother organizations in other European countries (Geaves 1995; Joly 1995; Lewis 1994; Nielsen 1992; Vogt 1995).

The main concern of parents was the negative effect of this split between *Barelwis* and *Deobandis* on the image of Islam in wider Norwegian society. Parents were also concerned about how schools reacted when Muslim children asked for permission to celebrate *Id-ut-fitr* on different days.

Instead of regarding the timing of *Ramadan* as a problem, it might be seen as an alternative way of experiencing time through the lunar cycle combined with elements like observation of the new moon. For Pakistani children in a non-Islamic society dominated by the solar festival cycle and clock time, it created a variety of time experiences, which they seemed to handle with multiple cultural competence. For me, as a researcher, it was a source of confusion, never knowing exactly when a celebration would take place (cp. Buitelaar 1993:52).

Ramadan: the atmosphere of the whole month

The three main social arenas for children (home, school and mosque) were all influenced by what happened during *Ramadan*, especially the fast and the celebration of *Id-ul-fim*. In Chapter 5, there was discussion of how the fast, and the breaking of the fast, was experienced by children within the home sphere. This section will

analyse some additional elements, which, together with the fast and its associated meals, make *Ramadan* a special time of the year.

In some respects the atmosphere of *Ramadan* is comparable to the month of December in the Christian Western world. It is a month in which life is supposed to go on as usual, but at the same time it is a month for spiritual preparation and worldly celebration,¹² How Ramadan changes ordinary life may, of course, best be studied in societies where Muslims are in a majority, like Pakistan or Morocco (Ahlberg 1990:177; Buitelaar 1993). The special character of *Ramadan* in such countries is visible, not only at an individual or family level, but also publicly. For example, the profile of TV programmes change and there is an intense party life in the urban areas at night.

Ramadan is experienced differently in a minority situation, and the tendency is either to privatise the celebration or to use it as a chance to make religious practice 'official' in a new setting (Ahlberg 1990:177; Baumann 1992). A change of attitude during the last few decades may be observed in Norway as in Britain. Danièle Joly writes: 'Moreover, while the religious practice of early Muslim immigrants remained a private matter, Islam has now entered the public sphere and has become a social question' (Joly 1995; cf. 5.4). Children are not unaffected by these tendencies as will be elaborated below and in the next chapter. *Ramadan* for Pakistani children in Oslo had at least two faces. One of these was directed towards mainstream society in the way that *Ramadan* and *Id-ul-fitr* were increasingly made visible in non-Islamic social arenas like the school, neighbourhood and media. *Ramadan* and the celebration of *Id-ul-fitr* were, in this respect, both a cultural and ethnic articulation and contributed strongly to children's social belonging within the Pakistani community. The other face of *Ramadan* was the strengthening of the inner religious life. Children mainly experienced this indirectly through their parents. As one of the children said about his parents' praying practices: 'They may do this on ordinary days too, but in that period they tend to become a little bit more religious.'

Recitation of the *Qur'an*

Both children and parents tended to pray and read the *Qur'an* more often during *Ramadan*. This increased practice took place at home, but even more among those attending activities at the mosque, mainly men. Some men and boys went to the mosque every afternoon during *Ramadan*. After *isha*, the fifth prayer, they read the *Qur San*, a new section each evening. This reading or recitation is called the *Tarawih*

prayers (Grunebaum 1992: 61; Sarwar 1992:78), According to Khalid (m12) the recitation started after the last prayer and lasted about two hours. That meant that the whole *Qur'an* would be read during this month.¹³

Family life changed character during *Ramadan*, both for those who fasted and went to the mosque, and for those who did not. For example, Khalid talked about daily prayers in the mosque as something he liked to do, but one day he objected to going because of an important football match on TV. He argued for some time with his mother, but the result was that he decided to go - on one condition: his sister should watch the last part of the match and inform him about the result.

Sitting *itiqaf*

A Marrakeshi saying about the different days of *Ramadan* goes something like this: 'The first ten are for the youth, the second ten are for the middle-aged and the last ten are for the elderly' (Buitelaar 1993:55). This means that the last ten days are the most difficult. Indeed, if a father 'sits *itiqaf*' family life may change dramatically. 'To sit *itiqaf*' means to spend the ten last days and nights of *Ramadan* 'secluded' in the mosque, praying and meditating, and not communicating with anyone from outside (Al-Bukhari Vol.III, Ch.33). This is meant to be a total withdrawal, but it is possible to make an agreement with God, for instance that one intends to break the *itiqaf* in the case of a death in the family. Such an agreement is understood in terms of making *niyya* (an intention).

The number of men performing this ritual varied from mosque to mosque, and from year to year. During the year of fieldwork, only one of the respondent fathers sat *itiqaf*. Each person who 'sat *itiqaf*' had his own mattress along the wall in the main room of the mosque. In front of these 'beds' sheets hung from the ceiling to give each person privacy. During the period of their seclusion, food was brought to the men by family members. Of the respondent boys, only Khalid spent two or three nights in the mosque during this period. On one of the nights some other boys were present too. They had participated in the ordinary *Qur'an* recitation and prayers, and on the last day they were rewarded with small prizes like pens etc.

Lailat ul-qadr

The 27th of *Ramadan* is called *Lailat ul-qadr* (Night of Power). According to the *sunnah* this was the day of the first revelation of the *Qur'an*.¹⁴ It is quite common to spend the whole night in the mosque in prayer and meditation. This is regarded as the

most important night of *Ramadan*, something that both the fast and the recitations of the Qur'an lead up to. The recitation of the whole Qur'an may be understood as a gradual actualisation of the theophany represented by the Holy Book. *Lailat ul-qadr* in the mosque is the re-enactment of the first revelation. The revelation is made present, or as expressed by Eliade: 'The time of the event that the ritual commemorates or re-enacts is made present, "re-presented" so to speak, however, far back it may have been in ordinary reckoning' (Eliade 1971:392). In Khalid's family they all, father, mother, sisters and brothers, spent this evening in the mosque. The women and girls stayed in the part of the mosque reserved for them.

Even in families that did not celebrate this night in the mosque, children were generally aware that fasting on this day brought a lot of merit. Bushra (f 12) said: 'But the 27th, I think, if you fast that day, it is somewhat more...important. We don't have to fast, but if we do it, it is good. It is a kind of important day. I don't know why.'

*Id-ul-fitr*¹⁵

Uncertainty about the timing of *Id-ul-fitr*, gave the whole celebration an atmosphere of unpredictability, even if it was something longed for during the hardships of fasting. The reason for this unpredictability was the request to observe the crescent moon as discussed above. Both adults and children seemed to under-communicate their knowledge of the exact date for *Id*. One was not supposed to know. Khalid (m12) said: 'You see it on the full moon...'.¹⁶ The astonishing thing for me as an outsider was the emotional and practical aspect of this uncertainty. For both adults and children there was a kind of excitement connected to the experience of waiting. Most of them got to know the proclamation of *Id* when some male family member returned from the mosque the evening before.

For the purpose of understanding children's approach to these issues, some examples of how they talked about *Id-ul-fitr* will be presented. Rifat (f17) said they had always looked forward to celebrating *Id*. She explained that they celebrated *Id-ul-fitr* more than *Id-e-azha* 'because then we have fasted for a whole month and everybody longs for the great day'. The 'we' used here is to be understood as 'we' vs. 'them', indicating the importance of fasting in the establishment and maintenance of social and cultural identity (cf. Chapter 4). Rifat (f17) further said:

Usually we gather, the whole family, and if the weather is good, we go out. First we read the *Id* prayer as everybody does, and then we have a

party. We are at home, but after *Id* there are different parties: *Id*-celebration in the mosque, and in the neighbourhood, and such things...It isn't finished at once. Families gather, and then we have good food, presents and that sort of thing. We also send each other *Id* cards, We send them to all the relatives in Pakistan and all around, and we get cards.

About the actual *Id* festival Nasir (m13) said:

First people go to the mosque, the boys and the men. We go to the mosque around 10 o'clock, and then they pray and then they go to eat, and they dress up. They have made an appointment with someone to celebrate. Maybe we go to them, and then we give them some presents, and maybe we get some money or parcels and then we may just go out somewhere for a picnic if the weather is good in the summer. If *Id* comes when the weather is bad, we stay indoors and have a good time in another way.

This sequence of the day was confirmed by all children. However, it is worth noting how gender influenced the celebration. In the morning only the boys went with their fathers to the mosque. The girls stayed at home with their mothers and siblings. In Chapter 5 we discussed how the practice of prayer strengthened the common bonds between women. The *Id* celebration also strengthened other traditional gender roles connected with the preparation of food. Saima (f 9) apologised for not having written in her diary because she had been too busy helping her mother to prepare all the food for *Id*.

The diaries contained elements of the *Id* celebration, mostly by relating what children did and what they got as presents. In her diary Yasmin (f14) wrote a kind of poetry about *Id*. It was not written on *Id* itself, but at the beginning of *Ramadan*. She wrote it in English:

When Eid came I was very happy. All the streets in our town shone. The whole town in Pakistan was so clean it looked more like a dream. Everybody was neat and clean. Every woman and girl had bought new pretty clothes. It was such a beautiful sight, with loads of shining light.

The celebration of *Id-ul-fitr* was a significant factor not only for boys, but also

for girls, to mark a Pakistani Muslim identity as different from a Norwegian identity (cf. 4.3). Yasmin's association of *Id* with Pakistan is therefore typical. At the same time *Id-ul-fitr* is part of a broader time complex. For Bushra (f 12) *Id-ul-fitr* was one of the nicest days of the year, comparable to May 17th (the Norwegian National Day), her birthday or Christmas. She always looked forward to these days, but no more to one than the other. 'I am looking forward to the celebration to come,' she said. This is an example of children's positive experience of qualitatively different times based on a combination of Islamic and non-Islamic cultural elements.

The elements of the *Id* festival may be summarised in a few words: taking a bath (*ghusl*) in the morning; praying at home (women) or in the mosque (men); sending and receiving *Id*-cards; having new clothes and; for girls, having hands decorated with *henna/mehndi*; eating special food; receiving presents and having a party. Except for the element of prayers, *Id-ul-fitr* had few specific religious elements. More than anything else, it was aimed at celebrating the end of the fast. Studied in isolation from the preceding month, it might not give the impression of being a religious festival, and Norwegians tended to ask whether *Id* had been influenced by Muslims living in the secularised West. This type of question may be caused by the tendency to compare *Id-ul-fitr* with Christmas. It was not uncommon to hear or read about *Id* as 'their Christmas'. There might be recognition in this terminology, a wish to equalise the two celebrations (or 'cultures' as expressed in the dominant discourse, cf. Baumann 1996). However, this type of equalisation may also be regarded as an expression of cultural incorporation or assimilation, i.e. of making 'them' similar to 'us'. Pakistanis themselves were often heard applying the same type of terminology. It was part of their strategy of adjusting to the dominant culture by applying 'their' concepts. This might work positively on a short-term communication level, but might have unforeseen effects in the long run, for example diminishing the respect for their multiple cultural competence (cf. Chapter 8). Conceptual homogenising presumably improved communication and mutual recognition between the non-Muslim majority and Muslim minorities, but might cause changes in focus and content and thereby lead to a deprivation of symbolic expressions. Here we touch on the interface of rituals and festivals as communication with 'others' and as community building (Cf. the discussion below concerning the celebration of *Mawlid*).

All respondent children were released from school at *Id-ul-fitr*. Some schools marked *Id* with arrangements some days after the real festival. Pupils would sing, dance" or perform in other ways. There was much less opposition in schools towards

Id celebrations compared to other elements of Islamic practice such as fast and prayers (cf. next chapter). This may be due to the fact that it is widely known and recognised that every religion has its festivals. It may, however, also be interpreted as a result of the above mentioned incorporation/assimilation tendency. The significant discrepancy in schools between the negative evaluation of Qur'an recitation and fasting and the positive attitude towards *Id* is a sign of such ethnocentric, assimilatory tendencies.

Hajj, Id-e-azha, Muharram and Mawlid

There are two reasons for not analysing these Islamic festivals in any detail in this context. First of all, none of them played a dominant role in the lives of the respondents, even if they were all mentioned by the children as Islamic rituals. Secondly, the role they eventually played had, for different reasons (which will be elaborated below), less to do with temporal and spatial experiences. This statement should, however, be modified with regard to the following. The *Shia* Muslims experienced the month of *Muharram* as a specific period of the year, and *Hajj* (and ') was closely linked to spatiality in respect of Mecca and Saudi-Arabia.

Like all Islamic festivals, the above mentioned follow the lunar cycle. Children had no clear idea of when the festivals would come next. These months and festivals were not in the consciousness of Pakistani children as fixed dates, related for example to the solar months or to school holidays. Unlike *Ramadan* and *Id-ul-fitr* they were not part of the combined Islamic/non-Islamic web of time. *Hajj* was a ritual performed by others or, for themselves, as a dream of the future, not a regular time-event connected to the month of *Dhu al-hijja*, the last month of the Islamic year. None of the respondent children had performed *Hajj*, but Family A had once performed *`umrah* on their way to Pakistan. *Hajj* (and *`umrah*) was part of the respondent children's spatiality and as such played a role in the world-constructing process of children (cf. 5.4).¹⁸

Id-e-azha, the feast of sacrifice, is celebrated on 10th *Dhu al-hijja*, the day when the pilgrims perform the sacrifice at Mina as a reminder of *Ibrahim's* willingness to sacrifice his son *Ismail* (Grunebaum 1992:33). However, since no sacrificial slaughtering takes place in Norway,¹⁹ this celebration has lost most of its importance, except among men attending prayers in the mosque. Some families invited guests to their homes, but the celebration did not have the same social status as *Id-ul-fitr*. For some, a system of buying shares in a sacrifice arranged on their behalf in Pakistan was part of the celebration (the meat of the animal was given to the poor). For others, the

slaughtering of an animal was substituted by a symbolic sacrifice: money was gathered and donated to a charitable cause somewhere in the world.

Since these festivals were more or less invisible in mainstream society, they also seemed to have a weaker position among Pakistani children. Another factor that contributed to this invisibility was the internal disagreements concerning the form and degree of celebration. This was especially relevant to the celebration of 10th *Muharram* and *Mawlid*. *Muharram* is the first month of the Islamic year and has for *Shias* a special importance since Hussain's martyrdom is celebrated the 10th of that month (Grunebaum 1992:85 ff). As a minority among minorities, and especially in a rather tense anti-Islamic, and even tenser *anti-Shia*, atmosphere, Pakistani *Shias* tended to privatise the *Muharram* rituals. The communication with 'others' existed only as a consciousness of hiding away from both mainstream non-Islamic society and mainstream *Sunni-Tslam*. *Sunnis* underlined that they too 'remembered' Hussain's martyrdom, but not in the same way and to the same extent as the *Shias*. For the majority of Pakistani children in Oslo, the specific *Shia* rituals were unknown (cf. Rifat's experiences in Pakistan discussed in Chapter 4).

The celebration of Muhammad's birthday (*Mawlid*) is also a disputed festival among Muslims. The dispute follows the traditional *Barelwi-Deobandi* line. For *Barelwis*, and other Sufi-inspired movements, the celebration of *Mawlid* is an expression of their deep affection and honouring of the Prophet (Schimmel 1975; 1985). The *Deobandis* reject this celebration because they fear it might give the Prophet a God-like position not in accordance with Islamic doctrine (Mawdudi 1990).

In Oslo the *Mawlid* celebrations have gained importance in some sections of the Pakistani community during the last couple of years. Several Muslim organisations and mosques have arranged a common prayer and a procession of men and boys from the mosque to another rented hall. The procession through the central part of town has given the festival a greater public character. However, compared to the number of Muslims in Oslo, the rate of participation has been low. None of the respondent children participated, nor had they any knowledge of the arrangement (which during the last couple of years took place during the summer holiday). The arrangement was well organised (banners, caps, T-shirts, pamphlets etc.), and gave the impression of being more aimed at communicating with 'others', i.e. with mainstream society and other groups within the Muslim community, than of expressing inner affection for the Prophet or being part of a traditional festival. The role played by the young men in

charge of the arrangement (Muslimsk Ungdom),^{2°} was decisive in this process.

Preliminary conclusion

Since Islamic festivals have already been seen to be part of a much broader time and space-web, including non-Islamic celebrations, a final conclusion on this theme will be presented after 6.4. What can be summarised so far, however, is the uneven influence of the different festivals on the lives of children. Whereas *Ramadan* and *Id-ul-fitr* were widely influential in a religious, social and cultural sense, and served both an inner community building and an outer integration building purpose, the other festivals had more limited and selective functions. Children and young people have been presented as actors and negotiation-partners in the maintenance and development of Islamic festivals in the Norwegian secular context.

6.4 Non-Islamic celebrations

The previous section discussed how ritual communication with 'others' was also an internal discussion within the Pakistani community in Oslo and within the lives of individual children (cf. the discussion of 'Us-Them' dichotomies in Chapter 4). The focus will now be shifted from Islamic rituals to non-Islamic celebrations. This analytical shift does not imply a clear-cut boundary between Islamic and non-Islamic celebrations. Children looked forward to whatever celebration came next, Islamic or secular. The discussion will be limited to the celebration of Christmas and New Year's Eve; May 17⁶ (the National Day of Norway); August 14th (the National day of Pakistan) and birthdays, since these were the events celebrated.

Christmas and New Year's Eve

The respondent children were asked to write diaries from the end of November (cf. 2.3). The diaries gave clear evidence for the domination of Advent and pre-Christmas events during this period, partly initiated by commercial interests, partly by the media and schools. The non-Christian (or post-Christian) elements of this celebration were adapted, to different degrees, by the Pakistani families. For adults it was a question of adoption or adaptation of selected elements. For children it was a taken-for-granted part of their lifeworld, a qualitatively different time event. This process was characterised as a process of triangular relations. Baumann says: 'Both the replication and the limitation of Christmas rituals draw attention to the same critical relationship: it is triangular in that it involves parents vis-a-vis their children vis-a-vis the surrounding culture with its post-Christian traditions' (Baumann 1992:105). The

'others', in this case then, were mainstream Norwegians or other Pakistanis or Muslims.

Elements which were part of Pakistani children's Christmas time included the following: Advent Calendars (at home and at school); watching Advent and Christmas TV programmes; making Christmas decorations (at school); sending and receiving Christmas cards; Christmas craftwork time (at school); pre-Christmas arrangements (at school); Christmas Tree Parties in January (at school, in the neighbourhood, at the sports' club, at father's place of work etc.); Christmas presents to children; parties within the family. Some examples from respondents' diaries will illustrate this:

Khaiid (m12)

1/12 'Today I woke up at 7.45, half an hour before school started.

Nothing more to tell today. By the way, when I returned home, I opened the Christmas calendar²¹, window number one.'

23/12 'I look forward to the next day because it will be December 24.'

Saturday [24/12] 'Today is Christmas Eve. I opened the last window of my Christmas calendar. Afterwards we went to visit my aunt who lives at Tveita.'

Sunday [25/12] 'We stayed home the whole day. We watched TV. We had pizza.'

Saturday [31/12] 'Today I woke up and went to town to buy rockets and shooting stars which we lighted at midnight.'

Bushra (fl 2)

14/12 'I hope we will have a nice Christmas. I hope everybody will have a nice Christmas. Merry Christmas, Sissel!'

18/12 'Hallo, today was a very nice day. At the centre where mum participates in a training group, there was a party. Tomorrow is the last day at school before Christmas. Tuesday - those who want to will go to church, and those who don't want to, will gather in the hall. Wednesday - we will have free activity time and some entertainment and we will process around the Christmas tree. Afterwards there will be Christmas holiday.'

All children participated eagerly in the pre-Christmas arrangements at school, like *Sancta Lucia*²² processions, craftwork time, theatre performances etc. Children

were eager to have their parents come to school to watch them playing or performing, and parents were proud of their children and mostly went to school for such celebrations (at least one of the parents). However, the children could not expect any practical assistance from parents in these matters. Some children had, for instance, some trouble in borrowing or buying glittering strings, which were needed for the *Sancta Lucia* processions. This is one example of the limits of enculturation and of triangular relations. Parents were enculturated through their children's participation and multiple cultural competence.

At school, among friends and through their watching of TV, Pakistani children gave no indication that Christmas, in this secularised fashion, did not belong to them. They enjoyed the atmosphere and looked forward to the holiday. When it came to Christmas itself, most Pakistani families 'celebrated' only in the way of receiving guests or paying visits to other family members or close Pakistani friends. Some of them exchanged presents (for children only). They had a consciousness of not really celebrating Christmas. Only one of the families had bought a Christmas tree (Family C) on the request of the youngest child. When I visited the family some days before Christmas, the tree was already decorated. However, some of the details of this decoration were slightly different from the mainstream style. The separate elements were all 'correct' and 'belonged' to an appropriate Christmas celebration (Christmas tree, Christmas decoration, goody bags, presents under the tree). Nevertheless, the combination of the elements and the timing represented an alternative to the 'normative' pattern. There were, however, no signs of deliberately transforming Christmas traditions into Islamic or Pakistani ones or to a combining of traditions. As Pakistanis in Norway they could not avoid being part of the rhythm of the year. The experience of the month of December, and especially the period of Christmas and New Year, was shared with the rest of society. More than causing a feeling of being outsiders, this period contributed to a feeling of commonality. However, this feeling of commonality had its limitations. Explicit and implicit communication and negotiations went on, between Pakistanis and mainstream society, between parents and children and among Pakistanis themselves.

In the celebration of New Year's Eve there was a greater similarity between Norwegian and Pakistani customs (except for eating and drinking habits). Social gatherings and fireworks at midnight were the main ingredients. Pakistani children, especially boys, talked a lot about the celebration of New Year's Eve. These were ritual occasions when they felt on equal terms with Norwegian friends, a kind of

compensation for limited participation in Christmas rituals. They performed the same rituals, but they did this as a Pakistani group. They spent the evening with their extended family or with Pakistani friends.

May 17th and August 14th.

As with New Year's Eve, the private part of the celebration of May 17th (The National Day) was spent together with Pakistani friends or family. However, the National Day is actually one of the few celebrations in Norway that is predominantly public in character. The celebration starts quite early in the day, when parents and children meet in the schoolyard, ready for participation in a procession of school children. In Oslo this culminates in passing the palace where the procession 'greet' the royal family. Each school has its own banner and pupils and teachers carry Norwegian flags. The participation of school orchestras is an important element in the procession. Most of the respondent children enjoyed the celebration and, generally, most Pakistani school children participated. When the respondents were asked to name festivals or celebrations during the year, they all mentioned May 17th with great enthusiasm.

However, participation in this procession was not taken-for-granted in the same way that it was for 'Norwegian' children/parents. Pakistani parents yielded easily to arguments from children who did not want to take part. The day did not belong to parents in the same way that it belonged to Norwegian parents (and grandparents). Those Pakistani parents who were engaged in school committees were more likely to participate and to encourage their children to do so. Everybody enjoyed the day, as individuals or together with the Pakistani family and friends. However, the degree of participation in the mainstream social arena depended upon participation in the life of the local school or the local community.

Pakistan's National day, August 14th, was a less central event to respondent children than was May 17th. They were all aware of the date, and some of them knew of, or participated in, arrangements by the Pakistani community in Oslo. These arrangements were of a formal character and took place in a hired meeting hall in the central part of town. Only a few invited Norwegian guests, mostly politicians, were present. In addition to this formal meeting and some special assemblies in the mosques, families invited Pakistani guests to their homes. Since 14 August falls at the end of the school summer holiday, the event is rarely noticed in schools.²³

Birthdays

As mentioned in 5.4, the celebration of birthdays is not a traditional part of Pakistani (or South Asian) culture (cf. Baumann 1992; Larson 1989; Nesbitt 1995b; Østberg 1996), and in rural areas in Pakistan, and among first generation immigrants, it is not customary to know your exact birth date.²⁴ As part of the modernisation process, both factors are changing in Pakistan as well as in the diaspora. Among second generation Pakistanis in Oslo, birthday celebrations were, however, still not taken-for-granted, although all children knew their birth dates. Increasingly though, Pakistani children accepted invitations to birthday parties among classmates as long as they felt confident they would only be served 'safe' food (or they felt confident to make enquiries about food).

Some of the respondent children invited classmates and friends to celebrate their own birthdays. These parties were then arranged to be as 'Norwegian' as possible. Birthday parties in a Pakistani style (in Oslo or in Pakistan) were always within a family setting and consisted of mixed elements from traditional Pakistani celebrations and a Western style (mostly inspired from Britain, influenced by relatives there or by TV and video). Birthday parties were arranged for both Saima (f 9) and Khalid (m 10) during their summer holiday in Pakistan.²⁵ Birthday parties were not arranged for adult family members, neither in Pakistan nor in Norway, but it happened that children made (or bought) presents for their parents.

Conclusion of 6.3 and 6.4

Section 6.3 discussed the implication of 'others' in the celebration of Islamic festivals. Performing of prayers, recitation of the *Qur'an*, and the celebration of Ramadan, *Id-ul-fitr*, *Id-e-azha*, *Muharram*, *Hall* and *Mawlid* were all primarily Islamic rituals performed within a Pakistani cultural context. However, the rituals also 'communicated' with the surrounding mainstream society, directly as was seen in the *Mawlid* celebration, and indirectly through the experience of qualitatively different time and space (cf. Baumann 1992).

Section 6.4 has discussed the role of non-Islamic celebrations in the lives of Pakistani children in Oslo. The focus has been on how processes of adaptation, negotiation and communication took place. Pakistani children regarded Christmas, New Year's Eve, 17th May and birthdays as events that belonged to them as members of mainstream society, as Norwegian-Pakistanis. At the same time it was evident that they did not participate in the relevant social arenas as assimilated individuals, but as

individual Pakistanis or as a Pakistani group. Parents were to a large extent enculturated through their children, and within a Pakistani family setting, new customs and civil rituals were adopted and adapted.

From the perspective of children, Islamic festivals and non-Islamic celebrations formed an integrated pattern in the web of qualitatively different time experiences over the period of a year. Whether Islamic, Pakistani or Norwegian in character, these annual rituals all contained communication with 'others', and thereby contributed to the confirmation and negotiation of children's plural identities (cf. Chapter 8).

6.5 Countries and places as realities and imagination

Introduction

In the previous sections spatiality has been discussed independently of geographical places or territories with two exceptions. The first is the spatiality of prayer, which was linked to Mecca, as a geographical site and a cosmic centre. Secondly, Mecca and Saudi Arabia were part of children's lifeworlds through *Hay* (and *'umrah*). This section will explore children's experience of spatiality connected to countries and geographical places. Implicit in this understanding of countries and places is the recognition of both as realities and as imagination, i.e. as 'imagined communities' (Anderson 1989). There is no indication in this terminology that countries and places are *either* realities *or* imagination. On the contrary, the actual countries and places are studied as imagined realities in the eyes of Pakistani children in Oslo.

The relationship between places and social networks was touched upon as part of the discussion of children's self-presentation (4.2 and 4.3) and will be elaborated below. Whether the link between territory and culture has been attenuated or simply changed among Pakistani families in Oslo will be part of this discussion. According to Giddens the separation of space and place is a characteristic of modernity:

The advent of modernity increasingly tears space away from place by fostering relations between "absent" others, locationally distant from any given situation of face-to-face interaction (1990:18).

To what extent 'the emptying of space' (ibid.) is an adequate description of the respondents' experiences will be discussed in the following.

Norway

All respondent children regarded Norway as 'their country'. Most of the time they talked about Norway in a territorial local sense: the place where they were born and where they had spent most of their life. Sometimes they also referred to Norway as the nation-state with which they identified, not necessarily in a political sense but, for instance, in the field of sports or in relation to something of which they were proud (for example showing the landscape to visiting relatives from Pakistan).

They expressed a preference for Norway in comparison with Pakistan as a place to spend their life. This was partly done by listing negative things about Pakistan seen from their point of view (boring, not peaceful, dirty, corrupt), partly by listing positive aspects of life in Norway (friends, peacefulness, career plans). Most of all they felt *at home* in Norway. This did not in itself imply any unified, specific adaptation of Norwegian culture. The 'Norway is my home' feeling was equally strong in Ali (m 17) who was a *hafiz* and ascribed himself as a Pakistani, as it was in Bushra (f I2) who ascribed herself as both Pakistani and Norwegian and hardly knew how to read the *Qur'an* (cf.4.2). The qualitative content of their attitudes to Norway will become clearer against the background of their affinities to local communities.

Local communities

'Local community' is here taken to mean the local area within which a family lived and the social interaction of inhabitants in this area (neighbours, school friends, teachers, parents, shop keepers, sports clubs etc.) (cf.3.4 and 3.6). Community in this sense is not identical with the concept of a Muslim community (*ummah*) (cf the discussion in Geaves 1995:10) or the concept of a Pakistani community as an ethnic entity. The existence of the latter as something unified and contingent is questionable (cf. Baumann 1996:14-20), and will, at least from the Pakistani children's point of view, have to be modified in relation to the concept of local community applied in this sub-section (cf. the discussion on ethnicity in 4.2).

As was conveyed in Chapter 3, the respondent families belonged to two types of local communities in Oslo (in addition to a Muslim and/or Pakistani community). Some of them lived in the central part of town, often characterised as 'the ghetto' because of the high percentage of people of immigrant background, while others lived in suburban communities with a greater percentage of ethnic Norwegians. Most families within the latter category had deliberately moved away from 'the ghetto' as part of a socially upward movement. Both types of local communities in Oslo had

spatial links to Pakistan. The inner-city type of local community was directly attached to local communities in Pakistan. Financial links and social relationships generated a space that linked trans-local places together. For children in the suburbs, the Norwegian part of their space was not so much a place (an area of Oslo), but themselves as individuals, a single family or a part of a *biradari* and a *zat* (Lien 1997:219-220, endnote 35; Shaw 1988:85-110; 1994:40-46). When locality for these children could also be said to have overridden the identity option of ethnic origin, it was a much more diversified type of locality, which again formed a more diversified set of identity options (cf. Wallman 1983).

Pakistan

More than anything else, respondents' attitudes to Pakistan were characterised by ambiguity. They felt attached to the country, and especially to some particular local communities, because they felt attached to their relatives there. Yasmin (f 14), for example, liked to go to Pakistan 'because I have relatives there, cousins. I don't see them very often. It is like...same colour of skin, same clothes...' Of the more negative aspects she mentioned the following: 'There are more pollution and poverty there. Very sad things. And there is a lot of ill-treatment, a lot of criminality. I feel safe here, much safer.' The younger children often found a stay in Pakistan boring. They missed their friends, disliked insects and dirt and suffered from the heat (Østberg 1996). The older children also mentioned concern about a negative moral climate in Pakistan: increased numbers of robberies, murders and acts of revenge.

These feelings of ambiguity did not hinder the children in expressing an attachment to Pakistan. Nasir's (m 13) experiences may illustrate these feelings. He had been to Pakistan only three times: when he was two, five and eleven years old. It was only from the last visit that he had any memories. He found the village where the family lived, 'their village', rather dirty, but the big cities like Islamabad and Lahore were nice, except for the exhaust fumes and the oppressive heat in Lahore, which made him feel ill. His personal attachment to Pakistan seemed to be more local and specific than national. 'Almost our whole family lives at the same place; it is like one village', he said. This local attachment was, however, more than simply territorial.

All of them are named *Sayed*. They somehow descend from *Sayed*, they are in the family of Muhammad. All *Sayeds*, not only those in that village, are related. I know all of them in Oslo!

The *biradari* relations established a link between two local places, and in this way generated the space in which he lived.

As mentioned already, families often had a house of their own in the village or city of origin, or they shared a house with a married sister or brother. Plans for renewing and/or enlarging the house were frequently discussed, both in Norway and in Pakistan. Housing location and housing plans for the future were essentially interwoven with the life of the extended family. Children's memory of Pakistan was often as concrete as a memory of a house. Saima (f 9) said of Pakistan: 'We don't need to miss our family. And the houses are bigger...and they have no roofs.' This is children's *imagined Pakistan*: a way of life where work and rest take place in a joint family setting - often on or around *charpais* on the roof or in the back yard, very much in contrast to nuclear family life in a small flat in Oslo.

If the respondent children had not themselves been to Pakistan recently, they said that Pakistan occasionally happened to be a topic mentioned when children were out playing, especially after summer holidays. Someone had been there and had 'stories' to tell. Pakistan was also, but to a lesser extent, present in the lifeworlds of children at a political or nation-state level. News from, or information about, Pakistan was heard as part of conversations or discussions among adults at home or through the mass media. For example Khalid's father had a subscription to the magazine *Urdu Digest*, and Khalid liked to read it. He said: 'It is a good thing to read, because you get to know how it is in Pakistan. In Norwegian newspapers you never get to know what happens in Pakistan.'

One of the girls, Yasmin (f 14), first had Pakistan as part of her future plans, not as a home to which she would return, but as a place to put her ideas into action:

I think I will study. My parents want me to study medicine. I thought of having a hospital for the poor people in Pakistan, in the way that they would not have to pay that much. But I think a lot of rich people will misuse that, dress up like poor people and....

Both her idealistic intentions and her scepticism were expressed from an outside position.

The system of marriages and the burial practices of Pakistanis strengthen the link to Pakistan in a special way (cf. Ballard 1990). The custom to send deceased relatives to Pakistan to be buried is a strong manifestation of social boundaries and of a link to Pakistan as a locality. Rifat (f 17) said:

All those who have died here, we bring back to Pakistan. I don't know of anyone who is buried by relatives here. At least those who have come from Pakistan, who have lived and stayed there, but I don't know about those who have stayed here their whole life...They may not want to go to Pakistan...

Parts of two graveyards in Oslo are reserved for Muslims. Elderly Pakistanis were mostly sent to Pakistan to be buried, but children and young ones who died were buried here. In this respect Pakistani Muslims differed from the practice of other Muslims, e.g. refugees from Somalia, Iran, Iraq and Bosnia who bury their countrymen in Oslo, old or young. The tendency among the Pakistanis not to send children and young people who had died to Pakistan to be buried may indicate a change of attitudes.

In Ballard's comparison between Muslim Mirpuris and Sikh Jullunduris, both immigrant groups from Punjab to Britain, differences in funeral rites are underlined as an important factor in explaining differences concerning integration (Ballard 1990:233). Burials among the Muslim Mirpuris generate ties to a particular locality back home in Punjab. Cremation among the Sikh Jullunduris does not. The Pakistani practice of marrying a first cousin, or at least marrying within the *biradari*, is another strong link 'back' (ibid.; Lien 1997; Werbner 1986). These two cultural traits modify Giddens' theory of 'emptying of space' as a characteristic of modernity. Despite long distances separating family members, Pakistanis tend to keep dominant face-to-face relations. Their spatiality may be increasingly emptied of place, but is not, to the same extent, emptied of face-to-face-relations.

Global networks

The respondent families were not only attached to their extended family in Pakistan, but they also had relatives in other parts of the world, e.g. in England, Denmark, Italy, Canada, USA or Saudi Arabia (cf.3.5). This is a typical pattern not only for Pakistanis but also for most immigrants to Europe from South-Asia (Joly 1996; Geaves 1996;

Vertovec 1996). Children were aware of this spread of family and occasionally had contact with family members through letters, telephone calls, *Id* cards etc. This global network also had some practical implications, e.g. making it possible for children to stay with relatives abroad when needed (cf.3.5). Increasingly children preferred to go to England to visit relatives instead of going to Pakistan. A girl said she felt that her cousins in Pakistan were 'maybe a little bit different from me'.

Being part of a global network of relatives did not imply a denial of their divergent national loyalties. On the contrary, this seemed to be sharpened or attenuated according to context. For example, when cousins from Norway and England watched a football match where teams from Norway and England played, they cheered Norway and England respectively. However, when relatives from England and Norway watched a video from a brother's wedding in Pakistan, England and Norway seemed as far away. The shared cultural belonging was based more on personal relationships than on territorial attachments. Hannerz has expressed the same idea in this way:

As collective systems of meaning, cultures belong primarily to social relationships, and to networks of such relationships. Only indirectly, and without logical necessity, do they belong to places. The less people stay put in one place, and also the less dependent their communications are on face-to-face contacts, the more attenuated does the link between culture and territory become (Hannerz 1992:39).

Among the respondent children there was little evidence of a consciousness of belonging to an Islamic global network. Some children expressed, however, their *ummah* identity through an affinity to Saudi Arabia generally, and to Mecca specifically.

Saudi-Arabia/Mecca

Mecca was not only present as spatiality through *qibla*. All respondent children spoke about the holy site with respect and enthusiasm. It was a concrete place that some of them had visited but, more than anything else, the imagined Mecca was a cosmic centre in their world. In my material this was discernible in two ways, illustrated by the following two examples. Through a story Rashid (m 14) told, he revealed a mythical or symbolic dimension of his life, a dimension not easily discovered through observing his activities on the football field. We were looking at pictures from Mecca,

when Rashid turned the focus of the interview by asking me: 'Do you know why we pray to Mecca?' He had not been to Mecca himself, but he had some pictures in a book he had got from his father as a child. He then told me his version of the *Hagar* and *Ismail* story, and he did it in a very lively and special way, making a link between the past and the present, between the acts of God in Mecca in primordial times and his life in Oslo just now. His story went like this:

It was like this. It was a lady...a quite important Islamic lady, and then she had a child, you know, and she was in Saudi Arabia, just nearby Mecca. And the child got very thirsty and cried a lot, and then she said: please wait a little while, and she put the child somewhere, and then she went around a mountain...seven times. And while she went, the child had begun to kick a lot of sand. It kicked in the sand. We think it was God who sent...He kicked in the sand, and then a lot of water comes out...and the baby got water. Still there is water at that place, it still comes out, and, you know, that lady, the mother went seven times...That's where we go. Seven times. We hold each other like this, and then we go seven times. And that water...it kind of never decays. We have kept water for two years now. A little bottle for two years. We still keep it in the fridge.

Rashid's way of telling this story, and making a link from Mecca to his own life, is a classical mythical way of linking time and space, past and present. Primordial times are revitalised through his narrative and through drinking the holy water. God is made present for Rashid in Oslo in the same way as he was present for *Hagar* in Mecca (cf. Eliade 1971:388).

For some children Saudi Arabia had the character of an ideal Islamic country in contrast to Norway and Pakistan. Saima (f 9) told me about terrible things that might happen in Pakistan:

Nobody has to be afraid because thieves are not always out in the night. Only in the morning.... They bring big sacks...and they put children in their sacks too, and take them away. That's why we will not go there and stay forever.

She went on to present a contrast to this awful aspect of Pakistan: 'But in Saudi Arabia

there are no thieves in the morning.' Saima had been to Saudi Arabia once, on her way to Pakistan, and she was really impressed with what she had seen, but maybe more from what she had been told about this 'pure country'.

No clear distinctions between different categories of countries and places could be made in the previous sub-sections. The reason for this was that children's own attitudes were complex and diversified. They moved between countries and places in a concrete sense, but they also lived in imagined communities, in a fluid spatiality. A dialogue between the researcher and Saima (f 9) may exemplify this spatial flow.

I: It must be nice to go there (to Saudi Arabia), and fun to travel, but you said you were born in Norway, and do you think you will live in Norway when you are grown up?

S: I don't think so. We have to be where we belong.

I: So you feel in a way that you belong to Pakistan?

Sr Yes, I feel like that, but actually I will...Sometimes I think I will stay in Norway. When I could not speak any Norwegian, then I was very afraid of thieves and that sort, but when I get grown up, then I will learn even more.

I: Mmm

S: And then it will be more fun, because I then may speak quite freely.

I: Yes, so you are not afraid of being in Norway now?

S: Sometimes I think I will stay in Norway forever.

I: Sometimes you want to stay here and sometimes you want to be in Pakistan?

Sr Munn, but not always, only when mum speaks about the time when we were younger and that sort, then we think of Pakistan.

I: Just that, but you still go there for holiday?

S: Yes

I: But when you are in Pakistan, do you then long to go back to Norway?

S: Yes, I do.

6.6 Conclusion

Two main lines of argument have been followed through this chapter and a third set of arguments has been attached. The two main lines have been i) the connectedness of time and space dimensions in all the rituals discussed, both within an Islamic and within a secular context, and ii) children's experience of qualitatively different time and space dimensions as part of their lifeworld. The attached set of arguments has been the understanding of these rituals as communication with 'others'. There are

clear links from the previous chapters to this discussion. In Chapter 4 children's self-presentations were seen to shift between a diversified set of 'us-them' dichotomies, i.e. an ongoing communication with 'others'. The purity-impurity complex as presented in Chapter 5 included communicative and negotiable dimensions with regard to degrees and categories of purity and impurity. One of the main aspects of the purity-impurity dichotomy was the constitution of 'us' in contrast to 'others'. The purity-impurity complex was in a very concrete sense connected to temporality and spatiality. There were pure and sacred times as well as places of both a religious and secular character. Prayer, as the main Islamic ritual expression, was analysed as temporality and spatiality. The shifting between states of purity and states of impurity was seen as a parallel to the shift between qualitatively different time and space experiences as analysed in this chapter.

The temporality and spatiality of children's lifeworlds can be summarised as being constituted by the following elements:

First, the awareness of being 'at home' in Norway and being part of mainstream society's time cycle (Christmas, New Year, 17th May, school holidays) formed the frames for their everyday 'here and now' lifeworld. This was the secular context of their lives.

Secondly, they experienced a relationship between 'here and now' and a mythical past, a sacred time and space. This experience was related to their belief in God. Humankind was regarded as being placed on earth, i.e. positioned in relation to God and another, heavenly world. Children experienced and expressed this sacred temporality and spatiality primarily through the bodily act of praying.

Thirdly, local, national and global social networks constituted a social and cultural transterritorial space in which they lived. This spatiality transcended the 'pain of migration', of being away from 'home' for the first generation immigrants, and 'normalised' the diaspora situation for their children. The extended family system constituted the core of the social network and contributed to a lesser degree of 'emptying of space' than emphasised by Giddens (1990:18). The importance of face-to-face family relations and social networks created links to Pakistan as a geographical place, but also contributed to strong attachments to Norway.

Finally, the concept of *umma* constituted a spatiality that combined linkages to

a geographical place (Mecca/Saudi Arabia) and linkages to other Muslims (cf. Geaves 1996:10), regardless of national or geographical origin or position. This type of spatiality made a life in Norway as meaningful as a life in Pakistan.

The next chapter will focus on how Islamic and secular rituals and social processes were transmitted as part of formal and informal education.

¹ For the following discussion it is important to have in mind problems connected to a correct translation of '*namal*', and 'to perform *namaz*' (cf. 5.2), especially the interrelatedness of prayer and recitation of or reading, the Qur'an. When Ali (m 17) said that he 'read in the morning', he meant reading the Qur'an and praying. He read a prayer. The same was expressed by Jamshed (m 9) in this way: 'We read. Then we have a sort of prayer. And then we read that prayer. And then we read the *Qur'an*.'

² For example conservative branches of the Hanafi law school (Vogt 1995).

³ Compare the unpublished paper by Julia Ipgrave, *God and guna. The Religious Education of Muslim children*. University of Warwick, May 1995, p.25 and 31. Cf. Buitelaar 1993:118, concerning the concept of *ajr* in the Islamic doctrine and Moroccan points of view.

⁴ This information was given as part of informal interviewing after their writing of diaries.

⁵ Bjørn Dæhlie is one of the Norwegian ski heroes.

⁶ The prayer practices of Norwegian-Pakistani children did not seem to differ much from the practice of children in Pakistan. Compare Lynda Malik's research in rural, smalltown and urban Punjab. Her findings indicate that Pakistanis above the age of eighteen 'are not punctilious, but rather casual in their religious observances' (Malik 1982:35). Cf. Ahlberg 1990:182.

⁷ *Id-rd-fitr* (the festival of breaking the fast, compare *iftari*) is not part of *Ramadan*, but the first day of the next month, *Shawwal*.

⁸ For an overview of the dates for Ramadan and other Islamic Festivals the next years, cf. Opsal 1993:344.

⁹ Muslims, as Jews, always reckon the start of a new day and night from sunset.

¹⁰ The same rules regulate the proclamation of other months of importance within the Islamic calendar, as the beginning of *Dhu-I-hijja*.

¹¹ It suffices to state that any serious split among Muslims may be seen as a threat to the idea of *tawhid* and *ummah* (Geaves 1995).

¹² Both *Ramadan* and December are in a spiritual sense preparations for a revelation, of the Qur'an (*tanzil*) and of Jesus Christ respectively. However, there are also major differences. The main element of *Ramadan*, fasting, is absent in the preparation for Christmas (to the degree that it is still practised among Christians; it is connected to the pre-Easter time). There are also commercial similarities between *Ramadan* and December: special food, new clothes and presents to buy.

¹³ In this mosque the *imam* read 1 1/4 part every night in the first period of *Ramadan* to make the recitation shorter at the end of the month. The 114 *Surahs* of the Qur'an are divided into thirty parts to fit the thirty days of *Ramadan*. See Watt and Bell (1970) and Opsal (1994:92).

¹⁴ S. 2:185 (Norwegian translation S. 2:181), and S. 97:3, 5 (Grunebaum 1992). There are some uncertainties connected to the exact date. See Yusuf Ali: *The Holy Qur'an*, S. 97:1.1

¹⁵ *Id-ul-fiir* (Ar. *Id al-fih-*) is also called *Choti Id* = Little *Id*, whereas *Id-e-azha* (Ar. *Id al-adha*) is called *Bari Id* = Great *Id*.

¹⁶ This is a common misunderstanding among Norwegian-Pakistani children.

¹⁷ Performances of 'break dancing' and traditional Indian dancing were observed.

¹⁸ An expressive description of *Hajj* is found in a book written by a young Norwegian-Pakistani girl: Ali, Mah-Rukh 1997:102-110.

¹⁹ All slaughtering in Norway is regulated by Norwegian law. One slaughterhouse (Vestfold, Buskerud og Telemark slakteri, Gol) produces *halal* meat to order by letting an *imam* perform the right prayers. This meat is sold to *halal* shops but no *halal* slaughtering takes place as part of the *Id-e-azha* celebration.

²⁰ *Muslimsk Ungdom*=The Muslim Youth was not a firmly organised group; rather something put together for the occasion.

⁷¹ Khalid used this term instead of the correct term Advent calendar. This is increasingly common in Norwegian.

²² A modern revitalised civil ritual (performed mainly in kindergartens and schools) combining elements from the Catholic celebration of the Saint *Lucia* and the pre-Christian Nordic figure of *Lussi*.

²³ Individual Pakistanis (often businessmen), who were engaged in developing mutual personal contacts between Pakistanis and Norwegians, arranged post 17th May and/or 14th August meetings of an informal and cultural character.

²⁴ In Pakistan birth dates are often 'invented' in connection with school enrolment

²⁵ No doubt, the extravagance of these celebrations (the number of visitors and presents, the decorations with balloons etc.) exceeded an ordinary birthday party, and also served as an opportunity to gather the whole extended family together while having visitors from Norway.

Chapter 7

The Educational Complex

7.1 Introduction

The interrelatedness of formal and informal elements of Islamic nurture has been documented implicitly as part of the previous analysis.¹ This chapter will deal more explicitly with the relationship between formal and informal educational elements. i.e. the focus will be on educational aspects of different social arenas, like home, mosque and school. The main focus will be on education as part of Islamic nurture, but Pakistani children's experiences of compulsory primary and secondary school will also be discussed, especially in comparison to their experiences of Qur'an classes² and socialisation at home.

The discussion is based on theories of socialisation which regard formal education as part of a broader primary and secondary socialisation, i.e. as part of the enculturation process (Bateson 1973; Berger and Luckmann 1966; Bourdieu 1967; 1977; Hoem 1978). Hoerr regards the distinction between commonality of values and interests as decisive for diverse sets of socialisation trajectories. He distinguishes between *strengthened socialisation* (shared values and interests of home and school), *de-socialisation* (value conflict, but shared interests in the way that schooling has an instrumental role), *re-socialisation* (the values of the school contribute to children's formation of identity despite value conflicts between home and school) and *non-socialisation* (schooling has no effect on children's formation of identity

because of a conflict of values and interests) (Hoem 1982 [19781:72; Engen 1989:321].¹ With special regard to socialisation in a pluralistic society, Engen has developed Hoem's ideas into a theory of 'double qualification and cultural comparativeness' (1989).⁴ According to Engen socialisation in a pluralistic society should simultaneously develop cultures on a community and a national level. There is a need for cultural qualification for both levels, but these levels are not separate or sharply sectorial, but interdependent. Social and cultural belonging and mastering are required within a minority and a majority setting (cf. Høgmo 1992). This chapter will analyse the role of Qur'an classes and compulsory schooling within a combination of Berger and Luckmann's and Hoem's theoretical framework of socialisation. The study diverges, however, from Engen in being based on a less 'closed' view of different cultural levels (cf. Chapter 2 and 3) and from Hoem in not regarding de-socialisation as a presupposition for re-socialisation and in maintaining the distinction between primary and secondary socialisation.

There will be discussion of how children presented or revealed themselves both at school and as participants of Qur'an classes. Attention will also be given to those they interacted and communicated with in these settings. This will give additional data to that on children's own self-presentations as documented in chapter 4 and will be included in the final analysis of the identity complex.

The media, especially TV, video and pop music, played an important role in the lives of the children. Section 7.3 will therefore briefly raise issues concerning influences from media. However, a thorough analysis of this issue lies outside the scope of this study. Nevertheless, it must be noted that the secular context of Islamic nurture was represented most fully by the world of TV, video and music (cf. Gillespie 1989).

First, the relationship between formal and informal elements of educational arenas will be the main focus of the chapter. Secondly, the relationship between oral, written, aural and visual elements will be highlighted. Thirdly, and especially relevant as part of the analysis of Qur'an classes, the relationship between educational and ritual aspects will be discussed. Fourthly, in an attempt to produce an overall perspective, the role of religious and secular education in relation to the development of children's

social belonging and identity management will be analysed (cf. Geaves 1996:61).

7.2 Qur'an classes

Introduction

This section will focus on the relationship between formal education, informal socialisation and ritual practice as aspects of the Qur'an classes, and how these classes affect children's social belonging and formation of meaning. Qur'an classes are here understood as an Islamic institution including Qur'an schools in the mosque (*madrasahs*), local variants of Qur'an schools and privately organised ways of teaching children to read the Qur'an.⁵ One of the reasons for regarding Qur'an classes as an institution in the lives of the children, regardless of organisational type or degree of practising, was the way children spoke about it. Expressions like 'reading the Qur'an', 'learning the Qur'an', 'go to the mosque', 'go to the Qur'an school' were part of their everyday vocabulary (experience-near concepts; cf. Chapter 2). In addition there were some individual variants covering the same, like 'going to the [sic] aunt'.⁶ Some of the variety and richness of this institution will be documented and its role in the lives of the children analysed. The first section will, however, briefly present some elements of an Islamic understanding of the Qur'an as a necessary background for a comprehension of Qur'an schools.

The Word of God as *al-Kitab* and *al-Qur'an*

According to Islamic doctrine, the Qur'an contains the words of God as they were revealed to his Prophet Muhammad (S.15: 87; 27:6; 6:19; 12:3). The Book itself (*al-Kitab*) in its earthly version (*al-masahif*) is holy. This is most easily observed in the regulations on how to handle the Book with respect, but also in the folk-religious use of the Book in a magico-religious sense as a talisman. For instance, Qur'anic verses are used in amulets (*ta'wiz*) for the purpose of healing (Ahlberg 1991:215). The language in which the Qur'an is written (*a l-arabiya*) is holy because God chose Arabic for his final Revelation,⁷ and the content of the Book is holy because it is God's guidance to all human beings (S. 27:1-2; Graham 1984 and 1985; Montgomery Watt 1970; Rippin 1993).

For the purpose of this study the different schools of interpretation, or the different law schools, are of little interest (since children are not expected to

reach that level of understanding).⁸ For my analysis, however, it is important to discuss the relationship between oral and written aspects of the Qur'an.

Despite the written form of Islam's revelation, its transmission amongst Muslims is oral, or more precisely aural, in the sense that it is, to a great extent, based on recitation and listening. The verbal noun 'Qur'an' literally means 'to proclaim, recite, read aloud' (from the Arabic root Q-R-'; Graham 1985:30) and the concept is first mentioned in the Book itself (S. 96:1). In the Qur'an, the verbal noun is used in many instances, but later on the reified form *al-Qur'an* became the dominant form and led to a strengthening connotation of Scripture. However, the dominant Islamic practice, recitation of the Qur'an, keeps the original orality alive. This was expressed by an informant thus: 'The sound is our sound but through this sound we can experience God'.⁹ In Graham's words: 'God is heard - and made present - through the devotees' recitation' (1985:37). From the devotees' side, recitation is an act of prayer or concentration on the presence of God. Many of the adult informants experienced the recitation as a kind of meditation (cf. 6.2 on *itīqāq*). According to one *Hadith*, the recitation of God's word is 'to be returned' to God as 'the very best' of all that he has given man (Tirmidhi 2:110, quoted from Graham 1984:375).

The transmission of Islam is also oral-aural because the best way of preserving the Qur'an is said to be by rote learning. The art of memory is, accordingly, the key notion of Islamic knowledge (Eickelman 1978:489). The role of the *hafiz* is to be a link in the chain of people keeping the word of God alive (Graham 1985:38). In a slightly different way, the transmission of Islam is oral because the content of the Holy Qur'an and the *Hadith* are revealed to most Muslims through oral teaching or preaching (*khutb*). This is partly caused by the high illiteracy rate in most Islamic countries and partly based on the above-mentioned characteristic of Islamic transmission.

In addition to these aspects of orality, at least two more should be mentioned: the *Sufi* ritual of experiencing God's presence through repetitive calling of his name (*dhikr/zikr*) and the typical South Asian tradition of devotional singing (*qawwali* and *nat*) (Graham 1985; Lewis 1994; North 1996).

This way of using the concept of orality is not congruent with what is called *primary orality*, i.e. a tradition transferred without a literate basis (Ong

1982:6), but oral in the sense of an aural dominance and transmission modus (Eickelman 1978). The conception of knowledge and the high status given to persons transferring the tradition are characteristics of oral dominated cultures (Ong 1985:41). 'In an oral culture words are recalled rather than looked up,' as expressed by Lewis (1994:77). This is a trait also found among Pakistani Muslims in Oslo.

An understanding, of these sound-based or oral-aural aspects of Islam is essential for an understanding of Qur'an schools. Equally important is, of course, an understanding of the written aspects, including the role of the Arabic script.

It is the combination of these aspects that makes for the centrality of the Qur'an in Islam. A comprehension of the sacredness of this combination is a necessary background for analysing the Qur'an schools, not in the sense that all children have reflected on these issues, but in the sense that it is part of the taken-for-granted knowledge within their tradition.¹⁰

Qur'an classes in the mosque

During the fieldwork period all the children had attended, or had been in touch with, one of the Qur'an schools of the mosques but only three young people of fourteen regularly went to a mosque to attend a Qur'an class. There were complex reasons for this, which will be discussed below. All the Pakistani-dominated mosques in Oslo offered Qur'an classes for children, mainly from Monday to Thursday between 4 and 6 p.m. Some mosques taught the Qur'an and Urdu respectively twice a week, and once a week basic Islamic Studies (*Islamiyat*) was taught (cp. Bauer 1997:6).¹¹ In addition some mosques had a *hafiz* class (cf. Grande 1989). Different weight was put on how strongly they prioritised the offering of *hafiz* classes, however. The difference was partly a result of the number of members and teachers, and partly a result of the difference between *Deobandis* and *Barelwis* (Ahlberg 1991; Lewis 1994; Geaves 1995; Vogt 1995). The former tend to give priority to formal, literate knowledge and understanding while the latter tend to underline the oral aspects of Islamic practice (Lewis 1994:78-79). However, even one representative of a *Barelwi* affiliated mosque said: 'It is not so useful to learn the Qur'an by heart here. It is more important to know what it is all about.' This attitude was based on an argument similar to the one of Mohammad Raza: If children or young adults cannot understand what they have memorized, how can they defend

themselves when their beliefs are attacked by non-believers?' (Raza 1991:59). A Bengali *imam* in Bradford would also teach more of the faith (*iman*) as part of the Qur'an school because he considered that 'those who live and are educated in a non-Muslim society need to learn the basic tenets of Islam as early as possible' (Barton 1981:184; cp. Bauer 1997:12).

Interviews with *imams* and male and female Qur'an school teachers showed, however, no fundamental doctrinal difference concerning the importance or the content of their regular Qur'an classes. The atmosphere and style of teaching, as documented through observation, was largely the same too.¹² Although it was emphasised there should be no difference in the formal training of boys and girls, both formal training and informal socialisation differed, partly as a result of gender segregation, and partly as a result of girls being taught by less skilled female teachers (see below).¹³ Occasionally a little girl might be seen among the boys or vice versa, either because parents preferred a specific teacher for their child or because sisters and brothers wanted to be together. This was not regarded as a problem as long as girls or boys had not reached puberty.

Formal training

Children would start by learning to read the alphabet in Arabic at the age of 4-6. This did not necessarily mean learning to read their mother tongue even if the alphabet is mostly the same as used in Urdu or Panjabi (cf.4.5). The aim of this education was to be able to recite the Qur'an with an Arabic pronunciation (*tilawah*) (Graham 1985:29; Farah 1992:83).¹⁴ This is a rather complex learning situation, which combines an oral and a written tradition (see above). Since the alphabet is partly the same as that used for their mother tongue, it cannot be viewed as totally independent of children's introduction to literacy. However, the weight of the training, and the experience of the children, was on the aural aspect of language. It was rhythmical training, underlined by the way the children were encouraged to make movements with their upper body while reading, and by the fact that the aim was to learn the text by heart. Young siblings were proud to demonstrate their first mastering of reading the alphabet in Arabic. In some of the families, the initiation of 'reading the Qur'an', the *bismillah*, was celebrated with a little party, with sweets given to the children etc. (Cf. the discussion of *bismillah* in the sub-section on Qur'anic recitation as ritual practice.)

Practices concerning physical aspects of reading, including rocking the body, how to move the fingers across the pages, how to sit correctly in relation to the Qur'an etc, were adopted by very small children mainly through imitation (informal socialisation), but also by being formally instructed.

The programme for learning to read the Qur'an usually lasted six years but some children read through all 30 parts (*siparas*) in two or three years.¹⁵ In the mosques all children were given sweets (*barfi*) when one of them had finished her/his first reading of the whole text. In some families children were also given presents on this occasion. After this period of training some children started reading the Qur'an for a second time, while others finished their formal training and others were ready for rote learning. If a child started the whole programme at the age of four, rote learning might start at the age of ten. Among the children in my study only Ali (m 17) had reached this level at that age. Most of the children and young people had actually started reading the Qur'an at a much later age, most of them around the age of seven, and they had reached, as will be documented below, very different levels of competence, depending on their ability and the intensity of training. Those who had attended regular Qur'an classes at a mosque had reached the highest competence at an earlier age than those who had had private lessons.¹⁶ Ali (m 17) started rote learning when he was ten and got his diploma as *hafiz* at the age of fourteen. At the age of 17, he attended a *tafsir* class, i.e. he was, for the first time, taught the content of the Qur'an, based on commentaries in Urdu.

Training in Islamic practices, such as how to wash and how to pray, was part of the formal training of the Qur'an classes (cf Barton 1986:191), but was, as will be exemplified below, mostly learnt as part of informal socialisation and ritual practice.

Informal socialisation

All the children who regularly attended a Qur'an class in the mosque said they enjoyed the experience. It was, however, difficult for them to explain why. After being encouraged to comment children mentioned the pleasure of meeting friends in the mosque. From the interviews alone, it is difficult to know if these answers are fully in accordance with their feelings or whether they are more an expression of acceptance of the Islamic doctrine on the Qur'an. It is, however, possible to come a step further in interpretation by reflecting on the observation data and by comparing the sayings of children

who did not attend a Qur'an class in a mosque (cf. the sub-section on children's experiences).

Observation of Qur'an classes in different mosques left a picture of lively talkative boys and girls coming to a place they knew and participating in activities with which they were familiar. As described in the previous sub-section, a strict and formal training programme was taking place. However, the framework of this learning (what to do when entering the mosque, how to sit, what to wear, how to behave towards the teacher, how to pray etc.) was familiar for most children. The atmosphere was a combination of strict formal elements and informality and relaxation within a cultural codification (cf. the sub-section on alternative Qur'an classes).

The familiarity which most children showed concerning how to behave in a mosque was a confirmation of already internalised knowledge and values. However, in contrast to a village setting in Pakistan (e.g. Farah 1992:77), this could not be taken for granted in Norway. In the minority situation the importance of the mosque as an arena for informal socialisation increased. As a consequence, some mosque representatives said they were pleased if only half of the session was effective as formal training. Children's need to meet, chat and socialise was tolerated and appreciated. Barton found the same attitude among *imams* in Bradford, who were aware that the Qur'an class, to some extent, fulfilled the function of a club (1986:192). Some parents in Oslo did not share this view and criticised the mosque for not being efficient enough in its teaching.

Exceptions to this pattern were found (strict, disagreeable teachers, impolite children, children feeling like strangers in the mosque), but the exceptions confirmed the pattern rather than opposed it. The exceptions were revealed by children who complained to their school teachers or to their parents about strict Qur'an school teachers.

For children attending regularly, the Qur'an schools should be viewed as part of their everyday life. This was especially true for children living close to the mosque. The practice of going to the mosque every afternoon was as 'normal' for these children as going to the park to play football or to meet their Qur'an school teacher in the local video shop. This everyday character of 'going to the mosque' did not prevent it from being a duty in contrast to

playing football or watching a video. The intention of underlining its everyday character is not to present the Qur'an schools as a favourite activity of children. The point is to emphasise their function as arenas of informal socialisation of a religious, ethnic, cultural and social character. Apart from the formal training, which was the explicit aim of the institution, children socialised to become Muslims by spending time in the mosque together with other Muslims, adults and children. This informal socialisation did not exist in a culturally neutral Muslim setting but within a Pakistani cultural codification. The children learnt to become Muslims and to become Pakistanis. The 'hidden curriculum' of the Qur'an class was how to behave in a Pakistani social setting.

The semi-circles of boys and girls sitting close to each other on the floor, the uneven sound of reading individually in Arabic, or chatting in Urdu or Panjabi, the voices of the teachers and the ways they looked at the children, the coming, going and greeting of people, gestures, dress codes etc. were sensory expressions and informal transmission of being a Pakistani Muslim and illustrate the interwoven nature of religious, social and cultural elements. The situation was more distinctively Muslim than distinctively Pakistani in the way that Muslims all over the world would feel familiar with this way of behaving in a mosque (the way of sitting, the way of reading and being taught) (cp. Barton 1981:183). At the same time, the situation was typically Pakistani because of language, dress code and verbal and non-verbal communication. The same elements of social behaviour were found in Pakistani settings outside the mosque (greetings, gestures, the way of sitting, the way of communication, gender segregation). The 'picture' also contained specific 'Norwegian' elements like baseball caps, plastic bags and winter coats.

This description may give the impression of the transmission of Pakistani-Muslim tradition as being congruent, harmonious, internalised and without opposition or active participation on the children's part. The findings of this study are more complex, however. First of all, the fact that so many of the respondent families had found other strategies for teaching their children to read the Qur'an, is, in itself, an indication of 'opposition' or alternative ways of thinking (cf. the next sub 'section). Children who attended the Qur'an schools in the mosque also had their ways of marking individuality. 'Forgetting' to wear the caps, using baseball caps instead of the common white *topi*, being noisy, and even secretly running out to buy sweets, were some of the strategies observed.

For some children their attachment to the mosque had developed over years, and their attendance was a question of social belonging as well as religious duty. 'To go to the mosque' had become a habit, a way of life, internalised as part of their religious and ethnic identity. Since attending *Juma* prayers and other arrangements in the mosques were, to a great extent, male activities, the continuation of the social attachment initiated by the Qur'an schools was easier for boys than for girls.

The role of *Imams* and Qur'an school teachers

Imams and Qur'an school teachers were highly respected by children who attended Qur'an classes and by parents who sent their children to be taught in the mosque. They were respected as '*ulama*' regardless of formal qualifications.¹⁷ It was a continuous challenge for mosques to find qualified persons for these tasks (cp Lewis 1994: 86; Reza 1991:58). Some of the *imams* and Qur'an school teachers came directly from Pakistan, and were engaged for a shorter period; others were found in Britain or in other European countries.¹⁸ A characteristic trait of this religious leadership was that their lives were lived exclusively within the Pakistani Muslim community. With a few exceptions, they had limited Norwegian language competence.¹⁹ This lack of competence did not cause major problems in their daily work within the mosque community, but in their role as contact persons or key informants in relation to wider Norwegian society, communication problems existed.²⁰ The same lack of competence was used by some '*ulama*' as a deliberate strategy to preserve a certain distance from the mainstream of the non-Muslim society in which they lived. Such detachment, often made visible through the use of an interpreter, may, within a Pakistani cultural setting, be regarded as a sign of high status. However, in a Norwegian setting it is interpreted as arrogance or lack of qualifications. Language competence and willingness to learn Norwegian were partly matters of personality and/or level of educational background, and partly reflected different denominational attitudes.

Few *imams* and Qur'an school teachers had adequate knowledge of the everyday life of the children they taught. As long as their teaching consisted purely of training in recitational skill or in Urdu, this had no great implications. However, the role of *imams* and Qur'an school teachers as role models or moral advisers was influenced by this lack of cultural competence (cf. Lewis 1994:178). From the point of view of many Pakistanis, children needed moral education based on Islam in schools (*Islamiyat*), in addition to what the Qur'an

schools offered (cf. Ashraf 1993; Barton 1986; North 1996).²¹

Alternative ways of organising Qur'an classes

All the children had been to a Qur'an class in a mosque at least once, but the majority of them were taught to read the Qur'an in other ways. The following reasons were discernible. Some had stopped 'going to the mosque' because the family had moved to a suburb too far away from any mosque. This sub-section will analyse the variety of solutions to this 'problem'. For others it was, however, not felt to be a 'problem' that had to be solved. One of their reasons for moving was to get away from the Pakistani 'ghetto', including the influence of the mosques. The distance to the mosque was, for some, a genuine reason for not sending their children. For others it was used as an excuse.

Some families who lived close to a mosque preferred private teaching to avoid what was called 'negative influence of the mosque' (cf. Lewis 1994:113-114). The background of such a statement was found in the different personal experiences of parents. Either they had bad memories from their own attendance at Qur'an classes as children in Pakistan, or they had gone through personal development as adults. This development was not necessarily experienced as distancing themselves from Islam or Qur'anic teaching. Rather some characterised it as 'being liberated' in the sense that they no longer feared punishment for not fulfilling all their Islamic duties.²² There is also reason to recall the fact that private Qur'an classes are quite common in Pakistan (not least among the upper and middle classes). Eventually, controversies among adult members of the mosque community might also result in children being kept away from the Qur'an school. Only one incident of physical punishment was reported and given as a reason for not sending children to the mosque (cf. Barton 1981:184; Bauer 1997:6).

Four other ways of organising Qur'an classes were found:

1) A Qur'an teacher was engaged by parents in a suburban area, often in co-operation with one of the mosques, to teach children in a rented location (school, shopping centre etc.). Such an arrangement might also be initiated and paid for by a mosque (no fees for the parents). The increased existence of local Qur'an schools indicates that parents and *'ulama* felt they had to do something actively to stop what was interpreted as a negative effect of the changed pattern of residence. Behind the decision to establish local Qur'an classes was also an

increased understanding of children's daily life. Parents wished to avoid a conflict between schooling, sporting activities and Islamic practice.

2) A Qur'an teacher was paid to come to a home for some hours each week, often at the weekends, to teach a group of sisters and brothers and maybe some neighbouring children. This practice was quite common among the respondent families and will be discussed below.

3) Children were taught by a relative who was competent in reading the Qur'an. This variant will also be dealt with more thoroughly later.

4) Children were taught by their father or mother. Among the more educated this was seen to be an acceptable but not desirable 'solution'. Parents who taught their children themselves, instead of sending them to a Qur'an school, often talked about it in negative terms. At our first meeting, a father wondered if they were an appropriate family for my research 'since our children do not attend a Qur'an class'. To attend a regular 'Qur'an class' was regarded as a sign of being 'good Muslims'. An aspect of communication with 'others' was implicit and in this context, the 'others' were others within the Muslim community.

Over a period of years, children may have tried all these types of Qur'an schools in addition to the ones arranged by the mosques. 'To attend a Qur'an class' was a familiar concept, an institution in their life that could be taken more or less seriously, but that could not be completely neglected without creating the feeling of neglecting Islam as well. This shows how closely the educational and the ritual aspects of 'reading the Qur'an' are linked (to be elaborated below). In addition to these alternative organizational forms, a few children attended Qur'an classes when they visited Pakistan during their summer holiday from school. Those who had been badly trained in Oslo used the opportunity to improve their competence. Yasmin's (f 14) reflections on her Qur'an instruction is illustrative:

I have read it only once. I want to read it one more time to get to know what is written there. I don't understand Arabic. I do want to know what is written there, to know what is what...what is written about life, what happened and ...I think it is good to know.

The reasons behind, and the effects of, different organisational forms of Qur'an classes have been touched upon, but will be further analysed below. The analysis will concentrate on the issues raised in the introduction: the question of socialisation trajectories (did Qur'an classes represent strengthening socialisation, de-socialisation, re-socialisation or protected socialisation?); the relationship between educational and ritual aspects (to what extent were Qur'an classes expressions of Islamic practice, not only training?); and lastly, the role of Qur'an classes in a secular minority context (how to evaluate increased influence of the mosques vs. increased privatisation?). Before a thorough discussion of these issues can be carried out, the voices of the children should be heard with regard to both their experiences of the formal content of teaching and the atmosphere of the classes. A comparison between the experiences of those who attended Qur'an classes in the mosques and those who attended one of the alternatives will also be of interest.

Children's experiences, reflections and knowledge

Children in families which had a Qur'an school teacher coming to their home some days a week or at the weekends said they preferred this to an arrangement where they had to 'go out in the cold and spend at least two hours in the mosque'. If possible, neighbouring Pakistani children participated in the class as well. A problem with this type of arrangement was its vulnerability to unexpected processes, like the teacher not turning up etc.²³

The atmosphere during a Qur'an class at home (with the presence of an *alim*) was relaxed and yet solemn, not very different from the atmosphere in the mosque (cf. description above). The following elements contributed to this atmosphere:

- A combination of formality and informality (recitation and prayer combined with chatting and playing with other children who were present).
- A combination of individual training and collective, ritual behaviour (a cacophony of sounds caused by children's reading exercises combined with consciousness of participating in a ritual of letting the sound of God be heard and handling the Book in a respectful way).
- A combination of hierarchical and non-hierarchical structures (the

authority of the teacher combined with everyone sitting side by side on the floor).

To what degree the values and atmosphere of Qur'an classes at home or in the mosque were internalised (Berger and Luckmann 1991:150) depended on the relationship between the general lifestyle of the family and the practices of the Qur'an classes. For some, the Qur'an classes functioned to strengthen socialisation, because home and Qur'an school had shared values and interests (Engen 1989; Hoem 1979). 'Reading the Qur'an' was an accepted part of everyday life. A dialogue with Saima (f 9) illustrates this attitude:

I: Do you have any duties at home?

S: Yes, in the week we usually practise the Qur'an, but the teacher does not come. We cannot just read on Fridays and Saturdays and Sundays. We have to practise.

I: Who is practising with you?

S: No, we just read by ourselves. Nobody wants us to be scolded and then have to read one more hour when he (the teacher) has left, one full hour the same day, not having any breaks and that sort of thing...because we haven't read well. He wants us to read very fast.

However, some children did not like to 'go to the mosque', and even among those with private arrangements, there were children who felt alienated in these situations. The effect of the Qur'an classes on these children's socialisation trajectory may be characterised as re-socialisation, because there were value discrepancies between home and the Qur'an school although the families were Muslims.²⁴ Parents and Qur'an school teachers had shared interests in the way that parents wished their children to be re-socialised (or strengthened) as 'good Muslims'. At least parents felt they had fulfilled their obligations as Muslims. Some of the private organisational forms, like letting a relative teach the children to read the Qur'an, were ways of organising Qur'an teaching that was acceptable both to their children and to themselves.

In families who were actively practising Muslims, reading the Qur'an was part of a general pattern of life alongside performing prayers, visiting the mosque, participating at *dars Qur'an* and celebrations. To practise reading the Qur'an at home was recognised as a duty but was at the same time experienced as a joy. In the following dialogue Saima (f 9) insisted on both aspects:

I: I would like to ask you one question: I know it is a duty for you, that you have to learn the Qur'an...

S: Yes

I: So you have to do it, and it is important, I know that, but do you like to do it? Or do you find it...

S (interrupting): Yes, I like it!

Her bodily and emotional expression showed that she enjoyed the recitation itself and she enjoyed it when she was praised for being a clever girl. This combination, which may be called the joy of mastering a skill that gives status within the community (and even the possibility of being honoured by God), was typical for many children.

Even children who found the Qur'an lessons boring did, however, have a feeling of its importance. Some of them had problems explaining why. Jamshed suggested that it might be useful if one wanted to become a Qur'an school teacher. Since the reading of the Qur'an was not an integrated part of Jamshed's or his family's daily life, the Qur'an was solely associated with the context in which the Qur'an was taught. Though Jamshed's orientation, for the time being, seemed to be more in the direction of hockey than Islamic practice, this attitude should not be interpreted as Jamshed having no knowledge of, or respect for, the Qur'an. When asked why one is not allowed to put the Qur'an on the floor, he replied;

Because the name of God is in it. Everybody says that one should not put it there as long as it is dirty. The name of God will be dirty as well. Then God will be angry.

A more common answer to the question, 'why it is important to read the Qur'an?' was the one given by Yasmin (f 14): '[It is important] because it is part of Islam...that you can read the Qur'an and know what it is all about.'

The difference between those children attending a Qur'an class in the mosque and those being taught privately was, besides a difference in recitational skill, a lack of familiarity with the mosque. All children knew what was meant by *qibla* (and they could point out the *qibla* at home), but those who had been taught privately did not recognise the *mihrab* when they were shown pictures from a mosque. Some children were not even sure if they had been to

a real mosque because the one they had visited in Oslo was actually 'just a flat'.

The ritual aspect of the Qur'an school training was more difficult to practise in a small family group than in the mosque, especially if the family did not perform prayers regularly. The same is true with regard to appropriate dress code while praying or reading the Qur'an. For some children this was introduced to them as part of the Qur'an schooling. This was a strange experience, especially for girls who did not otherwise wear either *dupatta* or a scarf.²⁵

Those children who did not 'go to the mosque' regularly, and therefore lacked the kind of knowledge gained just by being there, might have acquired a general knowledge of Islam that others lacked, however. Among respondent families, the role of the parents was decisive in this matter. Some well-educated parents were able to answer questions concerning Islam regardless of their own practice. Yasmin (f 14) said, for example, that she could ask both her mum and dad if there was something she did not understand. 'Daddy knows everything!' she said. However, another well-educated, but not actively practising father expressed his worries: 'I don't teach them anything, neither from the Qur'an nor anything else. Maybe they will remain very ignorant?'²⁶ The worry of lack of competence in reading the Qur'an was often combined with a concern about lack of skills in Urdu. Both were regarded as aspects of children's cultural heritage (cf. 4.5).

For those children who only read the Qur'an at home with their parents, elder sisters or brothers or with a relative, the Qur'an school as an institution did not lead to social belonging in the concrete sense of feeling 'at home' in the mosque, being together with other Muslims etc. For some of these children, Qur'an classes were felt to be more or less 'forced' upon them - either caused by the religious motivation of their parents or by social motivation: it was part of being properly nurtured. Some children felt this as a social pressure, not only from their parents' side, but also from friends. Rifat (f 17) said she started to learn the Qur'an (at home) because a girl-friend did.²⁷ It was expected of you that you at least could say you had been taught, or that you had 'read' something (of the Qur'an). In this way the institution of 'learning to read the Qur'an', regardless of organisational form, contributed to a cultural-religious belonging in the sense of being a marker of belonging to the Muslim community.

Qur'anic recitation as ritual practice

The issue has now to be raised as to whether the discussion of the Qur'an schools as arenas of socialisation in a late-modern, minority context has any implications for the understanding of Qur'anic recitation as ritual practice. In other words, did the organisational pattern presented above influence children's experience of Qur'anic recitation as a ritual, and if so, in what way? In practice, children were introduced to Qur'anic recitation mainly through attending Qur'an classes. This was the educational method used by the Muslim community to help parents during this period of Islamic nurture (cp. Bauer 1997:13).

Reading the Qur'an, as part of the training at the Qur'an school, has a ritual dimension in addition to the recitation itself. This ritual dimension is not equivalent to, but has some similarities to, *rites de passage*. A rite of passage in a strict sense marks a transition from one status to another through phases of separation, transition and incorporation (van Gennep 1960[1908]; Turner 1969; Douglas 1966). Denny mentions the following *rites de passages* found among Muslims: 'birth, *'aqiqa* (haircutting sacrifice), circumcision, marriage, mastery of certain phases of the methods (*tariqa*) of Sufi practice and receiving the Sufi cloak (*khirqah*), recitation of the Qur'an, and death rites' (Denny 1985:75). In addition to these, which are not universally observed in the Muslim world, performing of *Hajj* is perhaps the best example of *rites de passage* within Islam since *Hajj* contains the phases of separation, transition and incorporation. The title of *Hajji* expresses the new status.

The institution 'reading the Qur'an' cannot be identified as one specific event taking place at a specific time and changing personal status. Nevertheless, there are aspects of transitions on two different levels. Firstly the educational process itself (to learn to read the Qur'an) may be understood as an on-going initiation ritual aimed at making the child a full member of the community and perhaps reaching the level of becoming a *hafiz*. The Qur'an schools cannot, however, be said to automatically lead to the experience of belonging to a 'communitas' in the sense of spontaneous, undifferentiated, sacred communion (Turner 1969:96; Ahlberg 1991:131). Secondly, every recitation is, in itself, a transition from one mode of existence to another (cf the prescribed purification to be undertaken before reading and the rest of the soul said to be achieved afterwards). The recitation of the Qur'an during *Ramadan*, and especially the practice of sitting *itiqaf*, expresses, in a more concentrated

form, the transitional character of recitation. As Denny states, there is a 'strong relationship between text and context' (ibid.):

That is, it is not simply a question of the correct practice of recitation based on the knowledge of 'readings' (*qiratat*), and the rules of pronunciation, stops, and starts (*waqf wal-ibtida*), and so forth. The condition of the reciter, the place of performing the recitation, and the attitude of the listeners are also of critical importance (ibid.p.75).

In the previous sections, the idea of ritual transition has been touched upon in terms of both attending the Qur'an class and the recitation itself. However, the main points will be underlined here with the following examples. When a child is about four to six years old, parents feel that it is time for the child 'to do his or her *bismillah*', i.e. to start reading the Qur'an. *Bismillah* means 'opening' and it is a word used for different kinds of 'openings' or the beginning of something. Since a child is believed to be born a Muslim, its first 'reading' of the Qur'an does not mark its becoming part of the *Ummah* but does mark the opening up of the possibility of experiencing God's presence through reciting his Words. This is the starting point of a long educational training but, at the same time, it is, from the very beginning, a ritual which 'creates' something. From the moment of *bismillah*, the child is blessed by God through his or her reciting. One father told me that when his son was about to 'do his *bismillah*', they took him to a famous scholar (*Vim*) to let him teach the child the first phrases. The scholar 'read' some words and the child repeated. This was regarded as giving a special blessing (*barakat*) to the child.

Some families marked the first 'reading' by having a family celebration or simply by giving the children sweets (*barfi*). No prescribed way of marking the *bismillah* existed. It simply depended on the family's attitude and interest. The same has already been stated concerning the celebration of a child having read the Qur'an for the first time.

Even if very few reached the level of being a *hafiz*, we have also seen that this level was in many ways regarded as the culmination of the training. A diploma was put on the wall signifying the new status, but even more important was the consciousness of being a chain in the link of *huffaz* (plural of *hafaz*),

conveying the Qur'an in its original recitational form - as it was revealed to the Prophet.

Understanding the reading of the Qur'an as a ritual experience is not contradictory to the previous emphasis on the bodily and sensory aspects of the informal socialisation taking place at the Qur'an schools. Bodily and sensory aspects are as integrated parts of 'reading the Qur'an' as they are aspects of other Islamic practices, such as performing prayer.

Conclusion

This analysis of Qur'an classes has documented two apparently contradictory tendencies: on the one hand the tendency towards privatisation and on the other the tendency towards increased importance of the mosques. The mosque as arena for Qur'an classes has been found to be an institution for both formal religious training and informal socialisation in a broad sense. At the Qur'an schools, children were socialised to become Muslims and Pakistanis, either as 'strengthened socialisation' or as 're-socialisation' in relation to the home.

The tendency to increased privatisation of Qur'an classes has been viewed as both a normative and a liberal strategy within a late-modern context. Well-educated and actively practising Muslim parents combined the wish to give their children the best Islamic training with an ambition to secure good school results and sporting opportunities by finding flexible, private Qur'an class arrangements. Liberal, less actively practising Muslim parents used the same strategy to avoid what they regarded as the negative influence of the mosques or they wanted to offer a 'minimum' solution to their children, adjusted to their other activities.

Qur'an classes were found to function both as educational Islamic training and ritual practice. One of the main findings concerning education as part of Islamic nurture was the recognition of formal knowledge and skills both as a reservoir for development of 'potential religiosity' and as actual ritual practice. Recitation of the Qur'an may serve as an example of how formal knowledge was inseparably linked to ritual practice. The topic 'recitation of the Qur'an' may also illustrate the interrelatedness of the different theoretical complexes dealt with in Chapters 5 and 6. A child had to learn how to recite the Qur'an in Arabic and how to purify her- or him-self before reading. The reading itself had a purifying effect, and the recitation 'created' a qualitatively

different time and space, i.e. a place or a moment to experience the presence of God.

The open, explicit curriculum of Qur'an classes was the training in recitational skill as part of Islamic practice. This research gives evidence for recognising the training itself, from early childhood, as having social as well as spiritual dimensions. Through Qur'an classes at home or in the mosque, children were socialised into a culture dominated by orality-aurality with possible implications for general attitudes to what is worth knowing, how to learn and whom to respect because of their knowledge. This will be part of the discussion of the next section when focus is shifted from the Islamic aspects of education to compulsory secular schooling.

7.3 Formal schooling

Introduction

This section will broaden the perspective of socialisation by discussing formal schooling as a third main arena of socialisation, in addition to processes at home and in the mosque. The combined approach distinguishes this study from other reports on minority pupils and their educational strategies and school results (e.g. Engen 1996; Høgmo 1990; Lauglo 1996; Pihl 1998).

School and home (and school and mosque) are in many research studies, and in 'dominant discourse' (cf. Baumann 1996:9), frequently presented as *opposing* cultural worlds. The Day State School is said to represent secular values in opposition to the Islamic values of the home (or the mosque). Implicit in this type of statement is an understanding of school as an arena for conflicts between home-values and the values of mainstream society. Geaves says: 'School is the place where Muslim society and British society most deeply interact' (Geaves 1995:61). However, the question is whether this interaction is characterised by children in terms of being 'caught between two cultures' (Anwar 1980) or whether the interaction is an expression of children's competence as 'skilled cultural navigators' (Ballard 1994:30) or indeed whether there is some combination of the two. Based on his research among actively practising Muslims (young people and adults), Geaves' presentation of the school-home relationship is within a conflict-paradigm (Geaves 1995:61-3). The strengthened Islamic nurture of the home is presented as a counter-strategy to what his Muslim informants characterised as a negative secular influence of the school. Private Islamic schools, offering academic subjects alongside

religious instruction, were presented, by some of his informants, as the most desirable solution. Similar opinions were expressed by a similar type of informant in Oslo, but the present research on Muslim children contests this dominant discourse of conflict as a general pattern.

Formal schooling is the main secular institution in Pakistani children's lives. The term 'secular' is preferred here to 'non-Islamic' for the following two reasons. Firstly, it avoids the creation of a dichotomy between an Islamic and a non-Islamic part of children's lives. Secondly, it emphasises that the process of secularisation is a process within Islamic societies, and among Muslims in the diaspora, and is not only a process within Christian and post-Christian societies. As Berger says, 'By secularization we mean the process by which sectors of society and culture are removed from the domination of religious institutions and symbols' (Berger 1990 [1967]: 107). Theoretically, from an Islamic doctrinal point of view, no sectors of society and culture should be removed from the influence of Islam, which is regarded as a total way of life. However, from a social scientific perspective, a process is taking place within Islamic societies, and among Muslims all over the modern world, which may be characterised as secularisation. This is partly as a result of the globalisation process (Ahmed 1994) and partly as an internal process within the Islamic world (Halliday 1994). The Islamic revival (Islamic fundamentalism / Islamism) may be regarded as a modern counteraction to this secularisation, which in turn is often equated with modernisation and westernisation (Utvik 1993).

In this study, the use of the term 'secular' does not imply non-Islamic or anti-religious attitudes. Rather, secularisation implies that sectors of society such as law giving, politics, schooling, health care and the media, are increasingly institutionalised and practised outside a religious reference. It does not imply any reservation towards religion as such (cf. Luckmann 1967). The comprehensive school system in Norway must accordingly be interpreted as a secular school system. The school is by law and in popular opinion regarded as an institution 'removed from the domination of religious institutions' (Berger 1990:107). This does not imply that the school has no defined foundation of values, or that its ritual life is removed from the dominance of a Christian cultural heritage, including the presence of Christian symbols (cf. Chapter 1 and 8).

The shift from the discussion of Qur'an schools in the previous section to the present discussion of formal schooling is not simply a shift from formal Islamic education to formal secular schooling. It is a broadening of perspective in the study of socialisation. Qur'an schools and primary and secondary schools are formal educational institutions, but as part of this research are primarily studied as arenas of socialisation, containing both formal and informal elements. Children are not regarded as passive recipients or reproducers of fixed institutional cultures, but as active cultural producers, i.e. the study is based on an *interactionist* rather than a *structural* position (cf. Høgmo 1984:373,389). Children's interaction with each other and with teachers in the classroom, during breaks and in school-related situations were studied through observations, interviews with children, teachers and parents and through children's diary writing.

Extended socialisation at school

Observation of children at school was mainly aimed at observing the individual respondent child in a new social setting, but also at an understanding of the setting itself. My opinions of individual children, based on observations in the classroom, and the opinions of their teachers, occasionally differed. The differences could be attributed to what may be called the school paradigm, i.e. children were evaluated by teachers as pupils in relation to an often tacit school norm. This type of evaluation was an expression of a common school code, shared by pupils and teachers (cf. Bourdieu 1967). Pupils adjusted their behaviour to the school code or they developed counter strategies, for instance by forming solidarity groups based on ethnicity, class or other classifications, for example solidarity among Muslims who performed the fast or among girls wearing *shalwar qamiz* (cp. Høgmo 1984). As a researcher who already had experienced the children at home and in the mosque etc., my position was more like the position of parents: the image of the child (or young people) was more dominant than that of the pupil (cf. Chapter 2).

School activities were often mentioned in children's diaries. Firstly, school was present as the most dominant aspect in the rhythm of the day (I woke up and went to school'). Secondly, informal aspects of schooling were dominant, like playing, sports events, Christmas celebrations etc. Some of these school events differed from the young people's home world (like swimming or disco); others had a clear link to the home. Iqrah (f 9) wrote in her diary:

On Monday I went to McDonalds and I played with my friends at McDonalds. Our teacher was so kind that we all got ice-cream at McDonalds. I did not want to go home, but we had to.

A visit to McDonalds as part of schooling is an example of a link between home and school, even though such a visit is neither part of formal educational content nor part of Islamic/Pakistani values. Similar links can be found within youth culture (video *and* music preferences), sports, TV series, local politics, national celebrations etc. These aspects of daily life were expressions of a world, not originated from, or based on, but shared by, home and school.²⁸

All children expressed a strong attachment to their local school. One girl said proudly: 'At our school there is no racism; only when we fight.' The attachment to the school was a fundamental aspect of their belonging to a local community, expressed by children in the inner city and by those living in a suburb (cf. Chapter 3). The attachment to teachers was also strong, especially among the youngest children. The teachers were often referred to (by their forenames) during interviews. The teacher was no doubt a 'significant other' for children, but there is no evidence for saying that the teacher's role as 'significant other' was more essential for Pakistani children than for children with an ethnic Norwegian background. However, for Pakistani children who had few personal contacts among adult Norwegians, their teachers gained in importance as cultural mediators (cf. next sub-section). When children in interviews expressed viewpoints and attitudes typical for internalised school values, they mostly did so by referring to their teacher. The internalisation of the cultural content of education (e.g. literature) did not depend on de-socialisation, but on their relationship to the teacher (cf. 7.1 for conceptual clarification). *Extended socialisation* would therefore be a more appropriate term than *re-socialisation* to characterise this type of socialisation. Saima's (f 9) development exemplifies this. She had a very close relationship with her female teacher, had, to a great extent, internalised the school's values (cf. her attitudes to animals, environment, peace, elderly people, the importance of education etc.) and was increasingly a practising Muslim. A strong extended socialisation was traceable without any signs of de-socialisation.

A major part of schooling has to do with interaction, communication, self-presentation, i.e. a marking of identity. No homogeneous pattern was

discernible. The interaction depended on a diverse set of factors, not least the heterogeneity of pupils in the classroom in terms of gender, ethnic background, class background etc. The ways of organising teaching and the ethos of the whole school were also decisive factors for the interaction of pupils (cp. Engen 1996). Schools differed, for instance, in whether they identified themselves as culturally homogeneous Norwegian schools or as multicultural schools. This affected children's strategies in relation to under-/or over-communicating ethnic and religious identity.

At schools with a high percentage of minority pupils and a multicultural profile pupils tended to group themselves more strongly according to gender and ethnic/linguistic' background (over-communication of ethnic identity, cf. Høgmo 1990:73). Only in exceptional circumstances did individuals break this pattern, like Bushra (f 12) whose best friend was an ethnic Norwegian girl. Yasmin (f 14) and others who expressed a wish to break the pattern, did not feel free to do so because they were not fully accepted among ethnic Norwegians (cf.4.3). Pakistani girls seemed to be more trapped in this pattern than boys, which may be caused by a general difference in boys' and girls' pattern of communication and playing (cf. Høgmo 1990:71). At schools with few minority pupils, under-communication of ethnic and religious identity was customary. When topics relevant to them as Muslims were touched upon during a lesson, they seldom made any comments. When such topics came up (e.g. discussions of alcohol) in my presence, Muslim pupils might look at me as if to say 'You know what we mean about this...' or 'You know we are Muslims ...'

At schools with few Pakistanis, Pakistani pupils interacted more frequently with other minority pupils than with ethnic Norwegians. This pattern might, however, shift during a school day. When Saima (f 9) attended a Norwegian language class (Norwegian as first language), she interacted with all pupils in the class, girls and boys. In this setting she 'presented herself' as a clever Norwegian schoolgirl. Some of her classmates with an immigrant background attended another class (Norwegian as second language). On other occasions, e.g. swimming, she appeared as part of the non-trained group, mostly Muslims. She then strongly communicated her Muslim identity by wearing a baggy T-shirt and tights instead of a swimming costume (which was no hindrance to her enjoyment of swimming).

Muslim identity was generally under-communicated, except during *Ramadan*. Then Pakistani children who performed the fast were eager to inform others about it. They were proud, wanted to talk about it or to demonstrate it by being released from PE and swimming lessons.²⁹ During this period friendships with other non-Pakistani Muslims developed. This underlines that fasting was a marker of identity both towards the non-Islamic majority and internally among Muslims; i.e. it had both an 'us' and a 'we'-strengthening function (cf. 4.2). However, the practice of fasting was not appreciated from the school's side and children's pride was met by much scepticism. This negative attitude which, consciously or unconsciously, was part of 'a soft humane assimilation' (Engen 1996), did not change children's attitudes to, or practice of, fasting. Either it did not affect their practice at all (non-socialisation/protected socialisation) or it indirectly strengthened their consciousness of being different, i.e. Muslims. Omar (m 10) fasted the whole month, and he spoke rather enthusiastically about a dispute between himself and his teacher:

My teacher said to me at school: 'Don't fast,' but I said: 'I have to fast.' He said to me: 'Eat food!' He doesn't want me to fast.

At many schools a double-communication was discernible in relation to children's Muslim identity in the sense that the above-described negative attitude to fasting was combined with a positive attitude to the celebration of *Id-ul-fitr*. This festival was increasingly marked at schools with special assemblies, which contributed positively to a feeling of being recognised as a group (cf. 6.3). This kind of institutionalised practice was the only way schools contributed to strengthening the Islamic nurture of the homes.³⁰ Generally the relationship between home and school with regard to Islamic nurture was characterised by non-socialisation. The discussion above has, however, emphasised that even if formal schooling did not effect children's internalised Islamic values, these values were part of their school world.

Parents' attitude to schooling and school-related activities

The Norwegian school system was widely praised and supported despite its secularism and lack of Islamic content (cf. Chapter 1). Children were encouraged to work hard,³¹ and the opportunity to be well-educated was mentioned by many as one of the main reasons for staying in Norway. This motivation of parents was mainly instrumentally based (cf. Engen 1996), but

was also an expression of partly shared or overlapping values (cp. Nesbitt 1998, discussed below).

Those Pakistani parents who expressed support for the idea of establishing a private Islamic school in Oslo (see 1.4) did so, not because they actually planned to let their children attend that school, but as an expression of Muslim solidarity in opposition to political authorities which had denied them a 'right'. (Cf. similar attitudes among Muslims in England/Wales, for example the Kirklees and Birmingham actions; Hull 1996).

This verbal support for the Norwegian school system was, however, not in practice followed up by all parents. Some felt the school to be a 'foreign world', belonging to their children, not to them. If possible, they avoided attending parents' meetings, never assisted their children with homework and seldom discussed school events (cf. Lauglo 1996:60-62). Other parents participated fully, attended all kinds of meetings, committees etc. The school was their main access to mainstream society, and they were concerned about building a good relationship on behalf of Pakistanis in Norway. The different attitudes of these two groups of parents followed socio-economic and socio-cultural variables like class / educational background / urban-rural distinctions (cf. Chapter 3; Engen 1996). Whereas the motivation among the less-educated parents with a rural background may be characterised as instrumental, the motivation of the other group was based on common values and 'a common code' (cf. Bourdieu 1967:341). The father in Family B (rural uneducated background) wanted his children to do well at school, but he did not engage himself in their school work. 'I don't have the time,' he said (the same answer was given when he explained why he had handed over the Islamic nurture to the mosque). The situation in Family D may be mentioned as an example of sharing a school code and school values. The mother attended secondary school classes for adult immigrants and discussions of school related subjects were part of everyday conversations between parents and children. The school motivated group encompassed liberal Muslims (e.g. Family C) as well as conservative or doctrinal ones (e.g. Families A and D).

A presupposition for a positive attitude towards formal schooling, was for both groups, however, the perception of school as a secular institution.³² Some examples may illustrate this point. All respondent children attended the alternative RE subject called 'Livssynskunnskap' (Knowledge of Worldviews)

(cf.1.4). As long as this subject was regarded as a secular alternative to confessional RE, it was accepted even if children and parents might express a concern about mistaken information, for example in the teaching material's presentation of Islam (an orientation to Islam was part of the curriculum). Instead of interpreting this concern as an example of a cultural conflict, it may be regarded as an interaction between home and school. This interpretation would be in accordance with Nesbitt's study of young British Hindus' and Sikhs' perceptions of their religious tradition at home and at school. Her study gives evidence for how lessons at school and teachers' attitudes contributed to young people's knowledge about, and consciousness of, their own tradition. At the same time, it made parents double up as resources in the sense that children and young people knew they would access additional information by asking questions at home (Nesbitt 1998).

The opposition from Muslims (and other minority groups) to the new compulsory RE (KRL) can be attributed to their perception, rightly or wrongly, of a change taking place in school, i.e. a change away from secular to Church dominance (cf. the discussion in 1.4).³³

Teachers' attitudes to Pakistani children

The attitudes found among teachers were in accordance with a general pattern presented in this study. They were trapped in what I have called (following Baumann 1996) 'the dominant discourse', which consisted of a number of prejudices:

- Pakistani children belong to a common ethnic group with a shared culture.
- There is a deep conflict between *their* culture and Norwegian culture.
- A successful integration is achieved when Pakistani pupils participate in all kinds of activities at school. The following statement by Saima's teacher is a typical expression of this attitude: 'She is well integrated in the way that she joins in all the same activities as Norwegian pupils.' This is in accordance with what has been called 'actual assimilation' in a context of agreed integration policy (cf. Engen 1996:11-12, Høgmo 1990:14).

The consequence of this way of thinking was that every type of behaviour or requirement, which differed from the majority 'norm', was conceived as a 'problem'. Teachers verbally expressed a respect for Islam and Pakistani culture, but they demonstrated in different ways that they did not 'like' the practice of fasting or the practice of being dressed when swimming etc. These attitudes were seldom expressed directly to the children, but were part of the informal conversation in the staff-room or were indirectly communicated to pupils by body language such as expressions in the face, sighs, neglect or silence. Every frustration experienced by the teacher, for instance as part of home-school communication, was classified as being caused by cultural differences. Every example of successful integration or progress of children's learning was attributed to *their* ability to adjust to the Norwegian system. Individual teachers wished to promote the integration of Pakistani children and their ideal was to treat all pupils equally and fairly, taking their social and cultural background into consideration. However, the 'weight' of the dominant discourse (expressed and institutionalised through curriculum, textbooks, rituals and informally as part of the everyday communication code) opposed the official policy and the individual teacher's good will.

Conclusion

A diverse set of socialisation processes took place at school and the relationship between them has been discussed above. The conclusion of this discussion is that formal schooling primarily had a function as *extended socialisation*, in the sense that the internalisation of new skills and values did not presuppose de-socialisation of home values (cf 7.1). Not only children's knowledge, but their ways of thinking, arguing, reacting and behaving could, to a great extent, be traced back to socialisation at school, including influence from the total life of the school, academically and socially. According to Hoem, re-socialisation will only take place if there exists a conflict of values and commonality of interests (Hoem 1982 [1978]: 72). The discussion above confirmed the existence of a commonality of interests, but moderated Hoem's view on the necessity of conflict of values. A presupposition for *extended socialisation* to take place was parents' and children's comprehension and recognition of the school as a secular arena.

Pakistani parents' views of education were not part of an Islamic ideology, but mainly instrumental, related to qualifying for the high status job market. For some well-educated parents this implied a wish for full integration

into the mainstream of Norwegian society, characterised by fluent Norwegian language competence, familiarity with the Norwegian way of life and Western culture. They were willing to accept *extended socialisation* to a certain extent — as long as Islamic values were not threatened. This is in accordance with what Engen has called 'a tacit contract of division of labour between school and home' (Engen 1996:13, my translation). The findings of this study, however, contest the idea that this contractual relationship between home and school is only based on an instrumental motivation. As Engen has pointed out the distinction between commonality of values and commonality of interests is not always obvious (Engen 1989). Besides having shared interests, Pakistani parents and the school had overlapping values within specific sectors, despite differences of religious or ethnic identity (cf. Jackson 1997:138; Jacobson 1995:111). These overlapping values were grounded in the class and educational backgrounds of parents.

Socialisation at school strengthened some values of the home (the secular values), had no effect on other aspects (Islamic and Pakistani cultural values) and socialised children by contributing to their internalisation of new values, i.e. *extended socialisation*.

7.4 Conclusion

Different types of socialisation have been found to take place simultaneously 'in a lifelong process where identities are built, strengthened, weakened; where new identities are developed and where it is the actual situation of the individual which determines which identity is to be subordinated' (Hoem 1982 [1978]: 168, my translation). However, this study diverges from Hoem in his rejection of the terms *primary* and *secondary socialisation* as applied by Berger and Luckmann (1991[1966]: 149ff). The findings have given evidence for a maintenance of the concept *primary socialisation* in order to characterise processes taking place at home (cf. Knott 1991:101). This part of the socialisation process is primary not only because it comes first in time, but because of its pre-theoretical, bodily and sensory character. 'It should hardly be necessary to add that primary socialisation involves more than purely cognitive learning. It takes place under circumstances that are highly charged emotionally' (Berger and Luckmann 1991[1966]: 151). Islam, as practised by Pakistani families in Oslo, has been found to play a specific role in the primary socialisation process, especially with reference to its bodily and sensory character and the way in which it is interwoven with Pakistani cultural

elements. Formal educational elements of Islamic nurture, like how to read the Qur'an, have been found to combine oral, written and aural modes of learning, whereas a visual 'language' was internalised through the watching of 'Indian' films.

However, this primary socialisation which took place at home (and in the mosques), was not Islamic or Pakistani in a culturally fixed sense, but contained elements based on a diversified set of values, including secular ones which overlapped with values of formal schooling. *Strengthened socialisation* took place (i.e. common values of home and mosque, home and school), but also *de-socialisation* and *re-socialisation* (i.e. conflicts of values of home and TV; home and neighbourhood; home and school) and *extended socialisation* (i.e. new values established through formal schooling). Primary socialisation was not finished when formal schooling started, but there was an on-going socialisation process characterised by direct and indirect communication and interaction between home and school. Socialisation at school was seen to have a primary quality in relation to some aspects of the process of identity development and management.

Common/overlapping values are those which are shared by most citizens of Norway, formally through the law and the political system, informally through material frames of life (job, environment, housing, technology etc) and lifestyle (media, neighbourhood, holidays, food and fashion etc.). These values were present in Pakistani homes, but it lies beyond the scope of this study to ascribe to them a Norwegian influence caused by the diaspora situation, or to ascribe to them a general tendency towards globalisation. This research, however, gives evidence for attributing to children's formal schooling a role in strengthening these common values. Formal schooling and TV/video combined seemed to have the strongest influence in this direction. However, to the extent that Pakistani children watched 'Indian' films or Asia Channel more than Norwegian/American TV/video, the socialisation effect of schooling seemed to be weakened. In my material there is only evidence for identifying this situation for families in the inner city where the popularity of 'Indian' films was part of a generally Pakistani dominant lifeworld, linguistically, culturally and socially (cf Chapter 3). For most Pakistani children TV and video watching was as culturally mixed as the rest of their lifeworld (cf. Knott and Khokher 1993:600). For example, Yasmin's (f 14) favourite programme was 'Santa Barbara' but the family also had subscribed to the Asian Channel. The

father of Family A rented the video film 'The Messenger' (a popular devotional film about the life of the Prophet) as part of the Islamic nurturing of his children, but he also joined the rest of the family watching a Michael Jackson show on TV. The parents complained, in the same way that, according to Gillespie (1989:238), Asian parents in Southall, 'lament what they see as a process of progressive 'cultural loss' in each generation of children. Looking to the past they attempt to re-create 'traditional culture' (cp. Jacobson 1995:104). Children's and young people's preferences with regard to TV/video seemed, however, to reflect their own choices more than being formed by a 're-creating cultural programme' by parents.

From the children's perspective, the three social arenas (home, mosque and school) did not represent separate 'worlds' or 'cultures', but were all parts of one lifeworld, *their* lifeworld. The pattern of common values/conflicting values and common interests/conflicting interests was complex within each of the three arenas, and there were continuities and discontinuities between the arenas with regard to the socialisation processes. Internalised Islamic values were not absent from their school world (although formal Islamic nurture was), and non-Islamic and secular values were not absent from home. The combined study of Qur'an schools and formal schooling has thus revealed the complexity of socialisation processes without ascribing specific socialisation trajectories to separated social arenas. Children's movements *between* arenas have been found more essential for their identity management than cultural differences between home, mosque and school. Some of these 'movements' will be elaborated in the final chapter.

¹ On the concept of nurture, see Ch.3, endnote 1.

² Because of the frequency of the word 'Qur'an' in this chapter, it is not written in italics.

³ Hoem has, in later publications, substituted the term *non-socialisation* (ikke-sosialisering) with *protected socialisation* (skjermet sosialisering).

⁴ In Norwegian: dobbeltkvalifisering og kultursammenligning.

⁵ The practice of learning to read the Qur'an in Arabic (*tilawah*) is here called an institution and this covers a diversity of organisational models of which the *madrasahs* of the mosques is just one. The term '*madrasah*' was not used by children, but by some adult informants. Some reserve the term *madrasah* for schools in which the full curriculum of Islamic studies is taught (Barton 1986:174). At a higher level recitation courses are called '*tajwid*'. In Pakistan these courses for specialists may last two years. A person who has completed such a course is called a '*qurra*' (Graham 1984:1). No '*tajwid*' courses were offered in Oslo.

⁶ 'Going to the aunt' is a direct translation of Norwegian 'gå til tauten'. The determined form sounds equally awkward grammatically in Norwegian as in English and it is therefore kept in the translation. Probably it is a direct translation from Urdu, which does not usually distinguish between determined and indetermined forms (Thiesen 1988:102).

⁷ According to one of my key informants, an *imam*, God himself does not need a language.

⁸ The majority of Pakistani Muslims in Oslo are Sunnis belonging to the Hanafi school of law (Ahlberg 1991:48).

⁹ 'The sound of God' is preferred to 'the voice of God' because 'the voice of God' might have indicated that focus was on the content of his words.

¹⁰ Most of what is written by non-Muslims on Qur'an classes in Norway lacks an understanding of the religious aspects of the institution. The terms used to describe the activities in the mosque reveal this lack of understanding, for instance by saying that fathers send their children to the Qur'an schools 'to reel up the content of the Qur'an by heart' ('ramse opp innholdet i Koranen utenat'; Lien 1997:146). Likewise, Barton found that most non-Muslim criticisms of Qur'an schools were based on ignorance of the values of this practice to the Muslims (1986:201).

¹¹ One mosque planned to start offering classes in English. This might, of course, be a help to Pakistani pupils in Norwegian schools (with English as the first / second language), but it might also be a sign of the international orientation of this mosque and the strong affiliation to sister organisations in Britain, like the Islamic Foundation.

¹² There were, however, different styles in accordance with the personality of the teacher. Cf. what some of the children said about strict teachers and even physical punishment (see next sub-section). Physical punishment at Qur'an schools was reported in Norwegian newspapers. My material does not give indications of systematic use of physical punishment but it was given as one of the reasons for not attending a specific teacher's class. Among the respondent families there was no acceptance of this kind of practice. It was regarded as 'a bad habit among uneducated teachers from Pakistan' (cf. the sub-section on *imams* and Qur'an school teachers).

¹³ I was accepted as observer of both boys' and girls' classes in the mosques, in contrast to what is reported in research from Pakistan (Farah 1992:90).

¹⁴ At this level of training it is not a question of learning any of the 10 different ways of reciting the Qur'an (*qir'a*). The initial training should not be called *tajwid*, which represents a more advanced form of course in recitation. Cf. endnote 5.

¹⁵ The booklets, with extracts from the Qur'an, used in the classes, were bought in a Pakistani bookshop in Oslo, and had been imported from Pakistan or Turkey. Since the text was in Arabic it did not matter where they were bought. The prizes were decisive.

¹⁶ Their competence in pronunciation has not been evaluated. According to one of the *imams*, the most competent of Qur'an school teachers taught in the mosques. The same *imam* found, however, that the advantage of private teaching was the small number of pupils.

¹⁷ The more qualified, however, the more they were honoured. In a South Asian context, '*ulama* are not always a respected group (Lewis 1994:115). High status is generally attached to caste (*zat*) and family background (*biradari*).

¹⁸ There are no training possibilities for '*ulama* in Norway.

¹⁹ The difference in status of Norwegian and English among Pakistanis made this an even greater problem in Norway than in the UK (Lewis 1994:178).

²⁰ To let this type of activity be taken care of by a Norwegian speaking general secretary or other members of the board was not always a success because these persons often lacked competence in Islamic studies,

²¹ Syed Ali Ashraf recommends the use of Muslim community leaders to 'generate curiosity and enthusiasm to learn more about Islam and life in an Islamic way. Pleasure and learning can go hand in hand' (1993:11). The application by some Muslims to establish a private Islamic primary school in Oslo was based on a similar understanding of children's needs.

²² One informant referred to the reading of the Muslim reformist Ghulam Ahmed Pervaiz as the source for this attitude. He felt bound to follow the Qur'an only, not the *Hadith*. (Cf. Ch. 3).

²³ Lack of punctuality was an issue for discussion and a concern among Pakistanis as it was for the researcher.

²⁴ A distinction between strengthened socialisation and re-socialisation may in this case seem questionable, but it exemplifies, as rightly stated by Engen, a weakness connected to Hoem's distinction between 'conflicts of values' and 'conflicts of interests' (Engen 1989:314). The result of a strengthened socialisation is, according to Hoem, an expanded understanding and mastering of original belonging, whereas the result of re-socialisation is understanding and mastering of a *new* belonging (Hoem 1982 [1978]: 79). The question with regard to our discussion is whether Muslim children can be said to gain a *new* belonging through the Qur'an classes.

²⁵ Cf. Bushra's way of tying her scarf in the neck instead of under her chin (5.2).

²⁶ After the fieldwork period was over, I got to know that two of the boys who had been taught privately attended a Qur'an class in a neighbouring mosque. This was dominated by a non-Pakistani ethnic group.

²⁷ Even if the commonly expected pattern was to start to learn the Qur'an as a child, it was never too late to learn. In one of the mosques I met an elderly woman who recently had learnt to read the Qur'an. She came into the room of the mosque where girls had just ended their Qur'an class, sat down by herself and started the recitation with intense concentration and devotion. Merit (*sawab*) is gained by recitation of the Qur'an at any time (Shaw 1988:129).

²⁸ This does not imply that, for example, all types of audio-visual culture were shared by home and school. The watching of 'Indian' (HindirUrdu-speaking) films was a social activity that rather strengthened those cultural aspects of children's lifeworlds which were detached from school values (cp. Gillespie 1989; elaborated below).

²⁹ Their reason for not attending the swimming lessons while fasting was also based on Islamic prescriptions of not getting water in the mouth during fasting.

³⁰ The new RE (KRL) may, if rightly practised, from my point of view, contribute in the same direction.

³¹ Research on school results among pupils with an immigrant background (Norwegian Pakistanis and others) is in accordance with this finding, e.g. Lauglo 1996; Pihl 1998,

³² See Jackson 1997:139 for a distinction between 'secular' and 'secularist'.

³³ It is worth noting that conservative Christians argue from an opposite point of view. The new RE subject is interpreted as signifying an increased secularisation of the Norwegian State School and consequently some Christian parents' wish to place their children in independent Christian schools (see for example Vårt Land 3/2-1997; cp. the British situation, Jackson 1997:136). Other representatives of conservative Christians underline the continuity between the old confessional subject of Christianity and the new subject (see Prismet 1997/6).

Chapter 8

Islamic Nurture and Identity

8.1 Introduction

This final chapter will not only summarise the previous discussion, but will address the original research questions based on the analysis of empirical data and by drawing links across the analytical structure of the study. This implies both a broadening of perspective and a focusing. The broadening of perspective is caused by the multiple voices of the empirical material. Some of the 'voices heard' may widen the perspective of the research project, for instance by introducing the topic of audio-visual culture or in-depth analysis of extended family patterns. Despite such multivocality, which has been deliberately retained throughout the study, the focus on Islamic nurture has been maintained and will be further sharpened as part of this final discussion.

The following links traversing and combining the three theoretical complexes (Chapters 5, 6 and 7) have been identified and will be part of the final discussion:

- discussions of formality vs. informality
- institutionalisation vs. privatisation
- verbal vs. bodily knowledge/communication
- doctrinal prescriptions vs. individual flexibility
- cultural transmissions vs. negotiations and creativity

These topics, which run across the analytical structure, are covered within the

concept of *nurture* (cf. Chapter 3, endnote 1), especially related to the processes of identity management.

Since research question 1 (focusing on *how* religious and cultural traditions were transmitted) was to a large extent addressed in Chapter 7, emphasis will be on research question 2 which is the main focus of the study. This, of course, concerns the role of Islam in the lives of children, with regard to meaning and social belonging (cf. the Introduction to the study). The discussion of the following sections will, however, strongly relate to the discussion of education and socialisation in Chapter 7 and thereby also relate to research question 1. The headings of the sections are not identical with the theoretical complexes as presented in Chapters 5, 6 and 7, but expose both the interpretive paradigm Of the study (cf. 2.2) and the main findings based on the discussion both within these chapters and across them. However, the aim of this chapter is not only to discuss findings connected to Islam's role in children's lives, but also to generate theories of Islamic nurture related to identity management in a secular context. In accordance with the interpretive approach of the study, which implies that the search for meaning (or grounded theory) is a search for a contextualised meaning (cf. Geertz 1973:26), the next section will clarify the concept of secular context by relating it to a discussion of plurality and deconstruction.

8.2 Secularity, plurality and deconstruction

The concept of 'secular context' has, in the previous chapters, been used to describe Norwegian society generally and the state school specifically (cf. Chapter 1). Norway has been presented as a secular society, despite its state church system, because public life (law, politics, the media) and the informal social interaction of people are not marked by reference to religious faith and values.¹ According to official Church statistics (1990), 89% of the population are members of the Norwegian Church (the State Church), 5% are members of other denominations, and 6% are not members of any denomination (Botvar 1993:23). However, 8 out of 10 Norwegians attend a service/sermon less than once a month or never (ibid.p.59).² As mentioned in Chapter 1, following Luckmann (1967), this lack of church attendance does not necessarily imply a non-religious population. Rather it indicates the possibility of an 'invisible' religiosity, i.e. a religiosity marked by an increased individualisation and privatisation (Botvar 1993; Lundby 1985; Martin 1991; Winsnes 1985). The Christian faith is no longer a taken-for-granted reality or, as expressed by Berger, Berger and Kellner, 'religious definitions of reality have lost their

quality of certainty and, instead, have become matters of choice. Faith is no longer socially given, but must be individually achieved...' (1973:81). A privatised 'invisible' religiosity is therefore combined with a 'sectorised' public religion. Despite the fact that 89% of the population are formal members of the Norwegian Church, the majority of the population lead secularised lives in the sense that more and more sectors of their lives are perceived as independent of institutionalised Christianity.

From some points of view, which will be discussed below, the concept of plurality is more appropriate than secularity to characterise the social and cultural processes of late-modern societies (cf. Skeie 1995). The concept 'secular context' was, however, retained in this work because secularity, as explained above, was found to dominate the mainstream discourse and provided the public context of Islamic nurture. A plurality of religions and values was, however, not only discernible but increasingly expressed both within a majority and minority context (cf. the RE debate, Chapter 1). Pluralisation was not only caused by immigration of people representing 'new cultures and religions', but by social and cultural processes within the majority population.

One consequence of pluralisation has been increased secularisation in the sense of a privatisation of religion (cf. Berger/Berger/ Kellner 1973:81); another consequence is revitalisation of 'a sleeping religiosity' and 'the cultural heritage. Tendencies towards alternative religious orientation, e.g. within the New Age movement, may be interpreted as an expression of this pluralisation or as a consequence of it (Botvar 1993; Skeie 1995). The historical process of secularisation and pluralisation in Norway is beyond the scope of this study, but the interaction between an already secularised majority and a 'new' Muslim minority is essential for an understanding of the lifeworlds of Pakistani children. Religious and non-religious plurality of values increasingly forms the common frame of reference for the majority and minorities.' This does not imply, however, that all groups or individuals experience this plurality in the same way.

Because of the loss of faith as something socially given or taken-for-granted, the situation of modern men and women has been characterised as 'a deepening condition of "homelessness"' (Berger, Berger and Kellner 1973:82). However, such a characterisation does not include the experiences of Pakistani children in Oslo, despite their immigrant history and the tendency towards

marginalisation in Norwegian society (Wikan 1995). The phrase 'Desh Pardesh' (home from home/at home abroad; cf. Chapter 3, endnote 5), as applied by Ballard (1994:4) is a metaphor more relevant to their lifeworld situation than 'homelessness' (Berger, Berger and Kellner 1973:82).⁴ The following self-presentation was a typical expression of the children's feeling of 'Desh Pardesh': 'We are Pakistanis, but Norway is our country. We are born here' (cf. Chapter 4). This attitude will be elaborated by examining the distinction between traditional and modern religious plurality (following Skeie 1995) and by connecting this discussion to the concept of 'deconstruction' (cf. the hermeneutical paradigm of the study; 2.2) and 'cultural flow' (Hannerz 1992:4).

Traditional religious plurality 'indicates the existence of a variety of different religious groups or religious views in a specific context' (Skeie 1995:85). This description may characterise contemporary Western societies but is also a description applicable to earlier phases of Western history (e.g. the Roman Empire) and for other parts of the world (e.g. most South Asian countries). *Modern religious plurality* differs from the above description in the way that 'the number of different relations we take part in has increased, which in turn has multiplied both the number of perspectives and the speed of perspective-shifts' (Skeie 1995:87). So, even if we belong to different religions or worldviews in a given society, we are still 'locked' into 'separate worlds' to a lesser extent than in a traditional plural society.

Individuals living in the context of modern pluralism are affected by the same cultural processes that affect the social context in general. As discussed earlier in this study (e.g. Chapter 4), ethnic and cultural boundaries were permeable and Pakistani children operated with a diverse set of dichotomies. They were exposed to a 'cultural flow' more than to different 'cultures' existing side by side (Hannerz 1992:4). Theories with regard to how this type of social context may influence their identity management will be generated below within modes of deconstruction related to the concept of 'cultural flow'. Firstly, the understanding of modern plurality, or a postmodern perspective, implies a deconstruction of the idea of 'the individual' as an undivided soul (a romantic view) or a rational 'whole' (a modern view) (cf. Skeie 1995:88). Secondly, it implies a deconstruction of the concept of social arenas as separated cultural 'sectors'. Consequently, social arenas like home, mosque and the school, have not been found to represent different aspects of children's identity. As documented in this study, children's *movement between* these

arenas has been found more essential for their identity management than cultural differences between home, mosque and school. Interaction, communication and negotiation between individuals and groups of people were of greater importance for an understanding of Norwegian Pakistani children's lifeworlds than an understanding of home, mosque or school as separated 'cultures' (cf. Eriksen's metaphor of 'a complex electrical field' as opposed to the usual 'root' metaphor; [Eriksen 1994:23]). The discussion in the previous chapter of children's attitudes to and preferences with regard to TV/video/music may serve as an illustration of their plural and deconstructed lifeworld. The following three sections will draw connections across the previous analytical structure of the study and thereby generate theories of Islam's roles in children's lives within the secular, plural and deconstructed context elaborated above.⁵

8.3 Meaning and social belonging

As expressed by Berger: 'The social world intends, as far as possible, to be taken for granted. Socialization achieves success to the degree that this taken-for-granted quality is internalized' (Berger 1990 [19671: 22]). Related to the discussion above concerning the conditions of late-modern plural societies generally and the minority situation in particular, the study has asked whether this type of successful socialisation was achievable for Norwegian Pakistani children. The findings interpreted here have, however, repeatedly given evidence for the conclusion that the 'danger of meaninglessness' was avoided and a 'nomos' was established (see for example Chapters 5 and 6). Pakistani children in Oslo were not 'homeless', although their lifeworld was more complex and diversified than that of their parents (cf. Chapters 4 and 6).

Parallel to mutual dependency of meaning and context within the hermeneutic paradigm of the study (cf.2.2), meaning and social belonging were found to be strongly interrelated as part of children's lifeworlds (cf. the definitions of 'cultural identity' and 'social identity' presented in the Introduction to the study). Arguments were given for maintaining 'cultural *and* social identity' as a cumbersome conceptualisation with reference to the plurality of sources nourishing children's identities. The empirical data conveyed a complexity of social groups to which Pakistani children felt they were attached or belonged⁶: the extended family, Pakistani friends and neighbours, Norwegian schoolmates and teachers, Muslims of multi-ethnic origin, a multicultural neighbourhood, Norwegian society etc. (cf. Chapters 3 and 4). The children's comprehension of being Pakistani in Norway exhibited

a complexity that included aspects of cultural and social distinctiveness and a periodic, situationally dependent denial of that distinctiveness (cf. Chapter 4). This kind of complex social belonging was formative for development of a 'multiple cultural competence' (cf. Jackson and Nesbitt 1993:175) and constituted the social context for development of what in this study has been called 'integrated plural identity' (see 8.5).

The link between establishing meaning and social belonging can be illustrated by the following examples from the previous discussion. One pattern of meaning was analysed in Chapter 5 as the purity-impurity complex. Besides being a source for 'potential religiosity' (as will be elaborated in the next section), this pattern of meaning strengthened feelings of social belonging by creating boundaries towards 'others', e.g. non-Muslims and the opposite sex. Another pattern, the experience of qualitatively different time and space, combined the establishing of social belonging and meaning in the way temporality and spatiality were constituted in the lifeworlds of children.

Although there was a link between the establishment of meaning and the experience of social belonging, there was no direct link between which social group a child identified with in the given situation and their cultural identity. Their cultural identity (i.e. the establishing of meaning) was, in other words, not derived from a social identity. The children expressed social identities derived from their affiliation to, or 'membership' of, different social groups (e.g. schoolmates, a specific mosque, family). However, they also expressed cultural identities, i.e. consciousness of meaning, which transcended social groups. To give one example: children might express strong social identification with a specific group of Pakistanis (e.g. their extended family), but they might, at the same time, express 'ideas and modes of thought' (Hannerz 1992:7) inconsistent with other members of that group. By comparing reflections, attitudes and religious practices of different generations (parents-children or elder-younger siblings), cultural diversities were discernible, even within socially stable groups like families. Cultural aspects of children's identities changed to a greater extent than social aspects, not least because the communication with 'others', so crucial to the development of a cultural identity, was an on-going process across group boundaries and within groups (cf. the above discussion of modem plurality). In Chapter 4 children's self-presentations were, for example, seen to shift in terms of a diversified set of 'us-them' dichotomies, i.e. an ongoing communication with 'others'. The purity-impurity complex as presented in Chapter 5 included communicative

purity-impurity complex as presented in Chapter 5 included communicative and negotiable dimensions with regard to the religious content of the complex, i.e. degrees and categories of purity and impurity. Another aspect of the purity-impurity dichotomy was the constituting of 'us' in contrast to 'others'.

The temporality and spatiality of children's lifeworlds (Chapter 6) were shaped by a combination of secular and Islamic elements. Children's everyday 'here and now' lifeworld was marked by a secular context but not divorced from experiences of a relationship between a 'here and now' and a mythical past, i.e. a sacred time and space, for example through the linkage of *qibla*-Mecca-Hajj-holy water-God's presence (cf 6.5). Local, national and global social and religious networks were also found to constitute transterritorial spaces in which they lived. This type of spatiality made a life in Norway as meaningful as a life in Pakistan.⁷

Some of the general social and cultural processes influencing children's lives as individuals and as a minority group will be illustrated by the multiple role of the mosque in the minority situation.

The role of **the mosque in the minority situation**

Both the diversity of organisational forms of Qur'an schools and the formal and informal content of the classes have been discussed in Chapter 7. The findings confirmed the central role of this institution and at the same time gave evidence for great diversity with regard to organisational forms and practices. The pattern of organisational diversity, to a great extent, followed a pattern along two lines: 1) *Barelwi oriented* Muslims on the one hand and *Deobandi (and Jama'at-i Islami /JI) oriented* Muslims on the other,⁸ and 2) actively practising Muslims compared to not actively practising Muslims.⁹ This means that the two categories mentioned under point 2) are found both among the *Barelwi oriented* and the *Deobandi (and .JI) oriented*. However, the way of practising differed within the two groups, as the following diagram illustrates.

Places for attendance of Qur'an classes in relation to level of Islamic practice and group affiliation:

| | <i>Barelwi oriented</i> | <i>Deobandi and JI oriented</i> |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <i>Actively practising</i> | In the mosque | In the mosque or Private |
| <i>Not actively practising</i> | In the mosque | With parents, relatives or none |

It should be noticed that among the *Barelwi oriented*, both the actively practising and the not actively practising sent their children to Qur'an classes in the mosque. The reason for this practice was a combination of religious orientation, the location of residence and the educational and socio-economic background of parents (cf. Chapter 1 and 3). *Barelwis'* ritual orientation made them more attached to the mosques, including the Qur'an schools.

The mosques have been found to play quite diverse roles in the lives of children. They fulfilled religious, educational, cultural and social functions.¹⁰ These functions of the mosque are also found in Islamic countries and in countries with a Muslim majority (cf. Barton 1986; Farah 1992). Some aspects seemed, however, to gain importance or change character in the minority situation. The conclusion may be drawn from the discussion in this and the following sub-section that the mosques both increased and lost importance. The mosques (and their '*ulama*') increased their influence within the Pakistani community for two reasons. First, they functioned as an educational arena contributing to the Islamic education of children. Many parents felt their children were given a much stronger religious training than the one they remembered from their own childhood in Pakistan. One father gave the following reason for this increased weight put on religious nurture: 'Dread, maybe, or that we think we have to influence them now while they are small. Later on they will not listen to us.' The greater unpredictability of the future in a minority situation added a new dimension to the seemingly general attitude of a father's concern for his children. According to Geaves, the stress on giving the children an Islamic nurture may be interpreted as a parental attempt to counteract what is regarded as the negative influence of Western society generally and schooling particularly (Geaves 1996:62).¹¹

Secondly, the mosque gained importance as a social and cultural arena, primarily for men, but to a lesser extent also for women. This tendency has been attributed partly to the lack of a family network (cf. Chapter 1 and 3), partly to the 'rediscovering' of Islam. Women's role in this process has been attributed to their traditional dominance of the informal family sector including their support for the formation of educational institutions (cf. Shaw 1994:49). Women themselves were rarely to be seen at *Juma* prayers and were absent from celebrations like *Id ul-fitr* (all space available was occupied by the men). However, all mosques had special arrangements for women, like *dars Qur'ans* at weekends. At some celebrations, such as the celebration of Sufi masters' death anniversaries or receiving guests from abroad, such as famous *qawwali* singers, women gathered in their part of the mosque. Video transmission (or at least sound transmission) from the ceremony in the main room was common. Women expressed a need to meet for their own sake (seeking religious nourishment) and to share experiences concerning the upbringing of their children. Some said they liked to come to the mosque and take their small children with them 'so that they can be familiar with coming and increase their Urdu competence'. The gatherings in the mosque offered a sociality they missed in their local communities, especially those living in the suburbs. These gatherings for women contained the same combination of formal and informal elements as the Qur'an classes for children, characterised as an integration of religious, cultural and social aspects.¹²

The increased demand for organising special gatherings for women derived from two sources. First, a pressure from active, often well-educated, female Muslims who did not accept being deprived of their 'rights' (cf. Parker-Jenkins and Haw 1996:24). They argued that, according to the Qur'an and the *Hadith*, women have the same right to education as men (cf. Parker-Jenkins 1995:37; Sarwar 1994:199). Secondly, the male leadership of the mosque constantly had its attitudes challenged by 'gender-conscious' non-Muslim visitors. The mosques increased their 'good reputation' in mainstream society by referring to specific educational and social arrangements for women. The consequence of both internal and external 'pressure' was greater female participation than was common in Pakistan.

Because of what has been called the increased social importance of mosques in a minority situation, mosques could not avoid becoming arenas for conflicts. These seemed to be of a religious, political or personal character.¹³ In the choice of where to send children for Qur'an classes, and in the selection

of teachers to come to their home, such conflicts have been noticed as influencing parents' choice. Children, however, never mentioned internal conflicts within mosques or conflicts between mosques.

Privatisation as a normative or liberal strategy within late-modernity

Pakistanis in Oslo who did not want to be involved in religious or political conflicts at mosques, but still wanted to perform prayers occasionally (e.g. at festivals), found it difficult to be present anonymously. This led to the opposite of what has been described above as the increased role of the mosques. It led to a privatisation of Islamic practice. The minority situation increased the consciousness of being an insider or an outsider within the Pakistani Muslim community. A 'middle way position' was more difficult to practise in Norway than in Pakistan. Whether these experiences should be understood within the background of the minority situation (as parents seemed to think) or as typical for late-modern societies generally, is disputable (cf. 8.2). This study found that the tendency to increased privatisation of Qur'an classes might be understood *both* as a normative and a liberal strategy. Privatisation may be identified as a typical expression of 'modern religiosity', i.e. a weakening of institutionalised, official religiosity and a strengthening of 'invisible religion' (cf. Berger and Luckmann 1995; Botvar 1993; Luckmann 1973; Lundby 1986; Skeie 1995; Winsnes 1985). Although religiosity amongst Pakistani Muslims in Oslo cannot be called 'invisible' in the same way as the religiosity of secularised Christians (cf. 8.3), some of the alternative ways of organising Qur'an classes may be regarded as steps in the same direction.

The increased tendency to organise Qur'an classes independently of the mosques was interpreted as an expression of modernity in the sense that 'localised influences drain away into the more impersonalised relations of abstract systems' (Giddens 1990:140). In the context of this study, it means that whereas 'going to the mosque' to attend a Qur'an class was often part of a local community activity (something neighbouring children did together), attending a private Qur'an class in a suburban area was part of a sector of life connecting children to a worldwide (abstract) Muslim community. However, this *was* hidden from schoolmates or neighbouring peers.

This study gives evidence for a diversified, even contradictory, set of attitudes within this mode of 'late-modernity'. Both actively practising and not actively practising Muslims were found among the families who had chosen a private solution concerning Qur'anic teaching for their children. This implied

that 'not going to the mosque' did not indicate a specific religious attitude. Among some respondents, private Qur'an teaching meant that high priority was given to this education both with regard to costs and time invested. According to some parents, the investments were not wasted because they gave a good result, i.e. recitational skills and the internalisation of Islamic values.

Among others, private lessons were chosen as a minimum investment. It caused less inconvenience for children because it could be adjusted to other activities, like school and sport. This attitude was found both among parents with a liberal religious attitude and among more normative Muslims. Being a good Muslim was still an aim of the upbringing but it was somewhat detached from the knowledge of Qur'anic recitation. Some of the more normative Muslims (e.g. the *Deobandi* or the *Jama'at-i Islami* oriented) defended this attitude by underlining a moral standard as more important than rituals.

Islamic institutional development in Oslo is in accordance with recommendations given by some Muslim writers concerning growing up in a multicultural secular society: 'As far as the Muslim community is concerned, its duty is to see that children get habituated to prayer and the recitation of the Qur'an from childhood. Parents have to undertake that job and the community has to arrange for weekend schools. Mosques should be utilised for this purpose' (Ashraf 1993:11).

Neither of the two tendencies identified above can be regarded exclusively as minority phenomena but rather as typical of a late-modern, urban way of life. The same tendencies are found in cities in Pakistan and in other parts of the Muslim world, especially among the upper and middle classes. Among the upper classes, private Qur'an lessons have always been common because rich people could afford to pay for a good teacher. However, the privatisation of Qur'an classes is now becoming more common amongst the middle classes too, especially in cities like Oslo. The motivation for this may, as we have seen, be either to secure a qualitatively good training for children, or to make teaching and learning as convenient as possible so that Qur'an classes do not hinder participation in other social activities. The minority situation strengthens a development that is generally discernible in late-modern societies: the tendency to institutional formation *and* to individualisation.

8.4 Experience, reflexivity and potential religiosity

By focusing on Islamic nurture as part of the general socialisation process,

everyday aspects of Islam have been emphasised. An everyday approach to Islam may be regarded as a deconstruction of Islam as a doctrinal system (cf. 8.2). However, it should rather be interpreted as being in accordance with the Islamic concept of religion (*din*) as encompassing all aspects of life (Hjärpe 1979:8).¹⁴ The establishment of meaning and social belonging was in the previous section presented as the main content and function of children's Islamic religiosity (the role of Islam in their lives). The term *religiosity* as applied in this section, is not introduced as an alternative religious attitude, but as covering a *layer of personal commitment within Islamic practice*. Personal commitment is not equivalent to individual religiosity, but an increased element of individuality is discernible compared to a religious practice exclusively based on tradition (cf. Knott and Khokher 1993:599). (The relationship between individuality and personal commitment will be discussed below.)

The religiosity found among children is called *potential religiosity* because it manifested itself occasionally, i.e. it was activated or provoked in specific situations and under certain conditions.¹⁵ Potential religiosity was documented within all three theoretical complexes (see Chapters 5, 6 and 7), but the analysis of children's attitudes to prayer and their experiences of praying practices in particular, conveyed the existence of such a layer (cf. the sub-section Purification, Praying and Ablution in 5.2). Neither religious practice nor a personal commitment were taken-for-granted, but were experienced, negotiated and reflected upon through communication with 'others' within the Muslim community and with non-Muslims (cf. 8.3). The minority situation combined with the religious plurality and secularity of mainstream society increased their reflexivity, whereas the following two aspects of Islam in particular affected their religiosity: *formal Islamic education* and *the bodily groundedness of Islamic practice*.

Through formal Islamic education children had learned a verbal and bodily language that could be activated when needed. The formal educational elements of Islamic nurture facilitated in this way an Islamic religiosity. As an example, the variety of incentives for prayer, classified in Chapter 5, was summarised as a need to approach God and be purified after periods of impurity in a moral, bodily or religious sense.¹⁶ An aspect of personal commitment was attached to this need for 'a new beginning', but it was not expressed as individual feelings but through the already learned religiosity, i.e. ritual prayers. The content of this religiosity will be explored by relating the previous anthropological analysis of prayer, dress codes, food and fasting

(Chapter 5) with Islamic doctrine on purity and impurity (Arabic: *taharah* and *najasah*; Urdu: *pak* and *napak*).¹⁷

In the same way that *taharah* is understood both as spiritual and physical purity, *najasah* comprises impurity / uncleanness in a moral and a physical sense. When different types of *najasah* are listed, impurities of a permanent and impermanent character are found (Badawi 1979: 4-5). According to some Islamic jurists (e.g. the Maliki School of Law), no living animal is impure in itself, nor are the saliva, sweat, or tears of a living animal impure in themselves (ibid.).¹⁸ Likewise, wine, alcohol and other intoxicants are by some jurists declared to be impure in the moral not physical sense. Whether the impurity is attached to the substance itself, or to the emotional or moral aspects of the act or the state, is also widely discussed in the case of the prostatic fluid (*madhy*) which is usually a result of sexual excitement. In some Islamic texts it is clearly uncontrolled sexuality which causes impurity, not the fluids themselves (ibid.). These, and related aspects of Islamic doctrine, show that the bodily groundedness of Islam, expressed by the respondent children in this study, was fully in accordance with an Islamic understanding. Children's potential religiosity was established and expressed within an Islamic anthropology and cosmology (cf. Berger 1990 [1967]: 25).

The practices of prayer, dress codes, food and fasting have been found to be deeply related to bodily and sensory experiences of children and especially related to the constitution and expression of gender. Some of these practices were closely linked to the formal educational aspects of Islamic nurture, like reading the Qur'an. One of the key findings is the recognition of the bodily foundation of the purity-impurity complex as decisive for establishing Islam as 'meaningful' to children (see above). To the respondents, Islam was not primarily doctrinal beliefs or duties to perform, but a way of life and a body of knowledge grounded in bodily and sensory experiences. This type of groundedness is, according to the theory generated in this study, one reason for the persistence of Islam as a source for identity, and for there being less permeability of religious boundaries in comparison with ethnic ones, as documented by Jessica Jacobson's study (1995; 1998). The transference of cultural and religious traditions, like reading the Qur'an, prayer, dress codes, food and fasting, was not only part of informal socialisation, but the character of Islamic nurture, especially its bodily and sensory aspects, was decisive for children's identity management (cf. the next section).

Potential religiosity has in this study been conveyed as a situationally dependent layer of personal commitment within an everyday Islamic ritual practice. 'Religiosity' within a modern Western context has been defined as 'attitudes and actions of the individual', although religious faith and behaviour are socially contextualised (Lundby 1985:62). 'Religiosity' within an Islamic context, as discussed above, should rather be defined as *personal commitment expressed through collective ritual forms*.

8.5 Integrated plural identity

A grounded theory

Implicit in the definitions of *social* and *cultural identity* presented in the Introduction to this study, was the assumption that 'identity' by definition is *personal* identity. However, since the formation, development and management of personal identity is unthinkable without interaction with 'others', there will always be a relationship between individual and collective elements of personal identity, i.e. what is specifically individual and what is shared with others. Identity is not only formed by social processes but 'it is maintained, modified, or even reshaped by social relations' (Berger and Luckmann 1991[1966]: 194). Identity, as expressed by Taylor, is not defined in terms of individual properties but places us in some social space (Taylor 1991:311). Geertz's studies from Java, Bali and Morocco illustrate the necessity of a social contextualisation of concepts like person, identity and the self. Through his analyses of how people defined themselves as persons and how they represented themselves and others through symbolic expressions (words, images, institutions, behaviours), the diversity of meanings of identity and the differences between the three societies were clarified (Geertz 1993 [1983]; Tesli 1990:466).

Grounded in the empirical data and the above analysis, the theory of 'integrated plural identity' has been generated and will now be presented in more detail.¹⁵ The theory of 'integrated plural identity' is embedded in the hermeneutical paradigm of this study as presented in Chapter 2, i.e. in a semiotic understanding of reality (Berger and Luckmann 1991 [1966]: 195; Geertz 1973:5, 29; Ricoeur 1971; 1981, 1993). Within this paradigm reality is regarded as socially constructed and man is accordingly an animal 'suspended in webs of significance he himself has spun' (Max Weber quoted in Geertz 1973:5). An interpretation of these significances is a presupposition for understanding. Likewise 'identity' is not a given entity to be discovered, but a symbol to be interpreted.

The concept 'integrated plural identity' is chosen to express the dual character of Norwegian Pakistani children's identity: its changeable, fluid, shifting character on the one hand and its stability or integration on the other, i.e. a dynamic stability. It is a plurality within which there may even exist 'configurations' which are inconsistent with each other (the concepts of configurations and plurality will be elaborated below). The term 'integrated' is used in the same way as the term is applied when 'integration' is contrasted with 'assimilation', e.g. integration of immigrants as distinct from assimilation of immigrants. Integration is also conceptually related to the concept of integrity, which will be explored below (cf. Lundby 1985:92). 'Integrated plural identity' implies the retention of plurality, diversity, instability, fluidity and contextuality without the individual losing a sense of 'self'. The concept of 'self' is used here following Ricoeur who distinguishes between 'self' as *idem* (sameness) and as *ipse* (selfhood) (Ricoeur 1990; 1993). The analysis will also draw on ideas of the Dialogical Self developed by Taylor (1991). The next sub-section will explore Ricoeur's concept of person as the hermeneutical basis for the following discussion of personal identity.

The narrator and the narratives

The concept of 'self as *idem*' indicates sameness in the meaning of being identical with, whereas 'self in the sense of *ipse*' implies no assertion concerning some unchanging core of the personality' (Ricoeur 1990:2). Ricoeur emphasises the ongoing conversation with 'others' and with 'oneself as another' in the process of identity development and management. The focus is not on who I am, but on who is asking this question [of identity]. Ricoeur says: 'Oneself as Another suggests from the outset that the selfhood of oneself implies otherness to such an intimate degree that one cannot be thought of without the other,' (ibid. p.3). The concept of *narrative identity* is applied by Ricoeur to characterise the communicative and interpretive aspect of the identity process (ibid.113ff; cf. Meijer 1995). Personal identity is formed by an on-going conversation with 'oneself as another', i.e. a dialectic between *sameness* and *selfhood*, and by situating personal identity in history. As expressed by Meijer in her interpretation of Ricoeur: 'One's biographical story restores unity by bringing coherence into diversity, continuity into changes of one's life, including the changes in oneself (Meijer 1995:94).

Pakistani children's reflections on who they are will, in a Ricoeurian sense, be regarded as more crucial for their identity management than the

answers given in different contexts.²⁰ As narrators of multiple narratives they exposed a diverse set of cultural and social identities, but on a personal level this diversity or plurality did not threaten their personal integrity. They were the narrators or the interpreters of their own lives. As long as the children communicated a multiple set of identities (Pakistani, Muslim, Norwegian, Norwegian-Pakistani, Punjabi, Asian etc.) to a diverse set of 'others', they 'narrated' themselves through an interpretation process and in this way developed their selfhood (cf. Meijer 1995:94).

However, in this study, children's interpretive reflexivity has not been understood solely as intellectually based, but as 'embodied', i.e. grounded in bodily and sensory experiences (cf. the previous section). This finding is not attributed to the young age of the respondents but to an epistemology which situates our understanding of human beings in their way of 'doing' things (cf. Vertovec 1992:x). For example, when the children did not possess the appropriate terms for describing aspects of Islam in their lives, it was not necessarily a 'lack' of knowledge, but because their knowledge was of a different kind, i.e. embodied. In Taylor's words: '...our bodily know-how, and the way we act and move, can encode components of our understanding of self and the world' (Taylor 1991:309). In this study the bodily and sensory aspects of Islam and Islamic practice as part of everyday life have been emphasised as decisive components in children's management of identity (cf. the concept of *habitus*, Bourdieu 1977:72).

Modern plurality and integrated selfhood

Throughout the study children's multiple repertoire of identities has been discussed, and references and comparisons have been made to a diversified set of concepts and theories. This sub-section will relate some of the previous discussions directly to the generated theory of 'integrated plural identities'. In an article on 'identity options', Waltman underlines the normality of what she calls 'multiple identity' with '...evidence showing that individuals have a more or less extensive repertoire of identity options which they call upon or engage with in different contexts and for different purposes' (Waltman 1983:70). Waltman's views on multiple identities are partly supported by the findings of this research but with a stronger emphasis in this study on elements of integration (cf. below). Even closer to the concept of 'integrated plural identity' is the term 'multiple cultural competence' as this term has been applied by Jackson and Nesbitt in their book *Hindu Children in Britain* (1993). The Hindu children referred to exhibited their 'multiple cultural competence'

by moving 'unselfconsciously from one milieu to another' (ibid.p.175). The findings of my research on Muslim children also provide evidence for the same kind of multiple cultural competence, which in this study has been related to their management of plural identities.

The study has argued that expressed feelings of being divided between 'cultures' can be traced back to conceptual traps, e.g. interpreting cultural varieties as grounded in ethnic distinctiveness or in the notion that there are distinct, coherent cultures (cf.Baumann 1996). The concept of 'integrated plural identity' is closely related to other concepts often used within this field of research, i.e. 'shifting identities' (Baumann 1996:5), 'situated identity' (Weinreich 1989:46), 'creolisation' (cf. Hannerz 1987:546; 1992: 264; Eriksen 1994:33) and 'hybridity' (Werbner and Modood 1997:1-26). 'Shifting identities' is avoided as a term because it might give the impression of a shift from one definite identity to another, thereby losing the fluidity or interrelatedness of the different 'identities' (cf. the discussion of modern plurality). The term 'situated identity' may, however, be adequate - and fruitful - if it implies that the situation or context is decisive for those aspects of the plural identity which will be dominant, rather than a total shift of identity.

The concepts of 'creolisation' and 'hybridity' imply that something new is created based on different cultural sources, often as 'cultural mixing or crossovers' (Werbner 1997:1). This study concludes, however, by stating that even if creolising tendencies and cultural hybridity are found among Pakistanis in Oslo, as well as in mainstream society, Pakistani children's plural identities cannot be characterised as being 'new'. They are not clearly distinct from 'old' identities represented, for example, by their parents on the one side and their ethnic Norwegian classmates on the other. One of the main characteristics of Norwegian Pakistani children is, on the contrary, their competence in 'code switching' according to the situation (cf. Nesbitt 1995). 'Code switching' is here used in the sense of switching the code of communication, which does not necessarily imply shifting identity or having developed a 'creolised identity'. The theory of 'integrated plural identities' was generated as distinct from the alternatives discussed above. The concept 'multiple cultural competence', as developed by Jackson and Nesbitt (1993:174ff), may theoretically be connected to all of the identity concepts mentioned above. This study, however, argues for connecting this concept of competence to the concept of 'integrated plural identity' especially. Emphasis was placed on children's competence in 'moving unselfconsciously from one milieu to another' (ibid.p. 175) without

having to shift identity, as was often wrongly presumed by non-Hindu 'outsiders'. The same kind of assumptions were found in the study of Muslim children in Oslo (cf. the discussion of conceptual 'traps', Chapter 4.), and can be ascribed to a lack of understanding of modern plurality as distinct from traditional plurality (see 8.2).

The concept of 'configuration' has been used in exploring the idea of 'integrated plural identities'. By 'configuration' was meant the inter-relatedness of a set of notions, a coherent meaningful pattern but on a much more limited scale than used by Benedict or Kluckhohn (cf Hultkrantz 1973).²¹ Among a group of people, and in each individual, there exist parallel 'configurations', which may even be mutually inconsistent when compared to each other. Hultkrantz' findings, from research among North American Indians, state that 'configurations' may be mutually inconsistent without causing disintegrated identities (1973:118). The concept was introduced in this study to emphasise that plural identities do not imply a 'mosaic' or a 'mishmash' identity at the empirical level, i.e. in the individual's experience of 'self'. A 'mosaic' identity would imply that each part was clear cut, with sharp edges, but with no meaning without being part of the total pictorial pattern. A 'mishmash' identity would imply that each part had mixed in a way that made the 'parts' unrecognisable and the 'whole' appear as confusion (cf analysis of the 'mishmash' metaphor by Hull 1991). The concept of modern plurality is, however, superior to the concept of configuration in the sense that *the move between* configurations is of greater interest than the configurations themselves.

The move between configurations is attached to another finding of this study, presented across the analytical structure of the work, i.e. the constitution of children's plural identity *in the conversation*, not in the reaction of 'the other' (as was the point made by G.H.Mead *et al*, Taylor 1991:310-314). Taylor says: 'The self neither Fe-exists all conversation, as in the old monological view; nor does it arise from an introjection of the interlocutor; but it arises within conversation, because this kind of dialogical action by its very nature marks a place for the new locutor who is being inducted into it' (Taylor 1991:312). The plurality and the integrated nature of children's identity can be ascribed to their participation in on-going multiplex conversations. Their 'selves' are not shaped as a reaction to these conversations but they are developed in the dialogues (cf. Taylor's concept 'the dialogical self' and Ricoeur's understanding of 'narrative identity').

8.6 Conclusion

This study has argued that religious and cultural traditions were mainly transmitted informally through parents and other significant others at home and in the mosque. Norwegian Pakistani children were socialised into becoming Muslims and Pakistanis and they did not distinguish clearly between the two identities. Likewise they were socialised into being Norwegian through formal schooling, media influences and inter-action with non-Muslim friends.

The bodily and sensory aspects of Islamic nurture and the interwoven nature of Islamic and Pakistani cultural elements were found to dominate primary socialisation at home and in the mosque and contributed to the shaping of their embodied knowledge. Another decisive aspect of Islamic nurture was formal educational training through the Qur'an schools, either in mosques or in private homes. Children had to learn to pray, to read the Qur'an, to purify, dress properly and respect food restrictions. The combination of formal educational elements and informal bodily and sensory aspects, especially related to gender socialisation, strengthened the role of Islam in children's lives, as part of an everyday practice and as potential religiosity.

Islamic practice, or the knowledge of Islamic practice, as part of their everyday lifeworld, contributed to the development of their social and cultural identities, regardless of type of mosque affiliation or degree of practice. A reference to the combination of informal socialisation at home and the institution of Qur'an schools does not only respond to the first research question concerning the 'how' of the transmission process. This institutional combination of *strengthened socialisation* offered the children arenas for social belonging and 'construction of meaning'. The meaning of their lifeworld was not fixed and static, and not exclusively bound to these arenas, but highly attached to them. *Socialisation* at school and through the media and non-Muslim friends *extended* their cultural identity by broadening their perspectives without implying a de-socialisation of Islamic values. Formal schooling was no threat to their Islamic and Pakistani identity but rather irrelevant to it. In the development of *integrated plural identities* Islamic nurture was both part of that plurality and had an integrating function through its role in primary socialisation and through its special combination of formal educational and informal bodily and sensory elements. Islamic identity was not only one among many aspects of their plural selves, but there was a plurality within their Islamic identity.

Instead of regarding Norwegian Pakistani children as victims of cultural clashes, they have been found to display multiple cultural competence and strong reflexivity by being exposed to diversified communication with 'others' and to be engaged in a continuous interpretation of their own positions.

¹ The expression 'not marked by' is used to indicate that such references may occasionally be found in Norwegian public debate, explicitly or implicitly (cf. the debate connected to the school reform, Reform 97).

² According to the same research report, active church members in Norway amount to 12% compared to 21% in Great Britain and 24% in Germany.

³ Some of the internal discussions within the Norwegian State Church (e.g. the homosexuality debate) are signs of this increased plurality within the majority.

⁴ Another matter is the individual experience of 'metaphysical homelessness' by being exposed to the innate fragility of all socially constructed worlds (Berger 1999 [1967]: 22).

⁵ As part of the methodological introduction to the study, the concept of culture was partly deconstructed (following Abu-Lughod 1991, Baumann 1996, Clifford 1983). Studying Islam in an everyday perspective may also be regarded as a deconstruction of (doctrinal) religion. The study is, however, not aiming at a postmodern ideological deconstruction of Islam.

⁶ Cf. Lundby's distinction between 'attachment' and 'social belonging' (Norwegian: tilknytning og tilhørighet), Lundby 1985:81. A presupposition for 'social belonging' is a feeling of being part of a social entirety.

⁷ Cf. the discussion of the social foundation of religiosity related to or independent of 'local places' (stedsbundetbet i.f.t. stedsuavhengighet), *ibid.* p. 87.

⁸ The terms *Barelwi oriented* and *Deobandi oriented* are used to avoid a fixed categorisation of Barelwis and Deobandis. Cf. Chapter 2 for a further presentation and discussion.

⁹ The last term is preferred instead of 'not practising' because all respondents were practising Muslims even if their level of activity varied. 'Not practising Muslims' has the evaluative connotation of not being a Muslim. Cf. the idea of regarding Islam as orthopraxy more than orthodoxy (Smith 1957:20).

¹⁰ Mosques also played a political role in Norway, internally by influencing members and participating in the Islamic Council of Norway (Islamsk Råd i Norge, IRN) etc., and externally as part of broader European and/or South-Asian movements and networks (Geaves 1995; Lewis 1994; Vogt 3994).

¹¹ This study diverges, however, from Geaves with regard to parents' attitudes to formal schooling (cf. 7.3).

¹² Religious practices such as wearing amulets (*ta 'wiz*), seeking healing or blessing (*barakah*) through *pirs* etc. are common among some layers of the Pakistani community (Ahlberg 1991; Lien 1993). These are customs transmitted especially by women from rural parts of Pakistan. In Pakistan these practices mainly take place in arenas other than the mosque, for instance at the tombs of *pirs*. Since this possibility is not present in Oslo, the mosques may gain in importance as a folk religious arena for women. This would be an interesting topic for research.

¹³ Cf. Ballard 1994, Geaves 1995 and Lewis 1994, for an analysis of group processes in diaspora and typical patterns of the organisation of personal attachments in South Asian religious leadership. Cp. Mageli 1997:26ff on the issue of personal rule entailing factionalism and patron/client-ism in the style of Indian political leadership among women.

¹⁴ The broad concept of *din* includes *iman* (content of faith, doctrines), *'ibadat* (the religious duties) and *mu 'amalat* (transactions of financial, social and political aspects of life).

¹⁵ Cf. Botvar's understanding of religiosity as a phenomenon along a scale from low to high instead of either-or (Botvar 1993:30).

¹⁶ Cp. Winsnes' challenge to the sociology of religion to study 'specific situations that "provoke" reflections on the meaning and aim of life' as an alternative to a church-oriented approach to the study of religion (Winsnes 1985:181, my translation).

¹⁷ The following is based on Al-Bukhari 1977; Badawi 1979 and on discussions with *imams* in Oslo.

¹⁸ The same point of view was expressed by Saima's father when Saima referred to a situation from school when some Muslim boys, to the irritation of their teacher, uttered 'Ugh' whenever they saw a picture of a pig. The non-Muslim teacher and the Muslim father agreed that pigs were creatures of God and should be respected (although pork meat was *Karam*).

¹⁹ I am thankful to Robert Smith for helping me in conceptualising this idea.

²⁰ Their participation in the research project might in itself strengthen this narrative dimension. Cf. Nesbitt (1998:110).

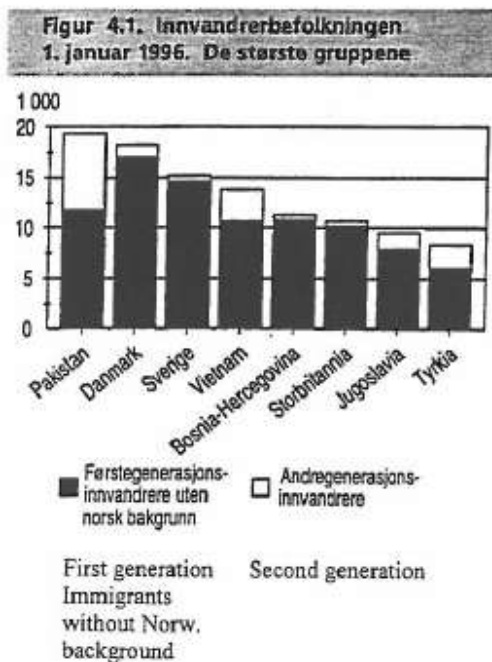
²¹ Hultkrantz defines 'configuration' as 'an arrangement, a system, where the totality is more than the sum of its parts' (Hultkrantz 1960:51). He also refers to Kluckhohn's development of Benedict's monistic concept of one configuration

to each culture into a plurality of 'cultural configurations' or 'implicit or suppressed premises that tend to be characteristic of a certain group'. This study is not concerned with the use of the concept of 'configuration' in relation to such superior theoretical discussions of 'culture', 'cultural pattern' or 'configuration of culture'. Rather, it finds the term 'configuration' useful to express some essential aspects of the 'parts' of an 'integrated plural identity', viz. that each 'part' is in itself 'a meaningful whole'. Cf. the discussion of 'mosaic' and 'mishmash' identity.

Appendix A

Overview of immigration population in Norway

(Vassenden, 'Statistics Norway, Statistical Analysis', 20, 1997:39)



Appendix B

Pakistani dominated Islamic organisations in Oslo

Information given: Sectarian affiliation, year of establishing in Norway (may differ from year of registering), address and number of members in 1995/1996.

Pakistani Sunni mosques

Central Jama'at Ahl-e Sunnat (Barelwi), 1976, Urtegt. 11, 5,500

World Islamic Mission (Barelwi), 1984, Åkerbergvn. 28A, 4,000

Ghousia Muslim Society (Barelwi), 1989, Sverresgt. 4, 1,500

Bazme-Naqshband (Barelwi, Sufi Naqshbandiyya), 1989, Borggt.7, 590

Idarah Minhaj ul-Qur'an (Barelwi), 1990, Calmeyersgt. 15B, 2,500

Anjuman-e Islahul Muslimeen /Madni Masjid (Tablighi), 1977,
Malmøgt.3, 450

Markaz Tanseem ul-Muslimun, (Tablighi), 1989, Sofienberggt. 2B

Islamic Cultural Centre (Jama'at-i Islami), 1974, Tøyenbekken 24, 1900

Shia Mosques

Anjuman-e Hussaini, 1974, Rathkesgt.9, 715 (majority Pakistanis)

Tawheed Islamic Centre, 1994, Enebakkvn.36B, 426, (a few Pakistanis)

Appendix C

Kinship Terminology

The sources are key informants, and the terminology has been cross-checked with Barker (1967).

Transcriptions are in accordance Ferozsons' Urdu-English Dictionary (rev.ed.) and McGregor (1972).

When it comes to terminology for uncles and aunts, only terms for fathers and mothers, and brothers and sisters are given, not their husbands and wives. The terminology for those uncles and aunts are the respective female or masculine forms, e.g. the mother's brother's wife: mami; the mother's sister's husband: khalu.

| | Father's side | Mother's side |
|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Grandparents | dada/dadi | Nana/nani |
| Uncles | Taya (older brother) | Mamun |
| | Chacha (younger brother) | |
| Aunts | Phuphi (father's sister) | Khalah |
| Cousins | Taya zad bha'i/bahan | Mamun zad bha'i/bahan |
| | chacha zad bha'i/bahan | Khalah zad bha'i/bahan |
| | phuphi zad bha'i/bahan | |

Appendix D

An overview of respondent families

Family A

| | |
|---|--|
| Household members | Parents + 4 children |
| Names /age of children | Khalid (m 12), Saima (f 9), sister (6), brother (3) |
| Relatives in Oslo | Father's sister (<i>phuphi</i>) + family |
| Parents' region of origin | Punjab |
| Urban/rural | Urban |
| Extended family in Pakistan | Grandparents on both sides, uncles, aunts, cousins |
| Family abroad | An uncle (<i>khalu</i>) in Kuwait |
| Father's arrival in Norway (age) | 1975 (20) |
| Mother's arrival in Norway (age) | 1978 (18) |
| Relationship between parents | She is daughter of his cousin |
| Educational background | Father: BSc, Mother: Sec.schooi |
| Language competence of parents | Urdu speaking at home Norwegian: father - very good, mother —weak |
| Pattern of settlement in Oslo | From inner city to suburb area |
| Working pattern of parents | Father: permanently employed + extra job Mother: home-worker |
| Health situation | Mother: rheumatic pains |
| Social networks | Family, friends, mosque, neighbourhood, father's job |
| Mosque affiliation | <i>Islamic Cultural Centre</i> |
| Links to Pakistan | Extended family, house |

Family B

| | |
|---|---|
| Household members | Parents + 6 children |
| Names /age of children | Ali (m 17), Anwar (m 13), Omar (m 10), brother (6), sister (5), brother (3) |
| Relatives in Oslo | Father's sister (<i>phuphi</i>) + family Mother's brother (<i>mamun</i>) + family |
| Parents' region of origin | Punjab |
| Urban/rural | Rural |
| Extended family in Pakistan | Grandparents on father's side, uncles, aunts, cousins, sons from father's first marriage |
| Family abroad | An uncle (<i>chacha</i>) in the USA |
| Father's arrival in Norway (age) | 1971 |
| Mother's arrival in Norway (age) | 1976 |
| Relationship between parents | Cousins |
| Educational background | Father: primary school |
| Language competence of parents | Panjabi speaking at home Norwegian: father - weak, mother —no |
| Pattern of settlement in Oslo | new flat in inner city |
| Working pattern of parents | Father: permanently employed Mother: home-worker |
| Health situation | Father: stomach/asthmatic problems Mother: rheumatism? |
| Social networks | Neighbourhood, family, father's job |
| Mosque affiliation | <i>Central Jamaat E-Ahl Sunna</i> |
| Links to Pakistan | Extended family, house |

Family C

| | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| Household members | Parents + 3 children |
| Names /age of children | Bushra (f 12), Jamshed (m 9), brother (5) |
| Relatives in Oslo | Father's brother (<i>chacha</i>) + family Father's aunt (<i>anti</i>), her son + family |
| Parents' region of origin | Punjab |
| Urban/rural | Urban |
| Extended family in Pakistan | Grandmother on father's side (<i>dadi</i>), uncles, aunts, cousins on both sides |
| Family abroad | Cousins in England |
| Father's arrival in Norway (age) | 1975 (20) |
| Mother's arrival in Norway (age) | 1982 (26) |
| Relationship between parents | Cousins |
| Educational background | Father: technical training Mother: lower se. school |
| Language competence of parents | Urdu and Panjabi at home Norwegian: father — very good, mother —weak |
| Pattern of settlement in Oslo | Inner city |
| Working pattern of parents | Father: from a variety of jobs via unemployment to his own firm Mother: home-worker |
| Health situation | Father: stress symptoms |
| Social networks | Family, local community, sport club |
| Mosque affiliation | No specific; <i>Sunni</i> Muslims |
| Links to Pakistan | Extended family |

Family D

| | |
|----------------------------------|---|
| Household members | Parents + 4 children |
| Names /age of children | Yasmin (f 14), Igra (f 9), Tariq (m 9), brother (3) |
| Relatives <i>in</i> Oslo | Father's three brothers (<i>taya</i> , <i>chacha</i>) + family |
| Parents' region of origin | Sindh |
| Urban/rural | Urban |
| Extended family in Pakistan | Uncles, aunts, cousins on both sides |
| Family abroad | Mother's sister (<i>khalah</i>) and brother (<i>mamun</i>) in England |
| Father's arrival in Norway (age) | 1970 |
| Mother's arrival in Norway (age) | 1979 (23) |
| Relationship between parents | Their fathers were friends |
| Educational background | Father: university degree Mother: teacher |
| Language competence of parents | Urdu at home Norwegian: father — very good, mother — very good |
| Pattern of settlement in Oslo | From inner city to suburb area |
| Working pattern of parents | Father: different jobs, studies Mother: home-worker/part-time job |
| Health situation | Father: heart disease Mother: strong fatigue after giving birth |
| Social networks | Family, close friends |
| Mosque affiliation | <i>Shia</i> Muslims |
| Links to Pakistan | Extended family, house |

Family E

| | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| Household members | Parents + 4 children |
| Names /age of children | Rifat (f 17), Rashid (m 14), Nasir (m 13), Aisha (f 9) |
| Relatives in Oslo | Father's cousins with families |
| Parents' region of origin | Punjab |
| Urban/rural | Rural |
| Extended family in Pakistan | Uncles, aunts, cousins on both sides |
| Family abroad | Father's brother (taya) in England, remote relatives in Canada, USA, Italy, Denmark, The Arabic Emirates |
| Father's arrival in Norway (age) | 1972 |
| Mother's arrival in Norway (age) | 1979 |
| Relationship between parents | Remote relatives, same <i>rat</i> |
| Educational background | Father: upper sec.+two years training Mother: upper sec. school |
| Language competence of parents | Urdu at home, Panjabi speaking background Norwegian: father — very good, mother —weak |
| Pattern of settlement in Oslo | From inner city to suburb area |
| Working pattern of parents | Father: from a variety of jobs to social security Mother: home-worker/part-time job |
| Health situation | Father: serious back problems |
| Social networks | Family in Norway and England, Close friends, mosque |
| Mosque affiliation | <i>Islamic Cultural Centre</i> |
| Links to Pakistan | Extended family |

Appendix E

Interview guides

A. Formal semi-structured interviews with children (translated from Norwegian)

(This interview guide was applied for interviewing all children. The form of questioning was adjusted to suit their age. More interviews were needed to cover all the themes, and some of the same questions were posed at different occasions during the fieldwork period; cf. Chapter 2)

1 Introduction

1) Presentation (name, age, family relations, school etc.)

Small-talk about the interview situation, recording, previous visit

2 Description of the course of events

2) Please describe what you

do - on an ordinary day - in

an ordinary week

– at weekends

- what have you done/will you do today?

- at school: What are your favourite subjects/activities?

– What kind of RE do you attend?

– leisure activities? friends?

- Qur'an school?

– at home: activities? TV? duties?

3 Reflections/comparisons

- Does your everyday life in any way differ from the life of other young people/children? How?

- Do you have Norwegian friends? Other nationalities? Do you participate in other activities than they do (and vice versa)?

- Are there any differences among your friends/class mates when it comes to attitudes, values etc.?

4 **Religious practices**

Please tell me about how you and your family perform/celebrate/practise

- Prayer
- Qur'an schools
- Islamic festivals (which ones?)
- Fasting
- Other rituals/practices
- Male-female relations (only raised when interviewing young people)
- Dress **codes**
- Food regulations
- Who teaches you how to practise Islam? (the role of the mother/the father/the Qu'ran schoolteacher/others)

5 **Knowledge of Islam**

(These questions were often part of focused interviews)

- Islamic beliefs and teachings - Islamic practices
- Food regulations
- Dress codes
- Gender roles
- Sunni, Shia, Sufi
- Sectarian differences

6 **Islamic values**

- Which Islamic values do you appreciate most?
- In what ways do you find Islam different from other religions/worldviews?

7 **Feelings, opinions, attitudes towards Islam as religion and tradition**

- What is positive? How?
- Less positive? How?
- Negative? Difficult?

8 **Social belonging – identity**

- Pakistan — Norway: relatives? friends? visits?
- Where do you prefer to stay? Why?
- Which languages do you speak?

- Self-ascriptions (What do you feel you are, Pakistani or Norwegian? How? Muslim?)
- Ascription by others

9 Plans for the future

- Schooling
- Profession/job
- Marriage
- Where to live

B Formal semi-structured interviews with fathers (focus on the father and their role of raising children)

1 Introduction

- Presentation
- Small-talk about the interview situation, the recording (if used), the previous visit etc.

2 Individual presentation

- Where do you come from in Pakistan? Tell me about your background (education, job)
- Do you have relatives there?
- When did you arrive in Norway?
- Why did you emigrate? Why Norway?
- When did you get married? With whom? Arranged marriage?
- How many children do you have?
- What is positive in your life?
- What worries you?

3 Islamic affiliation/membership group

- Do you belong to a specific branch/group/mosque?
- Have you been affiliated/a member for a long time?
- Why just this group?

4 Islamic practice

- What does practising Islam mean to you?
- Do you pray at home and/or in the mosque? How often?
- Have you performed *Hajj*?
- Have you visited holy places in Pakistan? Which ones? Why?

- Do you regularly read the Qur'an? Why? Why not?
- Which festivals do your family celebrate during a year?
- Would your practising of Islam be different if you lived in Pakistan?

5 Cultural traditions

- Music, songs, story telling?
- Food? Fasting?
- Dress codes?
- Weddings?
- Rituals by birth?
- Funerals?
- Which of these traditions are important to you and your family?
- Is it possible to differentiate between religious and cultural traditions?
- Which traditions/customs would you miss if they disappeared? Why?

6 Cultural Transmission and Islamic Nurture

- Do your children know how to read the Qur'an, perform some Islamic duties, have a proper moral code?
- Who is responsible for their upbringing? Your wife? Yourself? Or both of you?
- Do you feel you need some support in the upbringing of your children? - By the school, the mosque, relatives in Pakistan or in Norway?
- When thinking of the future life of your children, are there aspects of Norwegian society you find negative? Positive?
- Do you want your children to remain in Norway?
- Do you want them to marry here or in Pakistan? Will you arrange their marriages?
- How do you think their life would have been different if they had grown up in Pakistan?

7 Self-ascription

- You have lived more than 20 years in Norway. Do you feel like a Norwegian or a Pakistani?
- Which answer do you think your children would give to that question?
- Please give me three keywords for what it means to be a Pakistani.
- Do you regard yourself primarily as a Pakistani or a Muslim?
- Which answer do you think your children would give to that question?

8 Possible turning points of the interview:

- Details of rituals (for example Juma prayer), performances, traditions

- Detailed descriptions of courses of events, for example job situations
- Friends and family in Oslo
- Health issues
- Financial links to Pakistan
- Unemployment
- Languages
- Politics

C Formal semi-structured interviews with mothers

(focus on the mothers as those raising children)

1 Introduction

- Presentation
- Small-talk about the interview situation, the recording (if used), the previous visit etc.

2 Background

- Where do you come from in Pakistan?
- Do you have relatives there? Extended family? Rural/urban? Rich/poor?Caste?
- What kind of education do you have?

3 Marriage

- At what age did you get married? -
- Arranged marriage? With whom?
- Did you know your husband before the wedding?
- Please tell me about the wedding.

4 Immigration

- When did you move to Norway?
- Did you have any relatives here?
- Friends?
- Describe your first period in Norway.

S The present situation

- How do you feel now compared to the first years after immigration?
- Describe your present situation (job, health, number of children, social life)
- Which languages do you speak?
- Do you feel that you have any language problems?

6 **Practising Islam**

- Which festivals do your family celebrate? How?
- Do you perform prayers? When? How? Where?
- Do you read the Qur'an? When? How? Where?
- Describe rituals connected to birth etc.

7 **Dress codes**

- Is it important for you to wear Pakistani clothes? Why/why not? What about your daughters?
- Do you wear *dupatta* or *burga*? On which occasions? Why?

8 **Food**

- Who does the shopping?
- Where do you or your family go shopping?
- Who prepares the food?
- What kind of food?
- Do you only prepare *Halal* food?

9 **The role of the mother as upbringer**

- What are your most important tasks as a mother?
- Are there any differences between your tasks and the tasks of the father?
- How do you participate in the Islamic education of your children?
- What is your and your husband's relation to the formal schooling of your children?

10 **Visits to Pakistan**

- How often do you visit Pakistan?
- What do these visits mean to you?
- How often do your children go to Pakistan?
- What do these visits mean to your children?

11 **The future**

- What are your dreams for the future for yourself and your children?
- What are your worries for the future?

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