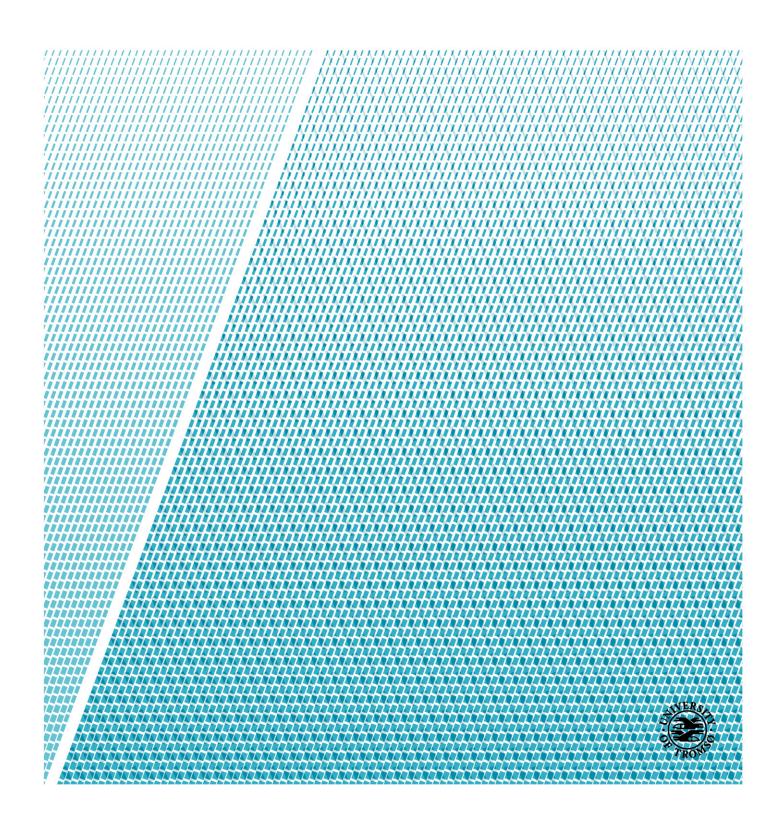## UiT
THE ARCTIC UNIVERSITY OF NORWAY

Department of Tourism & Northern Studies

Anime in Tourism

An Analysis of Norwegian Anime Enthusiasts' Motivation for Conducting Anime-Induced Travels to Japan

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Isabella M T Steine

Master's Thesis in Tourism, May 2019

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Abstract

Anime is a part of Japan's biggest growing markets outside of Japan (JNTO, n.d. a; AJA, 2018). What attracts overseas consumers to watch anime ranges from everything to having coherent and interesting storylines, Japanese culture elements (Thelle, 2009; Yegulalp, 2018) to unique styles and drawings (JNTO, 2011; Yegulalp, 2018).

Anime can also be connected to tourism and is more specifically referred to as anime pilgrimage or anime tourism, where fans conduct travels to locations featured in anime films or television shows (Okamoto, 2015; Beeton, 2016). What motivates fans to conduct anime travels to Japan can be due to several different reasons. According to Kasai and Hsu (cited in Kirillova, Peng & Chen, 2019, p. 269) the more one is invested in the world of anime, the more one is likely to conduct related travels to Japan. In regard to the latter, Kirillova, Peng and Chen (2018) discusses that the enthusiasts can be divided into three different types, namely otakus, anime fans and anime audience. The otakus are characterized as individuals that are immersed and often perceived as obsessed with the world of anime according to Lin and Tu (cited in Kirillova et al., 2018, p. 269). Anime fans are individuals that are not as immersed in the anime world as otakus, but still possess some knowledge regarding the matter, while the anime audiences are characterized as individuals that watch anime occasionally and are not as consumed by the anime world (Kirillova et al., 2018).

In this thesis, I have chosen to focus on Norwegian anime enthusiasts' motivations for conducting anime-induced travels to Japan. I have discussed their motivations regarding theories revolving around film 'imaginaries', anime tourist behaviour and motivation, as well as what characterizes an experience as regarding the *Experience Realms* model (Pine II & Gilmore, 1999). Motivators that were individually answered by the Norwegian enthusiasts will in addition also be discussed and analysed. Such motivators revolved around 'travelling out of interest', 'travelling to meet individuals with the same interests', and to 'experience anime theme parks'. The Norwegian anime enthusiasts' answers have also been analysed and discussed in terms of which anime enthusiast category they fit the description of.

Key words: anime, anime tourism, anime pilgrimage, tourism motivation, imaginaries, behaviour, experience realms, anime category types

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Anime is a phenomenon from Japan. The phenomenon is a shortened word for animation, which is defined as cartoons in Japan (Thelle, 2009; Yegulalp, 2018). They are renowned and admired for their unique stories and layouts (JNTO, 2011; Yegulalp, 2018), in addition to being diverse. What makes anime unique from standard Western cartoons, which often points towards younger audiences as its target market, is that anime is for everyone (Yegulalp, 2018; Thelle, 2009). Such as books and films, anime has different kinds of genres that are suitable for children, teens and adults alike. The genres range from fantasy, horror, action, comedy, drama, and so on. For the younger audiences, anime shows such as *Pokémon*, *Doraemon*, and *My Neighbor Totoro* is very popular, while anime such as *Death Note, Attack on Titan* and *Inuyasha* are more directed at mature audiences (Yegulalp, 2018).

Not only can anime be seen on screen, but also several other places in Japan. These places, or items can be food products, drinking bottles, bulletin boards, and even certain trains are decorated with images from anime (Japan Experience, 2019). In Tokyo, there are also specific areas dedicated to anime lovers, filled with anime merchandise, *cosplay*, and *manga* stores (JNTO, 2013). *Cosplay* is referred to as an activity where dressing up as fictional characters is a common practise (Okamoto, 2015; JNTO, 2011), whereas *manga* is characterized as comic books in Japan (Japan-guide, 1996-2019; Gisle, 2018). Like anime, *manga* is also diverse and have series for both adults and children. The stories in *manga* books are also often long and drawn in black and white (Gisle, 2018).

The two most popular areas to find cosplay, manga and merchandise stores are named Akihabara and Otome Road, which is an area that specializes in products for female anime fans, while Akihabara is more directed towards the male anime population (JNTO, 2013; Federica, 2016).

1.1 Anime and export

Anime is a part of popular culture, which also consists of other entertainment and fashion elements in Japan (JNTO, n.d. a), such as manga and cosplay (JNTO, 2011). In Japan, popular culture is one of the most influential exports (JNTO, n.d. a). Among the Japanese popular culture elements, as mentioned, anime is known for its unique styles, layouts and drawings

(JNTO, 2011; Yegulalp, 2018), which have gained attention outside of Japan (JNTO, 2011). In addition, anime series are also popular for its storylines and contents, where stories are often told throughout the whole length of series instead of ending after one episode such as in many Western animation television shows. This gives anime shows more depth and room for character development and is a factor that often attracts non-Japanese viewers. Anime also attract overseas watchers due to its inclusion of elements from Japanese culture, such as Japanese cutlery, buildings and traditional attires (figure 1.1, 1), food (figure 1.1, 2), and customs (Yegulalp, 2018; Thelle, 2009). As Anne Thelle (2009), states, the fascination for Japanese culture often starts with anime.

1.1 Figure 1: Outfits from *Spirited Away*

1.1 Figure 2: Ramen noodle meal from *Naruto*

Source: (Ghibli Wiki, n.d.)

Source: Bushman, 2017 (Crunchyroll.com)

When it comes to statistics, The Association of Japanese Animations in Japan discusses that Japanese animation is a growing export. From 2013 to the year 2016, the anime market has been gradually growing. The growth was not prominently in the anime market in Japan, but internationally. While the Japanese anime market had an increase of 1.23 trillion yen in 2016, the overseas market had a growth of 767.6 billion yen the same year. Streaming platforms such as Netflix have helped this growth, especially when they started to include renowned anime inspired by manga books on their websites (AJA, 2018).

As mentioned, manga is described as Japanese comic books and is like anime, popular overseas. There are manga books for every age group, with different genres like anime. Why manga relates to the latter is due to the fact that anime creators are often inspired by manga before creating an anime. *Sailor Moon*, *Naruto*, *Attack on Titan*, and *One Piece* are examples of such manga books (Gisle, 2018; Japan-guide, 1996-2019).

The Association of Japanese Animations also discuss the growth of anime overseas in terms of rights to air anime. These rights are signed contracts between Japan and other countries,

such as China and South Korea, and continents such as Europe and USA. In their overview *Japanese Animation in Overseas Markets*, the US is shown to have signed approximately 200 contracts, while Europe have signed approximately 80 (AJA, 2018).

In the summary, they also discuss that 2016 is the year when there was a change in the film industry in Japan, due to the release and success of anime such as *Your Name* and *In This Corner of the World*. Due to the latter, anime and manga also emerged as subcultures of Japanese popular culture (AJA, 2018).

1.2 Choosing a topic

According to Beeton (2016), visiting film locations is often enough to motivate film fans to conduct film-induced travels, as the film location itself is often a tourist attraction. Okamoto (2015) argues that the main motivation for conducting anime-induced travels is to visit locations that have been featured in anime television shows or films. Are such drives enough for Norwegian anime enthusiasts in wanting to conduct anime travels to Japan? In this thesis I will seek to uncover tourism motivation in regard to this, where my research question is:

"*What motivates Norwegian anime enthusiasts to conduct anime pilgrimage travels to Japan?*"

The reason why I chose to focus on Japan and anime travels is because I am very interested in Japan's extraordinary popular culture such as anime, manga and cosplay (JNTO, 2011). My fascination for the Japanese popular culture started however first with anime.

During my middle school years, Japanese anime films would sometime air on Norwegian television. At first the anime art style and storylines were a foreign concept to me, and I found it very strange. However, as time went by and the same films were aired over and over, I started to get curious about these films. Why were they so different from American and Norwegian cartoons, and why were the storylines so different? The film that left the biggest impression on me was Studio Ghibli's film production *Spirited Away*, which was released in 2001 (Yegulalp, 2019; Filmweb, n.d. b). I found the film in a local store and decided to buy it, due to my curiosity regarding the new and strange phenomenon. After my purchase I discovered that Studio Ghibli had released several other films (Yegulalp, 2019), and thus I decided to dig deeper into the world of anime. Soon after, I became interested in more of Japan's popular culture, such as manga and cosplay.

Because of my strong interest for Japan's popular culture, I wanted to explore this in relation to tourism in Japan in this research project. With a growth of Japanese animation in the world (AJA, 2018) and scarce literature regarding motivation studies of Norwegian anime enthusiasts, an investigation regarding this would be fruitful for research. Due to limited motivation literature, my thesis can also help shed light on this matter and contribute to Norwegian research studies regarding anime tourism.

1.3 Thesis outline

As an outline for the residual of my thesis, I will present the latter in seven more chapters. In the next chapter I will provide a background description of the phenomenon anime pilgrimage and present the phenomenon in terms of its history and tourism destinations in Japan that are related to anime. As this phenomenon is distinctive for Japan and Japanese popular culture, it can be a foreign concept for many outside of Japan, especially for non-fans of Japanese popular culture. Therefore, a background description will provide information about the phenomenon.

In chapter three, literature and theories relevant for the thesis and research question is presented. This literature includes tourism motivation, behaviour, and 'imaginaries' related to film and anime tourism. In addition to these theories I have presented the *Experience Realms* model by Pine II and Gilmore (1999), which characterize experiences and revolve around concepts from the experience economy.

Chapter four contains a presentation and discussion of the methods I chose to use for this thesis. In the beginning of the chapter, a brief presentation of the methods I chose is introduced, as well as the reason for this selection. Thereafter I have provided a presentation of my research process in terms of how I gathered my empirical data, as well as validity and reliability as well as ethical considerations. In addition to these components, challenges I faced when conducting research and gathering empirical data is also briefly presented.
I have also provided a presentation of my own experiences regarding anime pilgrimage and tourism in Japan in an auto-ethnography chapter following chapter four. In this chapter I have described my feelings

my experiences and what type of anime experiences I conducted.

Chapter six and seven presents the findings of my empirical research. Whereas chapter six presents my empirical findings in a systematic order, chapter seven analyses and discusses the findings in more detail. In chapter seven, the data is also discussed in regard to my research question and theories chosen for this thesis.

In the last chapter, the thesis is summarized and includes concluding thoughts regarding the research question and research.

Chapter 2: Background Description

Traditionally, pilgrimage is depicted as something sacred with religious connotations, where the goal is to visit places that are considered sacred or holy, such as buildings, cities or places located in nature. In Christianity it has been common to conduct pilgrimage travels to Bethlehem or Jerusalem, which are places with a connection to Jesus Christ. Pilgrimage journeys are also present in other religions as well, such as Islam, Buddhism and Hinduism. In Islam, it is common to conduct journeys to Mecca. Buddhism and Hinduism are more commonly associated with pilgrimages to religious temples (Kværne, 2018).

2.1 Anime pilgrimage

During the last twenty years, a new and perhaps more modern form of pilgrimage have transpired in Japan. In Japanese these pilgrimages are called *anime seichi junrei*, which translates to anime pilgrimages. Anime pilgrimage can be defined as a subcategory of otaku tourism that is often conducted by anime fans of the male sex, where the general idea is to visit real-life locations that have been featured in favourite anime films and television shows. The term anime pilgrimage is not that widely known around the world and is a rather new concept, only dating back to the 1990's. It did not get much recognition until 2008, seemingly when the concept gained more attention in the media. To fans of anime however, the terminology was not foreign (Okamoto, 2015).

Anime pilgrimage is a form of tourism that can relate to film tourism, due to its similarity with travelling to places or sceneries that are used in real life television shows or films (Okamoto, 2015; Beeton, 2016). Examples of such locations other places in the world are *The Hobbit* film set in New Zealand, the *Heartbeat* film set and *The Warner Bros. Studio Tour* in England (Beeton, 2016).

Anime pilgrimage, or anime tourism can also be connected to '*contents tourism*'. The word '*contents tourism*' derives from the Japanese word *kontentsu tsūrizumu* and revolves around stories and its characters; instead of focusing on the film or literature format itself (Seaton, 2015; Beeton, 2016). It is related to media-induced tourism such as literature and film tourism in Japan (Okamoto, 2015), where manga and anime also are included. Some examples of

'contents tourism' experiences are exhibitions or museums dedicated to authors or producers, such as The Ghibli Museum in Japan, and events directed at fans of cosplay according to Beeton, Yamamura and Seaton (cited in Beeton, 2016, p. 32), an example being Comiket or other smaller cosplay events spread across Japan (Okamoto, 2015). Later in this thesis I will explain the concept of cosplay further.

2.1.1 History of anime pilgrimage

Anime pilgrimage became a practise during the 1990's, especially around the time when the renowned anime series *Sailor Moon* was aired. During the shows airing, *Sailor Moon* fans would visit locations used in the series, such as Hikawa Shrine in Tokyo, as discussed by Fujiyama, p. 218 (cited in Okamoto, 2015, p. 22).
According to Hashimoto, p. 178-180 (cited in Okamoto, 2015, p. 22) the beginnings of anime pilgrimage also dates to the 1990's, when fans of the light novel *Mirage of Blaze* travelled to the festival named Uesugi Festival.

2.1.2 Existing information about anime pilgrimage

In Japan there are several locations that relate to anime film and television. JNTO, short for the Japan National Tourism Organization is an official tourism company in Japan. Their website contains information about everything from historical sites, nature and festivals, to restaurants and dining places (JNTO, n.d. b). In addition, JNTO offers an overview of several different anime locations in Japan, as shown in the two-page *Practical Travel Guide – Animation in Japan*. The guide is designed as an informative overview of the most popular anime locations in Japan and includes information such as opening hours, prices, and websites for the anime locations, as well as where and how to find them. The first page of the guide features museums spread across Japan, such as the Fujio Museum, The Osamu Tezuka Manga Museum, and the renowned Ghibli Museum (JNTO, 2013). Although the Fujio Museum and The Osamu Tezuka Manga Museum features manga, it can still relate to anime tourism, as anime is often inspired by manga (Japan-guide, 1996-2019).

In regard to manga locations in Japan, manga cafés are also popular places to visit. These cafés offer manga fans a wide variety of manga books and are designed as libraries. The manga books can be read at the cafés in exchange of a payment ranging from 300 to 1000 yen

(Japan-guide, 1996-2019). In the Norwegian krone, 300 yen is approximately 20 Norwegian Krone, while 1000 yen corresponds to approximately 80 Norwegian Krone.

The Ghibli Museum

The Ghibli Museum is perhaps one of the most popular places in Japan connected to the anime industry. It is a museum created by Hayao Miyazaki, who is a famous award-winning animation film producer in Japan (JNTO, 2013). Miyazaki together with Studio Ghibli have produced renowned animation films since 1985, such as *My Neighbor Totoro, Grave of the Fireflies*, *Princess Mononoke* and *Spirited Away* (Yegulalp, 2019).

The Ghibli museum is designed with elements from the Ghibli films and features different experience rooms. In some of the experience rooms, visitors can experience how the Studio Ghibli anime films are made. Other experiences at The Ghibli Museum include showing short animated videos, and elements such as statues recreated from the popular films (Ghibli Museum, Mitaka, 2001-2019a). Sometimes the museum features exhibitions related to the Ghibli films, such as *Delicious! Animating Memorable Meals*. The latter was an exhibition with time duration of approximately one year and contained meals that are featured in the famous Ghibli films (Ghibli Museum, Mitaka, 2001-2019b).

Anime shopping

In addition to museums, the *Practical Travel Guide – Animation in Japan* contains information about anime-shopping areas, anime events and theme parks, such as J-World Tokyo and Fuji-Q Highland. Both locations are theme parks that features popular anime series such as *Gundam* and *Evangelion* as found in Fuji-Q Highland, and *Naruto*, *One Piece* and *Dragon Ball* as found at J-World Tokyo (JNTO, 2013).

Anime-shopping areas in the animation guide includes Nakano Broadway, Akihabara and Otome Road, where anime fans have the opportunity to indulge themselves in anime and manga merchandise, and anime costumes.

The anime events presented in the brochure contains Animelo Summer Live and Tokyo International Anime Fair among other things. The latter is an event where products related to anime is displayed, while the Animelo Summer Live is a concert event where the performers

sing songs from anime series. In addition to these events, the brochure also includes World Cosplay Summit, which is a cosplay event that has participants attending from twenty different countries (JNTO, 2013).

The Anime Tourism Association

JNTO is not the only organization promoting anime pilgrimage tourism in Japan; furthermore, there is the Anime Tourism Association. This organization offers a guide to 88 different anime pilgrimage sites spread throughout Japan, from Hokkaido in the north to Okinawa prefecture in the south. Some examples of anime locations are Kuki City that are used in the popular anime *Lucky Star*, Kamiichi Town located in Toyama prefecture, which has been featured in *Wolf Children*, and Toshima-ku in Tokyo used for the anime *Durarara* (Anime Tourism Association, 2019a) or more specifically the district Ikebukuro (Anime Tourism Association, 2019d).

In addition to the *Guide of 88 Japanese Anime Spots*, Anime Tourism Association offers anime fans tours, where they visit popular anime locations. As of now, tours for 2019 has yet not been announced, but anime tours have been arranged in earlier years such as in 2017 and 2018. Their tour information is not translated to English, so the tours are perhaps more aimed at Japanese anime fans than International fans (Anime Tourism Association, 2019b).

Universal Studios

In addition to the *Practical Travel Guide – Animation in Japan* and the *Guide of 88 Japanese Anime Spots*, Universal Studios Japan can also be connected to anime. Although the Universal Studios itself is not an anime destination, it can still be connected to anime tourism. The destination is a commercial off-location amusement park (Beeton, 2016) that offers their visitors experiences for fans. Although they do not include real-life scenes from anime series, they offer their visitors experiences related to anime. The studio is varied in attractions and include rides and experiences from Hollywood films such as *The Minions*, *Jurassic Park* and *Harry Potter* (Universal Studios Japan, n.d. a), but they also offer their visitors anime experiences such as seasonal shows and attractions. One Piece Premier Show and 4D show regarding the anime *Sailor Moon* are two examples (Universal Studios Japan, n.d. b).

Since some of their exhibitions are seasonal, the shows are only at the Universal Studios for a limited time. In 2015, the studio launched an exhibition of the famous anime *Attack on Titan*, where they featured statues of some of the most popular characters. The showcase lasted from the beginning of 2015 until May the same year (Canaes, 2015).

2.2 Chapter summary

With its relatively new concept only dating back to the 1990's, anime pilgrimage is an interesting practise. As presented, the phenomenon is very similar to film tourism, where the idea is to travel to locations that has been featured in television or films (Okamoto, 2015; Beeton, 2015).

In terms of providing fans with information about anime locations, the Japan National Tourism Organization and the Anime Tourism Association does this in their guides. The Japan National Tourism Organization's guide consists of destinations such as anime and manga museums, popular shopping districts, theme parks and cosplay events (JNTO, 2013), while the Anime Tourism Association's tourism guide works as an overview over popular anime locations spread across Japan (Anime Tourism Association, 2019a).

In addition to the guides presented above, Universal Studios Japan also provides anime tourists with anime experiences such as attractions or seasonal shows (Universal Studios Japan, n.d. a; Universal Studios Japan, n.d. b).

Chapter 3: Literature Review

In this chapter I will present literature and theories I will use when discussing and analysing my empirical data in this thesis. This literature will shed light on my research question *"What motivates Norwegian anime enthusiasts to conduct anime pilgrimage travels to Japan?* from a theoretical perspective. The theories are presented as literature of anime pilgrimage tourism, whereas I will present theories related to tourism motivations and behaviour. In addition, I have also touched upon concepts of tourism 'imaginaries' as seen in both film and anime tourism, as well as concepts from the *Experience Realms* model.

3.1 Thoughts related to theories chosen

All theories and concepts chosen for this Master Thesis will together contribute a useful analytical framework in investigating the research question. The literature has been carefully chosen as theories that will give answers to the research question the best way and provide fruitful discussions in my analysis.

The theories chosen about tourism motivation include articles about anime enthusiasts' motivation for conducting anime-induced travels to locations in Japan presented by Takeshi Okamoto (2015) and Ksenia Kirillova, Cheng Peng and Huiyuan Chen (2018). Both articles focus on nationalities in Asia, but the findings presented are interesting to use for my thesis. It will give my research findings more insight on anime tourism motivator literature and give better arguments when discussing my case.

The theory presented regarding tourist behaviour is also chosen as a theory for my studies, as tourist behaviour is closely connected with tourism motivation (Crompton, 1979). It is literature I believe will explain and discuss my empirical findings more thoroughly, as my findings involve tourist behaviours at anime locations.
Although my findings and Okamoto's (2015) findings revolves around different nationalities, the on-site behaviour amongst both the Japanese and Norwegian anime fans is seemingly the same. Therefore, I believe Okamoto's (2015) findings will be very useful when discussing my empirical data, as well as provide a fruitful discussion to my case findings

I also chose to use general theories about tourism motivation and behaviour such as *pull, and push factors* as presented by John Crompton (1979). I believe that by using general theories to shed light on my research question, I can provide a more detailed analysis about anime tourists' motivation for conducting anime travels.

The general theories also include theories regarding the concept of imagination in tourism, where I chose to use literature presented by several writers, as I believe it would strengthen my analysis and show the concept of imagination in tourism from several points of views.

In my analysis and discussion, I will also connect the Norwegian anime enthusiasts' motivation with the *Experience Realms* model, as presented by Pine II and Gilmore (1999). Although the theory relates to what characterizes an experience (Pine II & Gilmore, 1999), I will provide my own thoughts and relate the concept with my empirical findings. In this chapter however, I will first present the theory in terms of the different realms, such as entertainment, esthetics, educational and escapism (Pine II & Gilmore, 1999). I will come back to that later in this chapter however, and firstly present motivation theories.

3.2 Motivation

Tourism motivation is a wide phenomenon that can provide many different understandings and definitions, as every individual is different, and each possesses their own thoughts regarding what motivates them to travel. Motivation or the drive to travel is however a part of tourist behaviour and is often related to push and pull factors (Crompton, 1979). The push factors revolve around why tourists want to conduct vacations and are according to Crompton (1979) related to socio-psychological drives. Socio-psychology relates to elements of a social and psychological nature (Merriam-Webster, 2019a), which can be connected with social psychology. The latter revolves around individual factors such as behaviour, personality and motivations, which are affected by social groups (Merriam-Webster, 2019b).

Pull factors can be characterized as factors that help tourists decide on their travel destination and is useful when investigating why tourists travel to their desired locations. These factors are named the 'cultural' category, which includes motives such as novelty and education factors, and are not related to individual elements unlike the push factors (Crompton, 1979). In his investigation, Crompton (1979) conducted unstructured interviews with thirty-nine participants, where the main topic was motivations for travelling, resulting in the push and

pull factors. In my investigation about motivations anime fans have for conducting travels related to anime in Japan, the results show answers related to both push and pull factors. By referring to Crompton's (1979) theory about travel motivation, it will describe these push and pull factor results in greater detail and encourage a discussion on this matter. As I will elaborate on further in this thesis, the push and pull factors that fits best with Crompton's (1979) theory is novelty, interaction with others in a social setting, to relax or simply go on a holiday, and escape from everyday life. In this part of the paper however, I will theoretically describe these socio-psychological and 'cultural' factors, which will be a part of my discussion and analysis later in this thesis.

Novelty is a 'cultural' pull factor and refers to something new and adventurous and is a factor that revolves around undergoing new experiences. However, the experience can be something tourists already have knowledge about beforehand. This way, novelty is realized when tourists undergo the tourist experiences and experience it for themselves first-hand (Crompton, 1979). In Crompton's (1979) research, travelling to new destinations seemed to be sought after by the novelty tourists investigated, as they were shown to go to leisure destinations that they had no knowledge of.

Regarding push factors, social interaction seemed to be a popular push factor when conducting leisure travels (Crompton, 1979). This motivation, however, was according to Crompton's (1979) research respondents, not realized until after vacations. In this push factor, interacting with strangers with other beliefs and opinions to converse about each other's understandings on certain matters was emphasized. Other respondents also emphasized forming new relationships during their travels. Interaction was shown to happen with other tourists however, as interacting with the local community was not always an easy task (Crompton, 1979).

Motivations such as the desire to relax or enjoy a holiday, is also a push factor I believe suits well with my empirical findings. This factor emphasizes relaxation, but not necessarily as a physical action, but instead as a psychological state. In regard to the latter, the relaxation push factor refers to conducting travels where the tourists participates in activities that relate to their hobbies and interests, leaving tourists exhausted after conducting travels (Crompton, 1979). Choosing such travels is described in Crompton's (1979) investigation as seemingly not being planned before conducting leisure travels amongst relaxation tourists, but instead

when travelling, due to extra time during holidays (Crompton, 1979). Such discoveries are interesting to discuss in terms of my empirical findings, as I believe the Norwegian anime enthusiasts are driven to conduct anime-induced travels due to their hobbies and interests in the anime phenomenon and is not something they do on a 'whim' when visiting Japan. Related with relaxation is the push factor that revolves around escape. According to Crompton (1979), this push factor is a popular motivator for travelling. By 'escaping' everyday life, tourists get to experience something new, and to get a break from mundane life such as work and everyday routines (Crompton, 1979).

Crompton's (1979) investigation revealed that there were no specific destinations that would give tourists the ultimate escape, but the travel destination had to be another location than where the tourists lived.

In a way the escape push factor can relate to tourism 'imaginaries' theories, which is a concept I will come back to later in this chapter.

3.2.1 Anime tourism motivation

It seems that motivations for conducting anime-induced travels is a popular theme that is often discussed in anime tourism literature, which I believe would be fruitful when discussing my empirical findings. Okamoto's (2015) research showcases empirical research about anime tourists' drive to conduct and participate in anime pilgrimage travels, as well as tourist behaviour. As mentioned, the main motivation for anime-induced travels in his paper is to visit locations that have been used in anime series or films (Okamoto, 2015). The latter is like film tourism motivation, where Beeton (2016) discusses that the practise of visiting locations featured in films is often enough motivation in wanting to conduct travels related to television and films.

In order to conduct anime travels, Okamoto (2015) discusses that obtaining information about anime locations are crucial. He also relates motivators with what information is already available about anime pilgrimage locations online and distinguishes between two different types of information. The first one relates to information obtained through word-of-mouth or from the Wide Web and is named 'acquired knowledge'. The second information factor revolves around 'known' knowledge, which is information that the individual already has knowledge of. Information can also be obtained through travel agencies, anime companies, or tourism associations, regarding anime-induced travels (Okamoto, 2015).

Much like Okamoto (2015), Kirillova et al. (2018) also showcases empirical findings in regard to tourism motivation. Their research goes over a broader spectrum however, where they present Chinese anime enthusiasts' motivation in regard to conducting anime travels to Japan. The results showed several different motivations, whereas merging fantasy with everyday life, feeling a sense of belonging in society, the wish to escape, and leisure travel, fit best with my empirical findings (Kirillova et al., 2018).

Between these results, the wish to merge a fantasy world with reality seemed to be one of the highest-ranking factors, which makes anime enthusiasts different from other foreign visitors traveling to Japan. The storylines in anime are also often, set in fictional worlds even though the locations featured are found in real life (Kirillova et al., 2018).

As mentioned by Kasai and Hsu (cited in Kirillova et al., 2018, p. 269), how immersed one is with the world of anime, however, can relate to how strong the wish to conduct anime travels to Japan is. Kirillova et al. (2018) differentiates between three different characterizations of anime enthusiasts, which each are involved differently in the anime world, such as otakus, the anime fan, and the anime audience. Otaku fans are described as devoted followers of Japanese popular culture elements such as manga, video games, anime, and anime collectibles (Azuma, 2009). Lin and Tu (as cited in Kirillova et al., 2018, p. 269) describe the otaku as individuals that are often obsessed with anime, which possess a higher involvement in the anime world, and that consumes anime on an ordinary daily basis.

The second anime consumer type refers to anime fans. The anime fans are not as immersed in the world of anime as otakus are as Lin and Tu (cited in Kirillova et al., 2018, p. 269) discusses, but have a certain amount of knowledge regarding anime, especially for some series and films. These anime enthusiasts are also usually active in communities and fandoms. The general anime audience are described as fans that are not consumed by the anime world and do not possess the same big desire to merge fiction with reality. These enthusiasts are also described as individuals that watch anime occasionally, but not quite as much as the anime fans (Kirillova et al., 2018) and otakus, as according to Lin and Tu (cited in Kirillova et al., 2018, p. 269).

The merging of fantasy and reality motivator included desires such as re-living specific scenes from anime series or movies or to show dedication for favourite anime by conducting 'sacred' anime pilgrimage travels. In addition to merging fantasy and reality, conducting 'sacred' anime pilgrimage travels can be connected to the category of identity and devotion

(Kirillova et al., 2018). Since otaku fans are often more involved in the anime industry, as according to Lin and Tu (cited in Kirillova et al., 2018, p. 269) they are seemingly more motivated to conduct anime pilgrimage travels (Kirillova et al., 2018). Otakus are also shown in Kirillova et al. (2018) and their research as valuing a merging of fantasy with reality the highest.

Imaginations about their favourite anime works, also seems to be a motivator. Anime tourists also seem to emphasize the sense of feeling like a part of a social group and to develop oneself when conducting anime travels (Kirillova et al., 2018).

Kirillova et al. (2018) also presents the wish to escape as an anime travel motivator, but discuss the motivator as being connected to the wish of merging fiction with reality, as anime enthusiasts' wish to merge fiction with reality is what makes them different from regular foreign visitors traveling to Japan (Kirillova et al., 2018). Escape as in getting away from everyday life as presented by Crompton (1979), was not a motivator revealed in Kirillova et al. (2018) and their research.

Motivations related to leisure, holiday, and being interested in Japanese culture are also factors investigated in Kirillova et al. (2018) and their research but scored very little points with the Chinese anime fans. Due to this reason, the motivator was removed. The authors argue that the reason for this is due to the fact that the Chinese anime fans' desire is to meet individuals with the same interests as themselves and to purchase anime merchandise, rather than to relax and do sightseeing as one would often do on leisure holidays (Kirillova et al., 2018).

Regarding my findings about Norwegian anime fans' motivations for traveling to Japan and conducting anime-induced travels, this motivator is of special interest, and is therefore a factor I will investigate further in my discussion.

Cosplaying is also investigated as a motivator (Kirillova et al., 2018). In their investigation, Kirillova et al. (2018) describes cosplay as a social interaction where participants have the opportunity to interact with other anime enthusiasts, which is a big motivation for Chinese anime enthusiasts when it comes to traveling to Japan. In their research, some Chinese cosplayers also showed an interest in cosplaying due to wanting to feel linked to their favourite characters, which can in a way function as an invisible interaction between the

cosplayer and the fictional character. It can also be connected with fantasy and fiction in Kirillova et al. (2018) and their research.

3.2.2 Anime tourist behaviour

As Crompton (1979) discusses, tourism motivation is a part of tourist behaviour. From his empirical findings, Okamoto (2015) reveals different behaviour forms that anime pilgrims usually show when undergoing anime pilgrimage travels. These forms are characterized as otaku behaviour, but Okamoto (2015) also connects the latter with other anime enthusiasts' behaviour, as they are often similar in nature. Amongst the behaviour forms presented, six forms where revealed. However, for my thesis, only two of them are relevant. These forms revolve around photographing and dressing up as your favourite anime characters (Okamoto, 2015).

Taking photographs is perhaps the most common form for otaku behaviour. Okamoto (2015) describes this behaviour as photographing sites that have been featured in anime, often with the same angles as shown in the series or films. Some anime fans even bring anime figurines on their pilgrimage trips and place them in front of or by the sites before photographing them. Other anime pilgrims match their photos with scenes from anime, similar to a comparison (Okamoto, 2015).

Dressing up as favourite anime characters is defined as cosplaying (Okamoto, 2015; JNTO, n.d. c), and is put together by the two words of 'costume' and 'play' (JNTO, n.d. c). Cosplayers are usually found at events directed at cosplayers and can be everything from small to large events. The large events are described as big conventions (Okamoto, 2015), an example being the World Cosplay Summit in Japan (JNTO, n.d. c; JNTO, 2013). The smaller events are usually held by municipalities and are situated in smaller sacred areas. At such events, cosplayers are normally not allowed to roam outside of the given areas (Okamoto, 2015). I will explain this further in chapter five of this thesis, where I will also present my experience of visiting anime and cosplay locations in Japan.

3.3 Characterization of experiences

As mentioned in the beginning of this chapter, this model characterizes an experience in terms of entertainment, education, escape and esthetics realms. In addition to the latter realms, the experience model contains four factors such as whether individuals are absorbed, immersed, actively or passively participating in an experience (Pine II & Gilmore, 1999).

3.3 Figure 1: *The Experience Realms*

Photograph by: Pine II and Gilmore (1998), (hbr.org)

Entertainment is the first realm in the *Experience Realms* model, where individuals are absorbing an experience passively (Pine II & Gilmore, 1999). By being absorbed, an individual's mind is occupied, such as when watching films or television series (Pine II & Gilmore, 1999). The latter is according to Pine II and Gilmore (1999), described as an entertainment factor in the *Experience Realms* model. Other factors revolve around attending concerts or other live performances, or reading books, where individuals undergoing such experiences are described as spectators. The individuals are referred to as spectators, due to their 'lack' of influence on the entertainment experiences (Pine II & Gilmore, 1999).

In addition to the entertainment realm, education is also a realm described by Pine II and Gilmore (1999) as being absorbed by individuals, either through physical activity or by engaging the mind. Engaging the mind and learning something new, often occurs during the absorption of experiences aimed at intellectual learning, while participating in physical

activities often happens during the absorption of physical exercising events (Pine II & Gilmore, 1999).

Even though educational experiences are usually absorbed, individuals are actively participating, which makes it different from the entertainment realm. As mentioned, individuals participating in the entertainment realm are both absorbing experiences and are passively participating, while individuals in educational experiences affects the performance (Pine II & Gilmore, 1999).

The last two realms in the *Experience Realms* model refer to the escape and esthetics realms. Unlike entertainment and educational experiences, individuals participating in escape and esthetics experiences are immersed in the experiences, which refer to being physically involved (Pine II & Gilmore, 1999). Pine II and Gilmore (1999) also discusses that one can be immersed if one is virtually involved in an experience.

Despite individuals being immersed in escapist and esthetics realms however, both realms require different participation from individuals (Pine II & Gilmore, 1999), whereas escapist experiences require active participation according to Csikszentmihalyi (cited in Pine II & Gilmore, 1999, p. 33, 211), esthetic experiences are passive. In this realm, individuals do not affect the experiences (Pine II & Gilmore, 1999), but are referred to as participants that seek to be present in esthetic experiences according to Csikszentmihalyi and Robinson (cited in Pine II & Gilmore, 1999, p. 35, 212). Pine II and Gilmore (1999) describes visiting art exhibitions and themed cafés or restaurants as being esthetic experiences, while escapism experiences refer to active participation activities such as paintball games, chat rooms or casinos (Pine II & Gilmore, 1999), and adventure tourism products according to Kotler and Scitovsky (cited in Pine II & Gilmore, 1999, p. 34, 211). In escapist experiences, participants affect the experiences (Pine II & Gilmore, 1999).

3.4 Tourism "imaginaries"

Connected with the *Experience Realms* model and motivation can be theories revolving around tourism 'imaginaries'. To imagine often means to visualize something unreal or fictional, which is often occurring during hallucinations or dreams (Teigen, 2018), and is defined as an individual and mental phenomenon (Salazar, 2010). Instead of living in one existing reality, Caughey (cited in Reijnders, 2016, p. 674) argues that there is one more world that humans live in. While the existing reality is defined as a world filled with physical

spaces and opportunities to experience this world through senses such as sight, taste and smell, the other world is a space built up by imagination. In addition to including dreams and hallucinations (Teigen, 2018), the imagination can also include fantasies and stories about different realities and physical spaces as mentioned by Caughey (cited in Reijnders, 2016, p. 674).

Appadurai (cited in Sabre, 2016, p. 06) defines imagination as the action of taking elements from media to create a fantasy world.

3.3.2 'Imaginaries' in tourism

According to Urry (cited in Beeton, 2016, p. 33), motivators to conduct travels are mainly driven by the wish to experience something the tourist has imagined in their mind, in real life. These experiences can be imagined by the tourist beforehand, which gives the tourist pre-made images of how tourist experiences are. Imaginary realities and worlds are created through the consumption of films, television series, and even books, and the consumers are imagining these worlds in their minds, according to Connell p. 1024, Lean, Staiff and Waterton, and Urry and Larsen (cited in Reijnders, 2016, p. 673). When visiting film tourism locations, the film tourists get the opportunity to connect what they have already imagined about film destinations with the physical locations, as discussed by Adams, Ehn and Löfgren p. 142, and Laing and Crouch (cited in Reijnders, 2016, p. 673).

According to Salazar and Graburn (2014), 'imaginaries' is an important part of tourism, especially in film tourism. In film-induced tourism, locations are often imagined during the watching of films and television series and are not only restricted to the process of undergoing tourism experiences. Instead, the imagining process starts early, as mentioned by Connell p. 1024, Lean et al., and Urry and Larsen (cited in Reijnders, 2016, p. 673), which can help give film tourists enough time to create an image or perception of either the locations portrayed or the story told in films and television shows.

3.3.3 Imagining anime

Tourism 'imaginaries' can also be found in anime tourism literature. Much like explanations of the phenomenon in film tourism, where film tourists imagine locations or storylines from favourite films or television shows as according to Connell p. 1024, Lean et al., and Urry and

Larsen (cited in Reijnders, 2016, p. 673), and then visits these locations, the practise remains the same in imagining anime. Anime fans will usually create imagined perceptions of the anime series or films they like, and then conduct travels to locations associated with anime, which Sabre (2016) refers to as media pilgrimage. Sabre (2016) also discusses that French anime and manga tourists are driven to visit Japan by the imagined perceptions they have from Japanese popular culture, such as manga, anime, games, and cosplay (JNTO, 2011). The imaginary concept is seemingly an important motivator to conduct anime travels; alongside with fantasies and imaginations the French anime fans have created.

'Imagined communities' is also a term mentioned in Sabre's (2016) article, which refers to communities where fans share the same interests. Often, the members of such communities are aware of each other's existence and that they share common interests, but do not personally know each other as discussed by Anderson p. 224 (cited in Sabre, 2016, p. 06). In a way, these communities can be defined as fan-created societies, thus names such as 'imagined communities' are possibly given.

As presented, Sabre (2016) studies French manga and anime fans in her article, but like Okamoto's (2015) and Kirillova et al. (2018) and their motivation research on specific nationalities of anime fans, I believe that Sabre's (2016) research on French anime fans is fruitful for my thesis.

3.5 Concluding thoughts regarding theories chosen

As a summary for this chapter, I present my reflections regarding theories chosen. Tourism motivation is the main theory I will build my research on, but this theory alone is not enough to base the research upon. As my research is broad, theories such as push and pull factors is too narrow when discussing the anime tourism motivation in my thesis. Therefore, I added other theories such as anime tourist behaviour and motivation, and tourism 'imaginaries'. According to Crompton (1979), tourist behaviour can relate to motivation to travel and choosing of destination. The choosing of destination can be connected with tourism 'imaginaries' as this concept revolves around tourists and their wish to experience something, they have imagined in their mind in real life Urry (cited in Beeton, 2016, p. 33).

In addition to concepts presented above, I will also connect my empirical findings with Pine II and Gilmore's (1999) *Experience Realms* model. As mentioned, this model includes factors

such as entertainment, education, esthetics, and escape, which all can help characterize an experience (Pine II & Gilmore, 1999). By connecting my findings with the latter factors, I believe I will uncover a deeper meaning of what motivates Norwegian anime enthusiasts to conduct anime travels to Japan. The factors can be connected with other theories and concepts I have chosen, such as push and pull factors and tourism 'imaginaries'.

With these theories, I am hoping I can discuss the thought process tourists do before they decide to conduct anime travels, in terms of 'imaginaries' and motivation. By initiating a discussion about on-site behaviour, I will also argue if motivations the Norwegian anime fans have to travel are affected by what the fans wish to do at the anime locations. My own experiences can help strengthen my theories and provide an interesting discussion when analysing my empirical data.

Chapter 4: Methods

In this chapter I will present the research method I chose for this thesis, as well as explain how this method is the best approach when gathering data, in terms of how the method is valuable when answering my research question. In addition, I will present my research process and how I gathered data for my thesis through qualitative semi-structured interviewing, and partly by conducting auto-ethnography. The research process includes how I formed my questions and interview guide, how and where I found informants for the interviews, how I conducted the interviews, as well as ethics and challenges I met when conducting empirical research.

4.1 Qualitative approach

The qualitative method is said to date back as early as the beginning of the 1900s (Savin-Baden & Major, 2013), and is referred to as the traditional era where researchers placed an emphasis on uncovering realities in terms of discovering reliable and valid understandings according to Denzin and Lincoln p. 07 (cited in Savin-Baden & Major, 2013, p. 08). There is no definition of the qualitative method today, however since the 1900s, the qualitative method has changed and developed (Savin-Baden & Major, 2013).

Qualitative research also places an emphasis on gaining knowledge, as researchers within this field perceive the social society as a different world than the natural world, unlike the quantitative research method, which seeks to discover cause and effect. According to Bryman (cited in Savin-Baden & Major, 2013, p. 359) participant observation and unstructured interviews are common techniques in qualitative research, especially in the study of people. Since qualitative research revolves around the study of individuals, the researchers for this method usually emphasize subjective understandings (Savin-Baden & Major, 2013).

4.1.1 Choosing a method

For a thesis of this scope, the qualitative approach is the method that fits best when investigating my research question, as the research question revolves around investigating Norwegian anime enthusiasts' motivation for conducting anime-induced travels to Japan.

Since there is not much literature concerning the latter, let alone information about anime pilgrimage in Norwegian literature, my aim with this thesis is also to contribute research and literature to this study. I am mainly interested in knowing anime enthusiasts' thoughts and opinions when it comes to motivation and behaviour for conducting anime travels, as well as expectations from past or possible future anime travels. Investigation for this kind of research is easier gained through a qualitative research, as a qualitative approach makes room for a broader investigation, where it emphasizes in-depth information about individuals (Jennings, 2012). This in-depth information can include topics like personal factors such as an individual's motivation, feelings and opinions regarding a matter (Malt, 2015).

By choosing a qualitative approach to my thesis investigation, I have been able to investigate my research question in more detail than I would have been able to do with a quantitative approach. My choice of method for investigating in a qualitative fashion involved conducting interviews with a handful of Norwegian anime enthusiasts.

According to McGehee (2012), interviews are very suitable for research questions in qualitative research, where in-depth investigations are necessary. In-depth investigations are often associated with unstructured interviews and participant observation in qualitative research as mentioned by Bryman (cited in Savin-Baden & Major, 2013, p. 359). In unstructured interviews, gaining an understanding of individuals' behaviour and opinions are emphasized, and there are usually no limitations to research (Fontana & Frey, 1994). As mentioned, qualitative in-depth information usually includes an individual's feelings, thoughts and motivation (Malt, 2015), and the in-depth interviews can be used when the researcher wishes to investigate these topics, as well as investigate an individual's personal experience regarding a matter (McGehee, 2012).

Semi-structured interviews

In my thesis research, a semi-structured approach is a combination of two different interview methods: The structured- and the unstructured. A structured interviewing approach refers to following a strict pattern when conducting interviews, often with an interview guide containing several questions that was prepared beforehand. It is also not common to ask additional questions in addition to the pre-established ones during the interviews, which is much more commonly accepted in unstructured interviewing (Fontana & Frey, 1994).

Unstructured interviews are also characterized as an interview technique that does not follow a certain pattern, as with the structured interviews. It is however common to prepare certain elements beforehand, such as topics the interviewer wants to uncover during the interviews (BD, 2019; Fontana & Frey, 1994).

I chose a semi-structured approach, as I wanted to stick to an interview guide when conducting the interviews. I prepared my questions beforehand, but I conducted the interviews in a casual and informal manner, as I did not want to conduct formal interviews and lean more towards a structured approach. However, when deciding which approach, I wanted to use for my thesis, I was first considering to use a more structured method for my interviews, but decided against it due to the structured interviews' strict tactic. As mentioned, the candidates in structured interviews also usually get the same questions, and it is unusual to ask additional questions (Fontana & Frey, 1994).

I did not want my interviews to follow a strict pattern, but rather feel more like a casual conversation. A pre-made interview template however, prepared me for the interviews and allowed me to stay on path during the interview process. Unlike the structured interview method, I asked my interview candidates questions in addition to the questions I had established beforehand where it was room to do so. Due to this, all my interviews were different, which gave me a lot of interesting answers. A semi-structured approach to gather empirical data also allowed me to examine my interview candidates' answers more thoroughly. This resulted in in-depth interviews with answers that have helped shed light on my research question about motivation to conduct anime-induced travels.

Auto-ethnography

In addition to choosing a semi-structured approach to interviews, I chose to add a short auto-ethnography chapter for this thesis. An auto-ethnography allows for an exploration of own experiences seen from the researcher's point of view, making the ethnography autobiographical in nature (Savin-Baden & Major, 2013). The auto-ethnography of this thesis will include my own experiences regarding anime tourism in Japan. However, the travel was not conducted in terms of the thesis project but is experiences I underwent during my stay in Japan four years ago. I will explain these experiences in further detail in the next chapter.

I chose to write an auto-ethnography about my own anime tourism experiences in Japan, because I can provide a wider understanding of the travel phenomenon, both in terms of motivation and inner thoughts regarding such experiences. Like the Norwegian anime enthusiasts, I have interviewed for this project, I am also an admirer of anime. I believe that by including my own experiences, it has helped finding an answer to my research question as I have experienced the joys and thrill of anime tourism myself. According to Ellis (cited in Savin-Baden & Major, 2013, p. 201), auto-ethnography can be defined as a method where uncovering understandings of cultural experiences by analysing the researchers own experiences are emphasized. Cultural experiences in this case can refer to the Norwegian anime enthusiasts' experience regarding anime tourism in Japan, where the cultural aspect of the latter revolves around Japanese pop-culture, which anime is a part of (JNTO, n.d. a).

4.2 The research process

4.2.1 Interview guide and questions

The research process for my Master Thesis began by gathering empirical data. Since I decided to conduct interviews, I first started with creating the interview guide that would contain reliable questions. As mentioned, the interview guide would also serve as a helping tool during interviews, so that I could follow the guide and stay on topic. However, where it was possible, I asked my interview candidates to elaborate on their answers in more detail, or to encourage a conversation.

When I formed my interview questions, I tried thinking about several topics that I wanted to cover in my interviews. With help from my supervisor, I came up with questions related to tourism motivation, tourism 'imaginaries' and behaviour. I did not dive into these questions in the beginning of the interview however, but instead started with a brief introduction to the phenomenon anime pilgrimage. With this introduction, my aim was to inform the interviewees on what anime pilgrimage was in case this was a foreign concept. The introduction would not only serve as an introduction to anime pilgrimage, but also as an introduction to my whole interview. Therefore, my first question revolved around if anime pilgrimage is a concept the interviewees had knowledge of. Starting with this question would make it easier to start a dialogue, and to start asking more complicated questions (Andersen, 2017).

Since I was to interview Norwegian anime fans, it felt more natural for me to conduct the interviews in Norwegian. The general idea was also that conducting the interviews in the interviewees' mother tongue would make conversation flow easier. The questions were later translated to English, as true and accurately to the Norwegian questions as possible.

The interview guide required quite a lot of time, both to form the interview questions and to create the layout for the template. After a thorough thought process, the interview guide ended up with six questions (see appendix 1, page 80).

4.2.2 Selecting participants

When looking for participants for my interviews, I first started thinking where I could find them. My initial thought was to look for participants in Facebook communities such as groups for Norwegian anime and cosplay fans. My aim was to search for individuals with an interest in anime culture, or individuals that are familiar with anime. Instead of looking for participants in anime and cosplay communities however, I chose a strategic technique when searching for candidates. I focused on finding individuals that would be relevant for my empirical research, and therefore settled with individuals that I have knowledge of and that I know is familiar with the anime concept. I also used a strategy called snowball selection, where I asked some of my interview candidates if they had knowledge of other possible candidates to interview (Tranvik, 2012).

I contacted individuals I was interested in interviewing in the chat function on Facebook and got responses from six individuals that was interested. I did not ask any more individuals if they were interested, as I gathered enough empirical information during the six interviews I conducted.
In addition to asking the candidates if they were interested in being interviewed, I informed the participants about my Master Thesis and briefly introduced myself. I will get back to this introduction and further describe this later in this chapter.

4.2.3 Validity and reliability

Although validity and reliability are not common concepts in qualitative research, they can be used to show critical reflections that has been taken into consideration during and after the research process. Reliability refers to if empirical data can be depended on, and whether the same research can be conducted in the future and shows similar data (Rudestam & Newton, 2007). If a similar research to mine were to be conducted in the future, I believe that the empirical results I gained during my interviews would show similar results, as my data is again similar with other research projects concerning anime pilgrimage and anime tourism. My results started showing signs of reliability early on during the interviews, therefore I only settled with six respondents. However, in order to gain more reliability in my empirical research, I could have perhaps interviewed more anime enthusiasts. The empirical data can still be considered reliable however, as there is little variation in the answers given (Svartdal, 2018).

In terms of validity, my research can be considered to have internal validity. Internal validity refers to if empirical data gathered is grounded in the exact number of candidates researched and is not generalizing according to Flick (cited in Rudestam & Newton, 2007, p. 113 (web)). Throughout my thesis I have referred to the interview informants as the Norwegian anime enthusiasts and discussed the term so that it cannot be mistaken as a generalization of all admirers of anime in Norway.

4.2.4 Process and duration

The interviews were conducted in three different ways and varied in time duration, ranging from ten to fifty minutes depending on answers given. I did not set up specific time duration for my interviews, but initially had an idea of using approximately twenty to thirty minutes. The reason for this initially thought time limit, was because I got inspired by a source on how to conduct qualitative research provided by the University of Oslo (Tranvik, 2012), but also due to the fact that I originally assumed twenty to thirty minutes would be the time it took to answer the questions I would ask.

I also asked the interview candidates if I could ask them additional questions, where it was room to do so, which in turn would make the interviews longer.

Although I planned a time limit for my interviews, my wish was for the interviewees to decide the pace and time duration of the interviews, instead of feeling they had to rush or use exactly the amount of time I would set. Despite this, I could have informed the interview candidates how much time I initially thought would be enough for the interviews.

The interviews were conducted through two different ways. Two of the first interviews were conducted through the communication tool Skype, while the remaining four interviews were conducted in person. Firstly, my wish was to conduct all the interviews in person, but where meeting in person was not an option, I settled with interviews through Skype as the best solution.

All the interviews were tape recorded with permission from the interview candidates. Recording the interviews was very helpful, as it made transcription of the interviews an easier process. After I had gathered the information I needed, the recordings were deleted in consideration to the informants and ethics, as this was something, I informed the candidates that I would do after data gathering. I chose to use an anonymous approach in my thesis, so this step of the data gathering process was of importance.

4.2.5 Ethical considerations

Regarding ethics, why is it important to think about ethical considerations when doing research? How is it important? When investigating, researchers have a responsibility to think about ethical considerations, as well as sport a sense of moral responsibility and common sense according to Punch (cited in Fontana & Frey, 1994, p. 373). Fontana and Frey (1994) discusses the importance of ethics in research, in regard to privacy, consent and protection. In qualitative studies where the researcher often investigates groups of people or individuals such as through interviews (Hoffmann, 2013; Fontana & Frey, 1994), there is placed an emphasis on protecting them from any harm. Protecting the interview respondents' identities in terms of privacy is also an important ethical consideration (Fontana & Frey, 1994), which I have emphasized when gathering my empirical data. As mentioned, I decided to use an anonymous approach where I excluded personal information regarding the interview candidates. Before and during my interviews I did not ask questions related to personal information such as name or gender, or anything that could identify the candidates and their whereabouts. I chose this approach because I was not interested in knowing personal

information, as it was irrelevant for the thesis. Instead I was mainly interested in gaining knowledge regarding thoughts and opinions in terms of tourism motivation and behaviour, as well as expectations from past or possible future anime travels.

In terms of anonymity, I also informed the interview candidates that the thesis would be published.

Confidentiality is also important to consider, especially after the research process is completed, when handling data gathered is in focus. The latter refers to if the researcher can handle information that has been given to them privately, the way they said they would (Savin-Baden & Major, 2013).
In terms of my own research, I informed my interview candidates that the interview findings would be anonymized in my thesis and optionally list their answers in connection to candidate one, candidate two, candidate three and so on. In the analysis chapter where I will analyse and discuss the empirical data, I will be using this reference method when citing quotes and information given during interviews.

In the process of finding candidates, I first formed a small note that I gave the possible candidates beforehand. The note would serve as an introduction to my thesis, where I would introduce myself, my field of study in master in tourism at the University in Tromsø, campus Alta, and what I am interested in investigating in this study. I introduced my thesis as a study where I would write about individual's motivation to conduct anime-induced travels, and possible experiences individuals had regarding anime pilgrimage travels, or locations connected with anime or anime tourism in Japan. I also informed that my thesis would contain themes such as identity.
By presenting my Master Thesis and what I am interested in investigating, and information about how I would handle the empirical data I would gather from the interviews, the interviewees would have the opportunity to think through if this was something, they were interested in doing. Gaining consent is also an important part of data gathering, where consent would normally be given after the researcher has informed possible research subjects about their projects. Such information must be truthfully and detailed presented, so that informants will have the opportunity to decide what the research projects involves (Fontana & Frey, 1994).

4.2.6 Challenges

Some challenges associated with the process before and during data gathering, revolved around forming questions for my interview guide. My wish was to create questions that would shed light on my research question the best way and involve themes such as tourism 'imaginaries' and motivation. I also created a question related to identity.

As mentioned in the process of forming interview questions, I focused on creating questions that would provide long answers, instead of only creating yes or no answers. The reason for this was because I wanted the questions to be elaborated on by the interviewees and to hear their thoughts.

Other challenges revolved around finding candidates for my interviews. With a research project this big, individuals might feel uncomfortable by participating in interviews, especially if the project is published. During my research to find relevant candidates, some of the individuals I was interested in interviewing declined my proposition. The challenge in this situation was to find other relevant interview candidates that I could interview, which were interested in participating. In the end, six of the individuals I asked accepted.

Due to the interview guide and questions being a challenge to create, as well as finding interview candidates, I used quite a lot of time on this process. To ensure my writing process to go more smoothly, I could have researched theories and literature that I wanted to use for this thesis at the same time when forming my interview guide. Finding literature that would illuminate my research question was not an easy task and required a lot of critical thinking and was therefore a thorough process. My biggest challenge was finding anime tourism literature that was relevant for my research question.

During some of the interviews I also faced some challenges related to losing track, where I sometimes had to get the interviews back on track. A thought related to the latter could perhaps relate to how my interview questions were formed, and whether they were easy to understand. In ethical consideration, I have decided to not use answers I got during such times as I sometimes steered the conversation too much, which was not my intention.

4.3 Chapter summary

In summary, I presented and described the method I chose to use when gathering data for my Master Thesis in this chapter. The qualitative approach was the most appropriate as such an approach often makes room for in-depth investigations (Jennings, 2012), whereas mentioned by Bryman (cited in Savin-Baden & Major, 2013, p. 359), unstructured interviews and observation are common practices used when gathering data. As presented, I chose to combine a structured and unstructured approach when conducting interviews resulting in a semi-structured tactic, which allowed me to conduct informal interviews, but with a certain structure due to using an interview guide with pre-made questions. In addition, I also presented my own experiences in regard to conducting anime travels in Japan, which has been helpful when discussing my research question in terms of what motivates Norwegian anime enthusiasts to conduct anime-induced journeys to Japan.

My research process started by creating an interview guide with questions that would help answer my research question the best way. My interviews were conducted in Norwegian with anime enthusiasts of the same nationality, which I knew had knowledge of anime. The interviews were conducted both in person and with the help of Skype, with permission to record the interviews, which posed some considerations regarding ethics. The recordings were however deleted after data gathering, in terms of the respondents' privacy. The research process also posed some challenges, which revolved especially around finding interview candidates and creating the interview guide. However, these challenges were solved during the research process.

Chapter 5: Auto-ethnography

As mentioned in the last chapter, I have decided to provide my own experiences regarding anime pilgrimage in Japan. I did not conduct this travel in terms of writing this thesis however, but during my stay in Japan four years ago.

As I am very interested in Japanese popular culture, I visited several anime and manga locations during my visit. These locations were situated in Tokyo and consisted of anime and manga merchandise stores, cosplay stores, themed cafés and cosplay events. The cosplay events and anime themed cafés are perhaps the most memorable locations, as they revolved around my favourite anime *Durarara* when I visited them.

5.1 Animate Café

In May 2015, I attended a Durarara themed anime café in Tokyo. I remember seeing a poster (figure 5.1, 1) for the café, and decided that this was a location I wanted to visit. The café was in the heart of the anime shopping area in Ikebukuro called Otome Road, which is a street known for offering goods for female anime fans. The area is also home to many cosplay, anime and manga stores (Federica, 2016; JNTO, 2013).

Attending the café was a very special and unique experience, as it was an entirely new concept to me and was not something I had ever heard about before. My anime experience in Norway had previously included visiting pop-culture stores such as Outland and Neo-Tokyo, but not anime cafés. Therefore, I was very excited to visit the *Durarara* café.

I visited the café with another friend of mine who was also passionate about anime. We needed tickets in order to be let in, which we could find online. There was a popular demand for the café and tickets could be hard to gain, but luckily my friend was able to book tickets for the both of us. Due to the latter, the experience of visiting the café felt more special, as it gave me a feeling that this was not something I could easily do whenever I wanted to. There was also a limited time the café would be themed after my favourite anime and how long I would stay in Japan for, so therefore it was even more important for me to visit the location, as it would serve as a 'once in a lifetime' experience for me.

5.1.1 Inside the café

The café consisted of food and decorations themed after the *Durarara* anime where they sold and handed out merchandise, such as coasters, keychains and bookmarks. This merchandise was specially made for the café, were the characters where designed to wear café uniforms (figure 5.1, 2), instead of the characters usual attires.

5.1 Figure 1: Poster from themed café

5.1 Figure 2: Merchandise from the café

Source: Author's photo, 2015

Source: Author's photo, 2019

The coasters and bookmarks were handed out as additional items every time attendees purchased meals and soft drinks, where each purchase gave us different items. The items, which featured *Durarara* characters, were given out on random selection and were not something attendees could choose on their own. I remember a feeling of excitement connected with the give-out, as each time I did not know which character I would get. Of course, due to this arrangement, I also felt a desire to order as many meals and drinks as possible, in order to get my favourite characters.

The café did however offer possibilities to purchase other merchandise goods, which the café had arranged in a designated area at the location. In this area, goods that were not found elsewhere were sold. The sense of owning such merchandise was important for me, as I was very interested in purchasing goods with a relation to the *Durarara* anime, due to my huge interest for the series.

Another excitement at the café was in relation to food and drinks, which consisted of elements inspired from *Durarara*. These elements included character names and were designed after these characters, such as blue drinks for characters with blue hair, and yellow drinks for

characters with yellow or blonde hair. This was a unique experience; as one got a sense of consuming one's own favourite characters favourite food and drinks. Therefore, when ordering, I purchased meals with my favourite characters names on it.

How the employees of the café were dressed up as popular characters from the *Durarara* anime, were also an interesting touch to the café. It did in addition to decorations, merchandise and food; give me an amazing experience. It was easier for me to immerse myself in the world of *Durarara* and being served food by my favourite characters was a great addition.

5.2 The *Durarara* cosplay event

The cosplay event I attended in Japan was also themed after my favourite anime *Durarara*, and merchandise from the anime was sold at the event. The main reason for the event to be held was due to a celebration of the light novels that the anime was adapted from, written by Ryohgo Narita that was released in year 2004, but also due to the release of the anime series' second season. The event, *STREEEEET!! Territory of Exhibition* (figure 5.2, 1) was held during the beginning of May in 2015 at Sunshine City mall in Ikebukuro (Green, 2015), and was arranged by Acosta! which is an event group that focuses on cosplay in Japan (Acosta!, 2014-2019).

The location for the event was slightly special as it was set in the same area that has been featured in the *Durarara* anime, in Ikebukuro. As mentioned, Ikebukuro is known for Otome Road, which is a Japanese popular culture area that specializes itself on goods for female anime fans (Federica, 2016; JNTO, 2013). Free roaming in Ikebukuro was not encouraged however; therefore, attendees received a map of where they could go which featured locations used in *Durarara*. In addition to the latter, the map featured recreated settings (figure 5.2, 2) from the anime, where attendees had the opportunity to experience elements from the anime (Green, 2015).

5.2 Figure 1: Event poster

Source: Scott Green, 2015 (Crunchyroll.com)

5.2 Figure 2: Recreated settings from *Durarara*

Source: Scott Green, 2015 (Crunchyroll.com)

5.2.1 Dressing up

Since the cosplay event was *Durarara* themed, I dressed up as my favourite character from the anime show and roamed the same streets as my favourite character had done in the anime. I also took photographs in my cosplay at the Ikebukuro locations, which I knew had been featured in the anime.

Although the event was themed after a specific anime, attendees were dressed up as characters from all sorts of anime. There were no limits to what individuals could and were dressed up as. However, since the event was aimed at the *Durarara* anime, there were a lot of cosplayers dressed up as all sorts of characters from the anime, from popular to not so popular characters.

At the *Durarara* locations in Ikebukuro, I tried finding poses relevant to my cosplay character in order to immerse myself in the *Durarara* world as much as possible. My wish was to portray my character and to act as the character the best way with poses the anime character is often seen doing in *Durarara*.

In my analysis chapter, I will cover my anime pilgrimage experience in further detail.

5.3 Chapter summary

In this chapter I presented my experience in terms of anime pilgrimage that I conducted in Japan four years ago. The experience consisted of a visitation to an anime themed café and a

small cosplay event in the district of Ikebukuro in Tokyo, which were both themed after my favourite anime called *Durarara*. The themed café consisted of *Durarara* themed food, merchandise, decorations and employees that were dressed up as characters from the anime, which created an authentic and amazing experience. At the *Durarara* cosplay event I dressed up as my favourite character from the anime show and roamed the streets of Ikebukuro.

Chapter 6: Interview findings overview

In this chapter I will present the findings from the six qualitative interviews I conducted for the thesis. These findings will be presented in subparts of this chapter, where I first will introduce the six questions asked in the interviews. I will provide the questions as they were made for the interview guide in this chapter, but these questions varied in how I expressed and asked them during the interviews. However, the essence of these questions is the same as in every interview.

To ensure a clear overview of the answers given, I have divided the answers into different categories. This chapter provides an overview of the answers given and will not be analysed in this chapter; they will be investigated in greater detail in chapter seven.

6.1 Anime pilgrimage

The first question asked in my interviews revolved around the phenomenon anime pilgrimage and was as follows: "*Have you heard about or are you familiar with the concept of anime pilgrimage?*" I wanted to start with a simple yes or no question, before I started asking in-depth questions for my interviews. This way, initiating a conversation regarding my research themes was easier (Andersen, 2017). As mentioned in the *Methods* chapter, I also introduced my anime pilgrimage theme briefly before each interview, in order to prepare the respondents for the interviews.

I decided to divide the answers I gained during all interviews into three different categories, such as:

1) *Knew about it*
2) *Knew about the concept anime pilgrimage, but not the term*
3) *Did not know about it*.

My findings revealed that only one interview candidate was familiar with the phenomenon anime pilgrimage (Respondent 2), whereas two candidates had not heard about the concept (Respondent 3 and 6). What is interesting to note here is that the three remaining candidates

were familiar with the anime pilgrimage concept, but unfamiliar with the term, or unaware that there was a word for this form of travel (Respondent 1, 4 and 5).

6.2 Experience and expectations in regard to anime-induced travels

The next question in my interviews revolved around the interview candidates' experience with anime pilgrimage travels and if it lived up to their expectations. For the respondents that did not have any experience with anime pilgrimage, I asked what they would expect to experience when conducting anime-induced travels, as well as if this form for traveling was of interest:

"*Have you conducted anime pilgrimage travel(s) before, or visited locations with a connection to anime in Japan? If yes, did it live up to your expectations? If no, is it something you are interested in doing? What do you expect to see and experience when conducting travels like these?*"

Among the results, only two of the interviewees had the experience of visiting anime pilgrimage locations in Japan. Candidate one had the experience of attending an anime-induced cosplay event in Tokyo (Respondent 1), while candidate two had the experience of visiting another anime event in Tokyo, as well as an anime themed café (Respondent 2).

If traveling to other anime locations in Japan in the future, candidate one replied that they would expect to get excited and take photographs at the anime locations. They were also interested in traveling to specific locations, as seen in the anime *Yuri on Ice* (Respondent 1). Candidate two replied that they would expect to have fun, with an emphasis on anime-induced theme parks (Respondent 2).

The remaining four interview candidates did not have the experience of visiting anime locations in Japan but was however interested in conducting anime travels. Candidate three showed an interest in visiting anime-themed amusement parks, and to experience carousels often seen in anime (Respondent 3), whereas candidate four expected to experience activities related to anime in Japan (Respondent 4). Candidate five showed an interest in visiting 'typical' Japanese locations shown in anime series, such as small villages, festivals, or locations with cherry blossom trees, and expected to undergo epiphany experiences in terms

of experiencing anime locations a different way than what they imagined the locations to be (Respondent 5).

Candidate six showed an interest in visiting The Ghibli museum, and ensuring they experience all activities provided at the museum while they are there. The candidate also showed an interest in traveling to the popular district Ikebukuro in Tokyo to photograph locations from the renowned anime *Durarara* (Anime Tourism Association, 2019d; Candidate 6) and compare them to the scenes used in the anime (Candidate 6).

6.3 Anime travels outside of Japan

The third question related to if the interview candidates had visited locations with a connection to anime outside of Japan: "*Have you travelled outside of Japan to places linked with anime? What kind of places were these and where was it?*" For this question, the findings can be divided into two different categories between those who had the experience, and those that did not have the experience.

Among those who had visited anime locations outside of Japan, the results showed that three of the candidates had visited cosplay conventions. These candidates had all attended cosplay conventions in Norway, but one candidate had in addition visited cosplay conventions outside of Norway (Respondent 2). Another candidate also had the experience of visiting a smaller cosplay event held in Japan (Respondent 1).

Among the remaining candidates that did not have the experience of visiting anime-induced events outside of Japan, two of the candidates were familiar with cosplay and anime conventions but had not attended any (Respondent 3 and 4). The last candidate did not mention conventions but stated that the only locations they had visited was grocery stores where they sell Japanese food that have been showed in anime, such as ramen and Japanese soda (Respondent 5).

6.4 Anime pilgrimage and motivation

The fourth question, "*Do you have any motivations to conduct these kinds of (anime pilgrimage) travels? Which ones?*" revealed the anime fans' motivations for conducting

anime pilgrimage travels. Like the first question, I also decided to divide the findings into three different categories:

1) *Traveling out of interest*
2) *Traveling to meet other individuals with the same interests as themselves*
3) *Traveling to experience anime theme parks*

Traveling out of interest was the result category with the most answers, and was answered by the three respondents, four, five and six. Amongst these candidates, candidate five especially expressed a wish to observe Japanese environments, as Japanese anime have often portrayed such environments in a positive light (Respondent 5).

Category two revolves around encountering other individuals with the same interests as themselves and was answered by two of the interview candidates, which was related to cosplay. Candidate one expressed the wish to meet individuals that enjoys the same anime series and films as themselves, and to take photographs together (Respondent 1), while candidate two found it fun to meet and converse with individuals holding the same interests (Respondent 2).

The last candidate answered that their motivator was to experience amusement parks with their favourite anime as theme, and to experience anime in real life, rather than only seeing it on screen. If this candidate found himself or herself to be in Japan and an amusement park had their favourite anime as theme, they would try to attend (Respondent 3).

6.5 Importance of visiting anime locations

The second last question revolved around the importance of visiting anime locations: "*Is it important for you to visit anime locations? In what way?*" For the findings related to this question, I also chose to divide answers given into three categories. These categories are if it is important to visit anime locations, if it is not important, and being unsure if it is important.

The results showed that two candidates, more specifically candidate two and six, found it important to visit anime-induced locations. Candidate two found it important to visit anime

locations if the locations meant something to them (Respondent 2), while candidate six expressed visiting anime locations as an experience for life (Respondent 6).

Candidate three and four did not find visiting anime locations as especially important, due to candidate 3 being more interested in food culture (Respondent 3), and candidate four that travels out of leisure and escape, and because they wish to do so rather than because they feel the need to do so (Respondent 4).

Candidate one seemed to find it very important to visit anime locations, as they expressed their wish to visit specific anime locations in Japan, such as locations featured in the anime *Yuri on Ice*. At the locations, the candidate expressed that they wished to eat the same food as the characters had eaten in the anime (Respondent 1).

The last candidate was unsure if visiting anime locations was of importance or not. However, they expressed that they would feel sad if they were not able to conduct anime-induced travels sometime in the future (Respondent 5).

6.6 Identity

For the last question in my interviews, I was interested in uncovering if the interview candidates' interest for anime a part of their identity was. The answers for the question: "*Would you say that your interest in anime is a part of your identity? In what way?*" can be divided into two categories. These categories relate to if anime is a part of the anime fans' identity, or if it is not a part of their identity. The candidates that considered anime to be a part of their identity was four of the interview candidates, such as candidate two, four, five, and six.
Candidate two answered that they do not watch much anime now, but expressed that anime was a gateway to an interest in Japanese culture (Respondent 2), whereas candidate four considered anime to be a part of their identity to the point of possessing tattoo images from different anime series (Respondent 4). Candidate five expressed anime as being a part of their identity and owns merchandise from anime (Respondent 5), while candidate six expressed their interest in anime as being their main hobby for a long time, along with cosplaying (Respondent 6).

Candidate one did not consider their interest in anime specifically as a part of their identity, but rather as a part of their overall nerd identity, which involved other fandoms such as *Harry Potter*, *Star Wars* and role-playing (Respondent 1), while candidate three did not consider anime as a part of how they identify themselves in this moment, but more when they were younger (Respondent 3).

6.7 Chapter summary

The latter chapter provided an overview of my findings that were revealed in my empirical interviews. The findings were presented in a way where I first introduced topics of the questions, the questions, and then the answers in each subpart of the chapter. The first part revolved around if the interview respondents were familiar with the concept of anime pilgrimage, where one was familiar with the phenomenon (Respondent 2), two respondents did not know about the concept (Respondent 3 and 6), and three were familiar with the concept but not the terminology (Respondent 1, 4 and 5).

The second question revolved around if the respondents had the experience of or wished to conduct anime travels to Japan. Two of the interview candidates answered that they had the experience (Respondent 1 and 2) and the remaining four candidates did not have the experience (Respondent 3, 4, 5 and 6). The two respondents that had the experience of visiting anime locations was also asked if the experiences lived up to their expectations, while the four candidates that did not have the experience was asked what they would expect to experience.

Question three in my interviews related to if the Norwegian anime enthusiasts had visited anime locations outside of Japan, whereas three of the candidates had visited cosplay conventions (Respondent 1, 2 and 6), two of the candidates were aware of conventions but had not attended any (Respondent 3 and 4), and the last candidate had visited grocery stores where they had sold food as seen in anime (Respondent 5).

Question four was the main question of my interviews and revolved around motivations for conducting anime-induced travels. Three of the candidates answered that they would or are 'traveling out of interest' (Respondent 4, 5 and 6), two of the candidates answered that their

motivations were related to 'traveling to meet other individuals with the same interests' (Respondent 1 and 2), and one candidate expressed a wish to visit and experience anime theme parks (Respondent 3).

I also asked the importance of visiting anime locations, whereas two of the respondents answered that it was important (Respondent 2 and 6), two other respondents answered that it was not of importance (Respondent 3 and 4), one candidate was unsure (Respondent 5), while another candidate expressed that they really wished to visit locations connected to the anime *Yuri on Ice* (Respondent 1).

The last question in my interviews revolved around if the Norwegian anime enthusiasts' interest for anime a part of their identities was. Among the candidates, as many as four considered anime to be a part of their identity (Respondent 2, 4, 5 and 6), while another candidate expressed that they considered anime to be a part of their identity when they were younger (Respondent 3). Another candidate expressed that anime was a part of their overall identity as a nerd (Respondent 1).

Chapter 7: Analysis and discussion

From my empirical data collection, the findings showed that what motivates the Norwegian anime admirers to conduct anime-induced travels to Japan is out of interest, to meet other enthusiasts with the same interests as themselves, and to experience anime theme parks. I will discuss these motivators by using theories as presented in chapter three of this thesis, especially regarding Crompton's (1979) push and pull factors. Before elaborating on the motivation findings however, I will first discuss my findings in terms of tourism 'imaginaries' and analyse my material in regard to the *Experience Realms* model, as presented by Pine II and Gilmore (1999). Thereafter I will analyse my empirical data in terms of what type of anime enthusiasts the interview respondents can be described as, as I believe it is important in regard to discussing the Norwegian anime enthusiasts' motivations for conducting anime travels. Kasai and Hsu (cited in Kirillova et al., 2018, p. 269) argues that how immersed one is in anime, can affect how much anime enthusiasts want to conduct anime-induced travels to Japan. Later in this chapter I will discuss this statement further.

7.1 The imagination and fictional worlds in anime

As mentioned in chapter three, simple motivation theories alone cannot uncover the enthusiasts' drives to conduct anime-induced travels to Japan. Perhaps motivators in regard to anime tourism need to be explained in more detail than regular travel motivators such as leisure holidays? Perhaps tourism imaginaries can be connected to the Norwegian anime enthusiasts' motivation to conduct anime travels to Japan? As Connell, p. 1024, Lean et al., and Urry and Larsen (cited in Reijnders, 2016, p. 673) argue, a tourism experience often starts by consuming entertainment passively on the television, before the tourist have had the opportunity to conduct travels. When it comes to anime and film tourism, the practise of imagining can play a huge role and is a concept I believe can be connected with tourism 'imaginaries' and motivation. According to Salazar and Graburn (2014), the practise of imagination is an important part of tourism. As mentioned in chapter three, to imagine also refers to create or visualize something fictional, often during daydreams or hallucinations (Teigen, 2018). The practise of imaginaries in anime is similar where anime enthusiast's form images and perceptions of locations used in anime series and films before eventually visiting them. The latter argument is discussed in terms of French anime fans (Sabre, 2016), but is

something I believe is like Norwegian anime enthusiasts. Sabre (2016) also argues that French anime enthusiasts are driven to visit anime locations, due to imaginations and fantasies created in terms of anime. A merging of fantasy with reality can perhaps be connected to tourism imaginaries, as anime enthusiasts somehow enter a fictional world when consuming anime.

When it comes to the Norwegian anime enthusiasts, the practise of visiting real life locations is not only limited to real life locations. Instead, my results revealed that visiting anime theme parks and cosplay conventions was also a common activity or wish. One of the candidates interviewed expressed their imaginations regarding perceptions of anime theme parks, whereas these parks were also more sought after than visiting locations used in anime. The perceptions revolved around activities found at the parks, such as different rides and carousels, as seen in anime where characters have visited amusement parks. These carousels were expressed as activities that one of the interview respondents believed they would experience while being at amusement parks (Respondent 3).
Another respondent expressed they would perhaps enjoy rides with anime characters depicted on them at anime theme parks (Respondent 2).

Other respondents expressed that they perceived cosplayers at conventions as a source to immerse oneself in another world, due to meeting cosplayers dressed up as characters from ones favourite series and films. The respondent expressed this source of immersion as the ones often creating the experience for other attendees at the conventions, but the act of dressing up oneself was also a source of immersion into another world (Respondent 1). Cosplaying refers to dressing up as characters seen in films, television shows, anime or even books, and is a concept often associated with Japanese pop-culture (JNTO, 2011; Okamoto, 2015).

7.1.1 Imaginaries regarding real life locations

Imaginaries connected with real life locations used in anime were however prominent in other interviews conducted. One respondent expressed a desire to visit locations in Japan that are like sceneries they have seen in anime, and not necessarily the specific locations used. Some of these sceneries included visiting Japan during the spring season, when flower meadows and cherry blossom trees are blossoming. In regard to the latter, the respondent expressed the

desire to conduct travels during the spring season, as they imagined it would be a romantic experience, as that is often how anime is shown. Visiting Japanese shrines where the respondent had seen characters from anime perform certain acts, was also included in the respondent's anime imaginaries (Respondent 5).

As mentioned in chapter six, the respondent also expressed several imaginaries connected with elements from Japanese culture, which they had seen been depicted in anime. These elements included etiquette, where younger generations talked to older generations with respect. If younger generations did not speak to elders with respect in anime, the respondent described these youths as delinquents, as they have often been portrayed in anime (Respondent 5).

The respondent also had imaginaries about elements from Japanese culture, such as cleanliness and contrasts regarding Japanese villages and big cities. The imaginaries about cleanliness in Japan were expressed as an observation made when watching anime, where villages and cities were always portrayed as tidy and clean (Respondent 5).

Respondent 4 also had imaginaries regarding Japanese culture, or Japan in general. These imaginaries included areas in Japan such as Osaka and Hokkaido and revolved around sceneries and food culture. According to the respondent, Osaka was regarded as the capitol of food in Japan, where the respondent had a wish to try lots of different foods. Hokkaido was described as a winter destination, where the respondent had imaginaries about the prefecture being a pleasant area (Respondent 4).

As mentioned, respondent 1 had imaginaries regarding cosplay, but the respondent also expressed thoughts related to expectations when visiting locations used in anime, such as taking photographs and trying to immerse oneself in scenes from anime series or films at the locations (Respondent 1). Okamoto (2015) discusses the latter act as being a part of anime tourists' behaviour when conducting anime pilgrimage travels in Japan, especially among otaku fans. The behaviour form is described as one of the most common forms of otaku behaviour (Okamoto, 2015). As I will discuss later in this chapter, respondent 1 showed an interest in being motivated to conduct anime-induced travels due to the wish of meeting other individuals with the same interests as themselves (Respondent 1). However, perhaps the respondent could also be motivated to travel by what they would expect to do at anime locations? I also believe that the other Norwegian anime enthusiasts interviewed could be motivated to conduct anime travels to Japan by the imaginaries of what they wish or expect to

do at the locations. As mentioned above, I believe that imaginaries can play a huge part when it comes to anime tourism, in accordance to Sabre's (2016) statement regarding French anime tourists and their practise of forming images and perceptions of locations used in anime series and films before visiting them. According to Crompton (1979), push and pull factors are often associated with tourist behaviour, and is linked with tourism motivation, which helps strengthen the theory that anime tourists can be motivated to conduct anime-induced travels due to what they wish or expect to do at anime locations. Regarding this and respondent 1's answer, imaginaries regarding taking photographs of anime locations also seem to be a drive in visiting anime locations.

Respondent 6 did not have any specific imaginaries regarding anime or Japanese culture but expressed a wish to visit the Studio Ghibli Museum and purchase film-reels they expected the museum to sell. However, the respondent seemingly possessed certain imaginaries related with on-site behaviour. Like respondent 1, respondent 6 also showed an interest in photographing anime locations (Respondent 6). According to Okamoto (2015), the anime pilgrims wish to take photos of real-life locations and try to illustrate the scenes from anime as closely as possible, often with the same angles as like a comparison (Okamoto, 2015). When it comes to this, respondent 6 expressed their wish to visit Ikebukuro in Tokyo and take photographs of locations used in the anime *Durarara* and compare them with scenes from the anime (Respondent 6).

7.1.2 The Experience Realms model

A theory I believe can relate to tourism imaginaries is Pine II and Gilmore's (1999) *Experience Realms* model, which consists of factors such as entertainment, escapism, learning and esthetics. In theory, the model sums up and characterizes an experience (Pine II & Gilmore, 1999). In regard to my research question, how can the realms be connected to the Norwegian anime enthusiasts' drive to conduct anime-induced travels to Japan? In accordance to film imaginaries theories, it is argued that the practise of film tourism does not necessarily begin with the visiting of film locations. Instead, the experience starts already by the consumption of films and television shows and film tourists are creating images about films or shows regarding the real life locations, as mentioned by Connell, p. 1024, Lean et al., and Urry and Larsen (cited in Reijnders, 2016, p. 673).

In the *Experience Realms* model, the entertainment factor refers to passively watching live performances, reading books or going to the movies. This realm is referred to as not being actively involved and to be absorbed, rather than immersed. Individuals are observers and do not have much effect on experiences, in terms of influencing the experiences (Pine II & Gilmore, 1999). The realm can easily relate to film imaginaries theories, as the anime enthusiasts would naturally consume anime before wanting to conduct anime travels, as Sabre (2016) discusses. By watching anime television series and films, the anime enthusiasts would create images about the fictional worlds (Sabre, 2016). When it comes to the entertainment realm, individuals passively absorb entertainment such as when watching films and television (Pine II & Gilmore, 1999), which I believe leads to creating imaginaries regarding the entertainment media. As Appadurai (cited in Sabre, 2016, p. 06) argues, imagining refers to the action of taking elements from media in order to create a fantasy world. Is that action what the Norwegian anime enthusiasts do when consuming anime, which makes them want to conduct anime travels? Caughey (cited in Reijnders, 2016, p. 674) discusses that imaginaries include fantasies regarding different realities and physical spaces. Regarding the latter, perhaps physical spaces can be defined as the locations that are featured in anime.

Expectations and marketing

From personal experience, creating imaginaries regarding anime is actively in use and can relate to expectations in regards to tourism experiences. Such expectations can be problematic however, as they can raise standards of tourism experiences. If the expectations are not met, tourists can be left disappointed and dissatisfied, which can result in not wanting to conduct such travels again (Cutler & Carmichael, 2010). Of course, tourism companies play a part here, in creating memorable experiences for possible consumers, but also making sure they market their product the right way (Parasuraman, Zeithaml & Berry, 1985). In anime tourism, marketing can perhaps be a bit tricky, especially when it comes to locations and elements that have been used in television shows and films. Some locations may be made into tourism locations, such as Washinomiya Shrine and the village the shrine is located, due to it being used in the famous anime *Lucky Star* (Anime Tourism Association, 2019c; Imai, 2009), and the district Ikebukuro in Tokyo, which have been featured in the anime *Durarara* (Anime Tourism Association, 2019d). However, in order to attract anime tourists, anime tourism companies must market their products the right way (Kirillova et al., 2018).

For other locations that has been featured in anime but are perhaps not that popular as several other locations would perhaps be a bit trickier to find, unless one is a huge fan of the anime.

Without tourism companies or associations marketing locations as being featured in anime, either on websites or at the said sites, the locations are just regular areas. In regard to this, I believe that anime tourists create their own expectations when consuming anime. Since there is little information about anime tourism in Norwegian literature, the Norwegian anime enthusiasts would have to lean towards finding information online or rely on their own imaginaries and expectations when planning anime travels. As Okamoto (2015) discusses, obtaining information about anime destinations is important in terms of journey planning. He distinguishes between knowledge acquired on the Internet or from other individuals, knowledge that anime enthusiasts already possess, and information provided by anime companies (Okamoto, 2015). Information provided by anime tourism companies or agencies, could perhaps be connected to how well such companies market their experiences? As mentioned, Kirillova et al. (2018) state that anime tourism companies must market their experiences the right way in order to attract anime tourists. If the companies fail, will also the number of anime traveller's decrease, or are the enthusiasts driven to conduct anime travels based on imaginaries? The information anime enthusiasts already have knowledge of could perhaps refer to imaginaries they have already created during the consumption of anime. Some anime enthusiasts may also have tried to uncover knowledge about anime due to their interest of the phenomenon. As discussed, in regard to possessing imaginations regarding anime that has been consumed during the watching of television and film (Sabre, 2016), anime enthusiasts are perhaps driven to conduct anime travels solely due to imaginaries. However, for foreign anime travellers, I believe that it is important that information about anime tourism exists or are easily accessible, especially for first time travellers.

During my interviews, two of the respondents informed where they find information regarding anime sites, where the Internet was a common platform (Respondent 5 and 6). However, despite the Internet being a good platform to find knowledge, respondent 5 informed that word-of-mouth was also a method they would use to gain information about anime locations. Some examples would include asking individuals which had already been in Japan questions like:

"What do you recommend me to see?" or *"Are there any films you think I should watch before I go on this trip?"*

By being recommended locations used in anime that are true to the film or television series and being able to experience it for oneself, is something the respondent believe they would gain more from in the end. They would look more forward to the experience, and form expectations such as *"will it look as real as everybody else says?"* before traveling to the anime locations. As mentioned in the *Interview findings overview* chapter, respondent 5 was among the anime enthusiasts that did not have the experience of visiting anime locations (Respondent 5).

The entertainment factor in summary

As a brief conclusion regarding the entertainment realm and aspects mentioned above, such as right marketing of products and tourism imaginaries, I believe the entertainment realm connected with imaginaries factors can play a role in what motivates the Norwegian anime enthusiasts in visiting anime locations. Where it is possible, such as with popular anime locations in Japan, anime tourism companies and associations can attract more anime enthusiasts in visiting by having good marketing strategies. In addition to anime site listings presented by the Anime Tourism Association (Anime Tourism Association, 2019a), as mentioned in the *Background Description* of this thesis, the Japan National Tourism Organization (JNTO), also provides anime enthusiasts with information about popular anime locations in Japan. These locations are presented in an English document, which makes information seeking easier for overseas anime tourists (JNTO, 2013). If the enthusiasts find useful and informative material revolving anime locations online, motivations to conduct anime-induced travels to Japan can also be enhanced. As mentioned, information provided online can also create expectations for the anime enthusiasts, along with imaginaries about locations and areas that have been featured in anime. Of course, not every anime enthusiast may create imaginaries, but seemingly as anime consumers enters a fictional reality in the consumption of anime, I believe that every enthusiast has some sort of imaginations and images related to the anime and its many featured locations.

Like Kirillova et al. (2018) argues, I also agree that imaginaries connected with favourite anime television and films, is especially a motivator for conducting anime-induced travels to Japan. In the consumption of such anime, enthusiasts may feel a stronger need to visit

locations used in such anime as they relate to their favourite elements. From personal experience, visiting locations from favourite anime is a very strong motivator in conducting anime travels. As stated in the *Auto-Ethnography* of this thesis, I had the honour of visiting the renowned area of Ikebukuro, where the famous anime *Durarara* have several real-life scenes featured (Anime Tourism Association, 2019d). In addition to conducting a regular visiting, I also dressed up as my favourite character (figure 7.1, 2) from that anime and roamed the same streets as that character had done in the series (figure 7.1, 1). Such a practise made the experience very memorable for me, as I got to immerse myself in the world of my favourite anime.

7.1 Figure 1: Scene featured in *Durarara*   7.1 Figure 2: Cosplaying at the location

Photograph by: (Awesome Inc, n.d.)   Photograph by: Author's friend, 2015

When it comes to the Norwegian anime enthusiasts, I also believe they would become more motivated to travel to anime locations in Japan by absorbing anime they enjoy. By absorbing anime and by visiting real life locations or other locations with a connection to anime, I also believe the Norwegian anime enthusiasts would find joy in.

Fictional worlds and escape

In the consumption of anime on screen, anime enthusiasts alternatively enter another world of reality. According to Kirillova et al. (2018), storylines in anime are often set in a fictional world, despite featuring real life locations. Merging fantasy with reality is one of the most common forms for Chinese anime enthusiasts' motivators when it comes to conducting anime-induced travels to Japan, which makes them different from another tourists' motivation to visit Japan (Kirillova et al., 2018). I believe the case is the same with the Norwegian anime enthusiasts, although my findings revealed three different categories in terms of motivation

such as 'traveling out of interest', 'meeting individuals with the same interests', and 'experiencing anime through amusement parks'. Despite these drives being the different motivators the Norwegian anime enthusiasts have in terms of conducting anime-induced travels, I believe that merging fiction with reality is the main drive. As an experience already starts with the passive watching of favourable entertainment as discussed by Connell, p. 1024, Lean et al., and Urry and Larsen (cited in Reijnders, 2016, p. 673), anime enthusiasts are merging fantasy with reality early on.

Regarding merging fantasy with reality and connecting it with tourism, perhaps the enthusiasts wish to experience the anime world actively, and are therefore motivated to conduct anime travels? By visiting locations one have seen in anime, anime enthusiasts like film fans as discussed by Adams et al. (cited in Reijnders, 2016, p. 673) are able to relive what they have seen on screen in real life, as tourism motivators are connected to the wish to experience something the tourist has imagined in their mind, in real life according to Urry (cited in Beeton, 2016, p. 33).

Perhaps merging fantasy with reality can relate to the wish to escape everyday life and routines? As mentioned in chapter three, escape is an anime travel motivator in Kirillova et al. (2018) and their research that can be connected to the motivator of merging fiction with reality. As mentioned, the anime enthusiasts' motivation to merge fiction with reality is what distinguishes them from regular foreign visitors travelling to Japan.

In the *Experience Realms* model, where the entertainment factor refers to absorbing rather than immersion (Pine II & Gilmore, 1999), the escape realm deals with actively participating in experiences as presented by Csikszentmihalyi (cited in Pine II & Gilmore, 1999, p. 33, 211). As mentioned in chapter three, being immersed in an experience requires physical presence such as at casinos, paintball games or chat rooms (Pine II and Gilmore, 1999), or in adventure tourism experiences as stated by Kotler and Scitovsky (cited in Pine II & Gilmore, 1999, p. 34, 211). Such experiences are not what I will focus on regarding my empirical findings however. Instead the escape realm refers to the practise of experiencing and visiting anime locations, which the Norwegian anime enthusiasts have either done or wish to do. In a way, this practise can be connected to the Myriad companies' films where they offer their visitors to experience films as seen through the eyes of an animal according to Krantz (cited in Pine II & Gilmore, 1999, p. 33, 211), in a so-called motion-based experience as described by Pine II and Gilmore (1999). In these experiences, the entertainment factor is brought forward and requires more active participation than simply by absorbing the entertainment

(Pine II & Gilmore, 1999). In an anime tourism context as mentioned, the absorbing of entertainment would happen by watching anime television shows and films, while being more immersed would refer to conducting the actual anime-induced experiences.

Anime as a gateway to Japanese culture?

A third realm in Pine II and Gilmore's (1999) *Experience Realms* model revolves around educational experiences, which requires active participation. Individuals seeking to learn can either physically or intellectually absorb these experiences, by participating in physical exercise events, or events aimed at academic learning (Pine II & Gilmore, 1999). When it comes to the latter, educational experiences are characterized as being absorbed by participants in Pine II and Gilmore's (1999) model, but regarding my empirical findings, I believe that experiences related with learning purposes allows the interview respondents to immerse themselves with knowledge. This does not necessarily refer to experiences offered by any tourism company or association, but rather the acts of visiting locations with a connection to anime or visiting cultural locations in Japan in general. As many of my empirical interviews revealed, several of the Norwegian anime enthusiasts showed an interest in Japanese culture in addition to being interested in anime:

"*It was anime and especially Studio Ghibli's films that made me interested in Japan. It was in a way my gateway to study it and figure out that I liked a lot about Japan and not just anime*" (Respondent 2).

"*To experience the culture; food culture and regular culture. I find that interesting*" (Respondent 3).

"*The things that have given me the desire to gain more information about Japan, have started with anime*" (Respondent 5).

Although not stated directly, respondent 3 also expressed their interest in food culture in other countries, rather than it being important that they visited locations with a connection to anime (Respondent 3). In this statement, I believe that 'other countries' refer to cultures other than the Norwegian culture, given that the respondent is of Norwegian ethnicity. I believe that the respondent is implying that they are interested in trying Japanese food, making them

interested in more aspects of the Japanese culture than only anime. The respondent also expressed that they gained more insight on food through an anime called *Food Wars*, which is a series that revolves around food from Japan, Italy and France. The anime was also expressed as one of the reasons for being interested in food (Respondent 3).

As presented in the *Findings* chapter, the respondent did not have the experience of visiting Japan beforehand.

Like respondent 3, respondent 4 also expressed an interest in food culture. As mentioned, their wish was to visit the Japanese city Osaka and try their cuisine, as the latter is described as the capitol of food in Japan (Respondent 4).

The respondent also had the experience of visiting Japan beforehand and told me that they had travelled to Japan in the past due to finding the Japanese culture amazing, and not necessarily because of anime. However, the respondent expressed that their interest in anime had been a big part of why they conducted travels to Japan (Respondent 4).

Respondent 5 also expressed the wish to experience other aspects of the Japanese culture, or more specifically, Japanese history. In the future, their wish is to visit Hiroshima and Nagasaki in connection with World War II history. The respondent also expressed a wish to purchase a Japanese fan and inexpensive kimono, and to experience festivals in smaller villages in Japan (Respondent 5).

Although my anime experiences in Japan did not revolve around other aspects of Japanese culture than anime and cosplay, anime can still be a gateway to Japanese culture. My interest in Japan started with the watching of Studio Ghibli's anime films and continued from there with other anime films and television shows. By absorbing anime, I gained information about the culture in Japan and became interested in manga. As mentioned in chapter one, manga is defined as comic books in Japan (Japan-guide, 1996-2019; Gisle, 2018).

However, I also started to find other sides of the Japanese culture interesting, such as food and traditions, which I started to explore after discovering Japanese pop-culture.

As a comment regarding respondent 2 and my answer regarding the Studio Ghibli films, it seems common for overseas anime admirers to discover either Japanese culture or anime, through the Ghibli films. Perhaps the latter is due to Ghibli films becoming popular overseas?

With more and more Ghibli films hitting the cinemas in Norway over the last years such as *Princess Mononoke* (Filmweb, n.d. a), *Spirited Away* (Filmweb, n.d. b), and *My Neighbour Totoro* (Filmweb, n.d. c), there is no surprise that the films are getting more recognition. By having the films shown at cinemas, more individuals will gain knowledge regarding Studio Ghibli and anime in general.

Overall, perhaps the Norwegian anime enthusiasts are motivated to conduct anime-induced travels to Japan, because they also get to experience the Japanese culture? Are the anime enthusiasts experiencing Japanese culture in addition to visiting the anime locations or are they learning about the culture by visiting locations they have seen in anime?

When it comes to my empirical findings, it seems that several of the Norwegian anime enthusiasts have gained knowledge about the Japanese culture either through anime or with the help of anime. I also believe that many anime enthusiasts learn about Japanese culture by absorbing anime on screen, before traveling to Japan and experiencing it directly. As Thelle (2009) discusses in her book, many anime series and films contain elements from Japanese culture such as cutlery, traditional customs and attires. By seeing how anime series are often depicted in terms of culture, the anime enthusiasts could possibly create imaginations and expectations in terms of how Japan is in real life, as the respondents seemed to place a positive light on that they have either gained or gains knowledge about other sides of the Japanese culture with the help of anime.

By learning about Japanese culture on anime travels, the anime enthusiasts could somehow undergo an educational experience because they gain new knowledge. Gaining new knowledge and information is a pull factor that relates to cultural aspects when uncovering motivations to travel according to Crompton (1979). In contrast to Crompton's (1979) findings regarding novelty and education as one motive however, the two pull factors can be connected when discussing my empirical findings. In accordance to Crompton's (1979) research, novelty refers to adventure and the act of experiencing something new. Since the Norwegian anime enthusiasts would presumably know of and absorb anime before conducting anime travels, the knowledge they would gain during these travels would not necessarily be new information, both when it comes to anime and other Japanese cultural experiences. Crompton (1979) argues novel as being a form for undergoing new experiences, but not essentially gaining new information. Instead, the anime enthusiasts would gain new knowledge during the absorption of anime, before undergoing anime and Japanese cultural experiences, and the act of learning could occur when conducting such experiences.

Regarding this, Crompton (1979) argues that novelty is often realized by tourists when undergoing experiences and experiencing them first-hand. However, the argument regarding traveling to locations the tourists have no knowledge of in terms of experiencing novelty, is something I believe to be wrong in regard to the Norwegian anime enthusiasts interviewed. The enthusiasts would perhaps gain new knowledge and experiencing something new when conducting travels to anime locations, but I do not believe they would travel to locations they are not familiar with or have knowledge of. As Connell, p. 1024, Lean et al., and Urry and Larsen (cited in Reijnders, 2016, p. 673) discusses in terms of film tourism, film fans will often create imaginaries regarding fictional worlds and realities during the consumption of films and television shows. As mentioned, Sabre (2016) also shares the same belief, but when it comes to anime tourism and French anime travellers. Due to these latter arguments, it is more likely that anime tourists would travel to locations they have already formed perceptions about when consuming anime. Therefore, the anime enthusiasts can possibly experience novelty, when visiting locations, they are familiar with and have seen on screen.

Esthetical

As mentioned in chapter three, esthetic experiences leans more towards the passive spectrum (Pine II & Gilmore, 1999) and is characterized by participants with a wish of being present in experiences according to Csikszentmihalyi and Robinson (cited in Pine II & Gilmore, 1999, p. 35, 212) rather than actively participating. Individuals in esthetic experiences are immersed but they do not affect the performance of the experiences, unlike the escapist realm. Esthetic experiences can also be related to authenticity and should be presented to its visitors as true and real, both in terms of the actual experience and the experience itself (Pine II & Gilmore, 1999).
Pine II and Gilmore (1999) discusses that the Rainforest Café is an esthetic experience. The café gives off a feeling of being in the middle of the rainforest, where visitors are surrounded by flora, animals, and waterfalls and different weathers. Despite containing the latter elements however, the Rainforest Café does not emphasize on imitating an experience for its visitors, but instead to create an esthetic and authentic experience so that visitors can get a sense of being in the rainforest (Pine II & Gilmore, 1999).

Much like the Rainforest Café, the anime themed cafés in Japan can perhaps be considered similar experiences. With its elements such as food and drinks named after anime, and

merchandise sold at the anime café, be perceived as an aesthetic experience? Among the Norwegian anime enthusiasts interviewed, as mentioned in chapter six, respondent 2 had the experience of visiting anime cafés. The respondent described these locations as pop-up cafés, which are usually held for a month at a time. When visiting the pop-up café, respondent 2 described that they consumed food that contained names from their favourite anime series *Yu Yu Hakusho* that the café was themed after (Respondent 2), which is very similar to my own experience regarding pop-up and anime cafés. During respondent 2's visit, *Yu Yu Hakusho* was celebrating their twenty-five-year anniversary. The location sold merchandise from the anime and respondent 2 expressed that they bought a great deal of keychains (Respondent 2). When it comes to my own experiences of visiting anime themed cafés, the behaviours described by respondent 2 are also very similar to my behaviours. As mentioned in my *Auto-Ethnography* chapter, I attended an anime café four years ago in Japan. The café was themed after my favourite anime *Durarara*, where the site was decorated with elements from the anime and sold and handed out merchandise, as well as sold food and drinks with a relation to the anime. It was an aesthetic experience, and the overall experience left me with a feeling of authenticity, as the café had thought of everything that could give their visitors an amazing experience.

A motivation regarding visiting anime themed cafés could perhaps be to immerse oneself and enter a different world, or perhaps to feel closer to one's favourite anime? During my visit to the *Durarara* café, I felt very close to the anime, as the café seemed to create an immersing experience for its visitors where almost everything at the location revolved around *Durarara*. Respondent 2 expressed that they found it important to visit anime locations if it meant something to them, such as with the *Yu Yu Hakusho* café. *Yu Yu Hakesho* was expressed as being one of the first anime series the respondent saw, and the respondent described the discovering of the café event as being something they had to experience (Respondent 2).

In addition to the anime themed cafés, perhaps the anime art form can help create esthetic experiences? Can the latter be considered as a form for art tourism? According to Adrian Franklin (2018), art tourism is a form for travelling where seeing art is the main objective, and where individuals either conduct travels explicitly for art or where other individuals include trips to art locations in their holiday planning. Instead of in a tourism setting however, Bennett, Foster and Smith (cited in Franklin, 2018, p. 400) argue that individuals often create perceptions of art in the art world, where they will also form wishes to experience the arts.

This argument strengthens the entertainment realm in the *Experience Realms* model and film-tourism imaginaries theories, where it is argued that consumers imagine fictional worlds they have seen in television series, films and books in their minds, as discussed by Connell, p. 1024, Lean et al., and Urry and Larsen (cited in Reijnders, 2016, p. 673).

As I discussed earlier, the same applies for anime tourism and anime enthusiasts. However, in regard to esthetic experiences, anime enthusiasts would not necessarily imagine real life locations in accordance with locations seen in anime, but rather focus on the art form and anime art tourists would perhaps value the aesthetics of the locations more instead.

In addition to valuing aesthetics of real-life locations, I also believe that anime enthusiasts that focus more on the art aspects of anime would value visiting anime or manga museums, such as The Ghibli Museum in Japan. As mentioned in the *Background description* chapter, this attraction is a museum which interior is designed after elements from Ghibli films that offer its visitors several experiences related to the films, such as learning about how they were made (Ghibli Museum, 2001-2019a).

As mentioned, respondent 6 showed an interest in visiting the museum, especially in terms of purchasing goods. The goods seemed to focus on the art form of the Ghibli films, as the respondent expressed a desire to own film-reels containing drawings or pictures of Ghibli films (Respondent 6). In terms of esthetics, purchasing aesthetic goods and the atmosphere at the museum itself, could perhaps be perceived as an esthetic experience and be a motivator in wanting to conduct anime-induced travels to Japan.

7.2 Types of anime enthusiasts

As presented in chapter three, it seems that the more one is immersed in the anime world, the more important it is to visit anime locations in real life and merge them with fiction, as discussed by Kasai and Hsu (cited in Kirillova et al., 2018, p. 269). There are three different types of anime enthusiasts in terms of this argument as presented by Kirillova et al. (2018), which can also be discussed when investigating motivations.

As mentioned, Kirillova et al. (2018) refers to anime tourists as different from other travellers going to Japan, as the anime tourists emphasize to merge fiction with reality. The authors also discuss the different types of enthusiasts when it comes to the level of importance of merging reality with fantasy. These enthusiasts can be described as otakus, anime fans and anime audiences. Azuma (2009) describes otakus as devoted followers of Japanese popular culture elements such as anime, manga and video games. Lin and Tu (cited in Kirillova et al., 2018,

p. 269) on the other hand describes otakus as individuals that are often obsessed with anime, involved in the anime world, and that watches anime every day.

The anime fans usually have great knowledge about certain anime and are often active in communities and fandoms. This makes their involvement higher than the anime audience's, which are individuals characterized as enthusiasts that occasionally watch anime (Kirillova et al., 2018).

When it comes to the different anime enthusiast categories, I have discussed the Norwegian anime enthusiasts and what type they can fit the description of. Placing the enthusiasts in one category each however is a bit difficult, not only in regard to finding a category that fits, but also because I believe there are more sides to how individuals are characterized instead of just one. Therefore, I have decided to characterize some of the respondents as more than one of the categories.

7.2.1 Otaku

Since otaku fans are devoted fans of Japanese popular culture (Azuma, 2009), Kirillova et al. (2018) discusses that perhaps merging fantasy with reality is something of higher importance to such enthusiasts, rather than regular anime admirers. As mentioned, Kasai and Hsu (cited in Kirillova et al., 2018, p. 269) argued that anime enthusiasts are more likely to visit Japan, if the enthusiasts are more immersed in the anime world. As an argument in terms of Kirillova et al. (2018) and their definition of anime enthusiasts and my empirical results, only one respondent could identify themselves as an otaku fan, but not in the sense of being overly addicted, which differs from Lin and Tu's (cited in Kirillova et al., 2018, p. 269) definition of otaku fans as obsessed. In my interview with respondent 5, the individual seemed to know a great deal about anime, from elements that are often used in anime to Japanese culture. This included everything from Japanese etiquette in the way youngsters speak to elders, to how villages and cities are described in anime as clean and tidy. These forms for culture, is something candidate 5 expressed that they had seen be portrayed in anime. The knowledge respondent 5 had about anime specifically, seemed to include elements largely used in anime such as cherry blossom trees, Japanese shrines, but also other minor elements such as soda bottles and how seasons of the year are shown (Respondent 5):

"*The part of spring where it is flowery, where it is not dry. One can see that in anime, but it sort of seems more romantic to go on a trip where it is spring, where it is not as dry*" (Respondent 5).

"*It is so typical to see, if you see in old series regarding barn buildings and such, you always see when people go around stairs if there are, if you follow an anime character who are under stairs or a mouse...there are always an empty bottle of ramune in a corner under the stairs each time*" (Respondent 5).

The fact that candidate 5 knows a great deal about and senses small details in anime, can perhaps make them fit into the otaku category where otaku fans are characterized as individuals that are immersed in the anime world as described by Lin and Tu (cited in Kirillova et al., 2018, p. 269), but also where otakus are described as dedicated fans of anime (Azuma, 2009). If the candidate knew about only particular anime series or films, it would perhaps be more fitting to characterize them as anime fans, as described by Kirillova et al. (2018). However, since the thoughts seemed to refer to anime in general, perhaps the otaku fan category is the most fitting.

Respondent 1 also showed signs of being an otaku, but instead the respondent chose the word 'closet otaku' and nerd. The nerd definition was described by the respondent to include other fandoms the respondent had an interest in such as *Star Wars*, *Harry Potter* and role-playing. The respondent chose to go by this identity, instead of naming himself or herself an anime nerd or someone that likes anime (Respondent 1). The candidate seemed reluctant when it came to recognize their interest for anime as a part of their identity during the interviews. When asked, the respondent answered with:

"*To tell people that do not have an understanding for anime and who thinks that anime is just hentai and such, who thinks anime is something perverted or very childish, are things I slightly restrain myself from. Because I do not want to be placed in a box, like some kind of weirdo or something*" (Respondent 1).

The above answer revolved around sharing anime with individuals that are not familiar with the phenomenon and can perhaps be linked with how the word otaku is perceived. Discussing the word and identifying oneself, as an otaku is a bit difficult, as the word itself has earlier

been perceived as something negative. The word was used to describe an otaku by the name of Tsutomu Miyazaki, who raped and murdered young girls in 1989 (Okamoto, 2015; Azuma, 2009). Otakus have also been defined as someone who stays too much inside and rarely leave their houses, indulging themselves in the world of anime, manga and games. These individuals have also often been described as individuals with little to no social skills. In the Western world, the word is usually used to describe individuals that are consumed with anime, manga and games (Merriam-Webster, 2019c).

Due to this, identifying oneself as an otaku could perhaps still be a bit difficult, although the meaning of the word is changing into something more positive today (Merriam-Webster, 2019c). Respondent 1 also expressed that they do not have any problems with the anime definition, but that they are afraid that other individuals do and therefore it is difficult to identify oneself as an anime nerd (Respondent 1).

Although not identifying themselves as an otaku, respondent 6 also seemed to fit the description of an otaku fan, in terms of being a devoted fan of popular culture (Azuma, 2009). When asked if their anime interest was a part of their identity, respondent 6 answered that it could, and that anime has been their main hobby for many years and that it means a lot to them. In addition to anime, cosplay also seemed to be a big part of the respondent's identity, where their interest for the hobby started with anime (Respondent 6).

7.2.2 Otaku and anime fan

Respondent 4 is a bit more difficult to place as they can fit the description of Kirillova et al. (2018) and their description of anime fans as being occupied by certain anime, and Lin and Tu's (cited in Kirillova et al., 2018, p. 269) description of the otaku fan, due to the respondent's high involvement and knowledge of the anime world. Therefore, the respondent can perhaps be characterized as a combination of both categories? The respondent seemed to know quite a lot about anime, but does not seem as immersed in the anime world as respondent 1 and 5. When asked about the importance of visiting anime locations, the respondent answered that it was not of high importance, but rather due to having the time, money and the desire to travel (Respondent 4). If the respondent identified themselves as an otaku fan, perhaps they would feel a stronger desire to conduct anime-induced travels to Japan, as otakus are described as anime consumers that are deeply immersed in the world of anime as mentioned by Lin and Tu (cited in Kirillova et al., 2018, p. 269). On the other hand,

however, the respondent had knowledge of several phenomena in Japan related to anime. Some of these phenomena were referred to as *roadshows*. The respondent described the *roadshows* as pop-up shops, which appears before the releases of new anime series or films. The shops are used to market these anime franchises, especially the big ones (Respondent 4). Other factors that can perhaps place the respondent in the otaku category, is the way they identify themselves. When asked if their interest in anime can be a part of their identity, the respondent answered that it can. In addition to this, the respondent answered that they have several tattoos from different anime series, as well as other fandoms (Respondent 4). These answers alone do however not determine the respondent as an otaku fan, as the characterization of Kirillova et al. (2018) anime fans can also fit this answer. As mentioned, anime fans are described as anime enthusiasts that have a certain amount of knowledge regarding specific anime and the world of anime (Kirillova et al. 2018). In regard to this, respondent 4 seemed to have great knowledge about certain anime series. However, I believe that for anime enthusiasts to have tattoos from anime or other fandoms for that matter can be characterized as otaku fans. The reason for this is because otakus are often described as individuals with a high involvement in the anime world as described by Lin and Tu (cited in Kirillova et al., 2018, p. 269), and having tattoos can show that the respondent is immersed in the anime world.

7.2.3 Anime fan or anime audience?

Respondent 2 and 3 seem to fit the description of anime fans, even though they both expressed that they do not watch as much anime as they used to in the past (Respondent 2 and 3). The reason why the respondents fit the characterization of anime fans in accordance to Kirillova et al. (2018) and their description is since throughout the interviews the respondents seemed to have knowledge about specific anime (Respondent 2 and 3). As mentioned, anime fans are characterized as enthusiasts with knowledge of certain anime (Kirillova et al., 2018).

Respondent 3 expressed that if they find anime series, they find interesting today they would watch it. In the past however, the respondent used to watch a lot of anime, and anime was expressed as being a part of their identity more during that time than now (Respondent 3), which could perhaps make the characterization of anime audience fit better. However, the respondent seemed to show an interest anime, and to visit theme parks related with the anime, or anime series they like (Respondent 3).

Respondent 2 also seemed to have knowledge about certain anime and can, despite that they do not watch much anime anymore (Respondent 2), perhaps fit the characterization of anime fan better than anime consumers who are not as invested in the world of anime (Kirillova et al. 2018). Like respondent 4, respondent 2 also had knowledge about certain phenomena related with anime, such as pop-up cafés in Japan. As mentioned, the candidate described the pop-up cafés as cafés that appear and stay for approximately one month at a time (Respondent 2), which usually have certain anime as theme. The respondent was also familiar with the concept of anime pilgrimage, which they had gained information about through youtubers or cosplay channels they follow on social media (Respondent 2). Although this does not define which type of anime enthusiast respondent 2 can be characterized as, it does tell me that the respondent seems more invested in the anime world than a general anime audience would be. So perhaps in terms of the answers gained in the interview, respondent 2 can be characterized as an anime fan instead of a fan that is not as invested in the anime world, which characterizes anime audiences (Kirillova et al., 2018).

7.3 Norwegian anime enthusiasts' travel motivations

When it comes to motivation and in addition to combining fantasy with real life and anime imaginaries, the Norwegian anime admirers are each seemingly driven by individual motivations. As mentioned, three different categories of tourism motivations were revealed during my interviews such as 'traveling out of interest', 'traveling to meet individuals with the same interests' and 'experiencing anime through theme parks'. The first motivator that deals with traveling due to interest reveals answers from my interviews that especially fit with Crompton's (1979) push factors such as leisure travel and escape. The second motivator reveals answers that can be connected to the push factor interaction and Kirillova et al. (2018) and their motivation theories regarding social belonging. The last motivator that deals with visiting anime theme parks have related to several theories regarding tourism motivation.

7.3.1 Traveling out of interest

'Traveling out of interest' is one of the results from my empirical interviews, and was answered by two of the respondents, namely respondent 4 and 5. How can we define what interest is, however? Does the act of conducting anime-induced travels go beyond interests

and are they important for the Norwegian anime enthusiasts to conduct? Or is it simply related to pursuing hobbies?

As mentioned in chapter three, tourist motivation is often related with push and pull factors, where push factors help decide why tourists want to conduct travels, whereas pull factors revolves around which travel destination to choose (Crompton, 1979).

I believe that in order to travel out of interest, the Norwegian anime fans must have something that pushes them to travel. Perhaps the interest in anime is the push factor, while the desire to visit anime locations is the pull factor? From my empirical findings, the push factors revolving around leisure travel and an escape of everyday life dominated my interview results. The answers were provided by respondent 4 and 5, and mainly revolved around question four from my interview guide: *Do you have any motivations to conduct these kinds of (anime pilgrimage) travels? Which ones?*"

Leisure travels and relaxation

Relaxation and leisure travels seemed to be in focus in respondent 4's answers. Leisure travel or relaxation in this sense relates to pursuing one's interests and activities related to it, as according to Crompton (1979). Instead of physical recreation, relaxation becomes a mental state here. Such travels are often decided during vacations due to extra time, and not decided when planning holidays (Crompton, 1979). Regarding the Norwegian anime enthusiasts' planning of anime-induced travels, I believe that trips related to hobbies and interests are indeed planned ahead of traveling. As I believe that anime enthusiasts form imaginaries about favourite anime works when consuming anime, as Sabre (2016) discusses in connection to French anime fans, I believe that the anime enthusiasts would plan how to pursue their anime interests before traveling to Japan and not conduct such trips on impulse while being in Japan.

In regard to asking respondent 4 about their motivations for conducting anime-induced travels, the answers given referred to that it would be a fun experience and due to having an interest in the culture (Respondent 4). The culture here can perhaps be referred to as the Japanese culture, but also that anime is a part of this culture. In Kirillova et al. (2018) and their paper, leisure and relaxation also referred to being interested in Japanese culture. However, the motivation scored little points among the Chinese anime enthusiasts (Kirillova et al., 2018). The motivator does however fit well with respondent 4's answers, due to their interest for Japanese culture.

In addition to traveling to Japan and conducting anime-induced travels, respondent 4 also expressed the wish to visit locations other places in the world, which have a connection to anime such as anime conventions (Respondent 4). Discussing Crompton's (1979) theory, the latter answer can be considered a leisure travel push factor, as it relates to the respondent's pursuing of interests and activities related to it.

When it comes to respondent 5, the leisure and relaxation factor can also be a drive to conduct anime travels. Although it is not directly stated by the respondent that leisure travel is a push factor to conduct anime travels, it could perhaps be implied in their answers. In terms of, traveling out of interest seemed to be emphasized in answers given (Respondent 5). As an answer to the question "*Do you have any motivations to conduct these kinds of (anime pilgrimage) travels? Which ones?*" respondent 5 expressed that anime series are often being portrayed as being positive laden and enjoyable (Respondent 5):

"*It is a thing anime's have been able to do, which other films have not succeeded so well with, that it can be a heavy story to tell, like Wolf Children. It is a very tragic story, but you cannot help enjoying yourself while watching it*" (Respondent 5).

In regard to the answer above, candidate 5 expressed that they believe the positive portrayal of anime have been a motivator in wanting to travel to Japan. The feeling of recognizing a place where one has never been before but has seen so many times in an enjoyable light, is something candidate 5 believes would be a great experience. According to respondent 5, these locations does not have to be depicted in a positive laden light in real life, but just the feeling of seeing tall houses and fences on each corner, gives off its own atmosphere (Respondent 5). Connected with Crompton's (1979) push factor theory, the above answer can be related to pursuing one's interests and activities related to it. The interest in this sense could refer to traveling to locations such as the ones observed in anime series and films, while activities related to the latter can be referred to as the practise of experiencing these locations.

When thinking about leisure and relaxation however, one does not usually think that it refers to performing tourist activities regarding ones interests. Instead, it is often related to travels where the main goal is to simply relax and getting away from everyday routines, for example destinations associated with warm places and beach holidays. Such holidays can give individuals both a physical and a mental relaxation, instead of just a mental relaxation like

Crompton (1979) refers to as the relaxation and leisure push factor. Then again, Crompton's (1979) theory describes this factor as a mental state where tourists are pushed to travel by their interests. When it comes to my empirical results, I believe that the Norwegian anime fans can experience both a mental and a physical relaxation when conducting anime-induced travels. Respondent 4 and 5 are perhaps pushed to travel by their interest in anime, but I also believe they are pushed to conduct such travels due to a wish to physically relax and getting away from everyday routines. At the same time, I believe they seek physical relaxation, especially respondent 4, which refers to conducting anime-induced travels as an escape of everyday life (Respondent 4).

As Kirillova et al. (2018) discusses about leisure and relaxation, is that Chinese anime enthusiasts does not wish to conduct relaxation and sightseeing holidays. However, in regard to respondent 4's answer, a relaxation holiday seems to be more sought after (Respondent 4).

An escape

In theory, I believe one can get away from everyday routines and experience new environments and cultures by traveling. In the first part of the analysis and discussion, I described escape in terms of being actively involved in experiences as presented by Csikszentmihalyi (cited in Pine II & Gilmore, 1999, p. 33, 211), and to be immersed (Pine II & Gilmore, 1999). Crompton's (1979) push and pull factors also contains escapement. According to Crompton (1979), the push factor that relates to an escape from everyday life refers to experiencing new environments and getting away from your own surroundings. It is no secret that everyday routines can become quite repetitive or tedious over a certain period, or perhaps even stressful. Individuals can thrive in their jobs and student life, but still need to experience something new occasionally. As mentioned in chapter three, Crompton's (1979) research showed that there were no specific destinations that would give tourists the ultimate escape, but the travel destination had to be another location than where the tourists lived.

A break from everyday routines is something I believe is easily achievable through travelling, especially if the travel destination is related to something fictional, as with anime tourism. Respondent 4 expressed that conducting anime pilgrimage travels was not of high importance, but instead referred to these kinds of travels as a hobby and escape from everyday life (Respondent 4). In addition to answers related with the relaxation push factor, the latter

answer also seems to reveal that respondent 4 thinks of anime-induced travels as relaxation and leisure. Does this mean that conducting anime travels for candidate 4 relates more to pursuing hobbies? I believe the latter is the case, as conducting anime travels was not of high importance, but can rather be related to the desire to relax on holidays. In addition, it is important to stress which anime type respondent 4 fits well with. Earlier in this chapter, I discussed the two forms of anime fan and otaku in regard to the interview conducted with respondent 4. I discussed that the respondent could be a combination of both anime enthusiast types, due to the respondents immersion of the anime world, which defines the otaku fan by Lin and Tu (cited in Kirillova et al., 2018, p. 269), but also due to the respondents knowledge about certain anime, which defines the anime fan (Kirillova et al. 2018). I also mentioned that respondent 4 would perhaps feel a stronger desire to conduct anime-induced travels to Japan, if they were deeply immersed in the world of anime, such as otaku fans are described by Lin and Tu (cited in Kirillova et al., 2018, p. 269), and therefore would emphasize escape more. Escape in regard to travelling to locations with a relation to fictitious worlds or realities, such as places used in anime television shows or films gives tourists an opportunity to re-live scenes according to Adams et al. (cited in Reijnders, 2016, p. 673). In addition to Crompton (1979), Kirillova et al. (2018) also discusses escape as a motivator for Chinese anime enthusiasts in wanting to travel to Japan. The motivator had a low score but was revealed as a drive connected to the motivator of merging fantasy with reality. The merging fiction with reality factor referred to re-living scenes from anime, or to show dedication to anime works by conducting 'sacred' anime pilgrimages (Kirillova et al., 2018).

Regarding respondent 4, this theory does not correlate well with answers given by the respondent. As discussed earlier, respondent 4 fit well with Crompton's (1979) definition of escape well, as the respondent described anime travels as a hobby and escape from everyday life, and not as travels that are important to conduct (Respondent 4).

Pine II and Gilmore's (1999) description of escape as being immersed and actively participating in experiences can perhaps be connected to how otakus are usually immersed in the world of anime as stated by Lin and Tu (cited in Kirillova et al., 2018, p. 269). Perhaps in order to wish for escape, tourists must be actively involved in something, such as for example the anime community. As discussed, Kasai and Hsu (cited in Kirillova et al., 2018, p. 269) connects the desire to conduct anime travels in relation to how immersed one is in the anime world? Kirillova et al. (2018) discusses this in terms of otakus, as they are seemingly more motivated to conduct anime pilgrimage travels due their involvement with the anime world.

However, I believe that anyone could wish for escape. As mentioned, individuals could find themselves to simply wanting to escape everyday life and routines and does not necessarily need to be a part of a community.

In my interview with respondent 5, a wish to escape was not exclusively stated. However, an analysis of the respondent's answers revealed that a wish to escape could still be desired and could perhaps fit Kirillova et al. (2018) and their description of merging fantasy with reality in terms of re-living specific scenes from anime series and films. Respondent 5 would also be actively participating and being immersed in the anime experiences and could perhaps strengthen respondent 5's definition of an otaku fan. As discussed, the respondent could fit this anime enthusiast type as the respondent knew a great deal about anime, from elements that are often used in anime to Japanese culture (Respondent 5). The respondent's answers can also be related to Kirillova et al. (2018) and their definition of merging fantasy with reality in relation to otakus and the wish to re-live scenes from anime. What is interesting to note in regard to respondent 5 and anime tourism is that instead of visiting specific locations used in anime series or films, respondent 5 expressed that they would instead do research on places they believe are similar to elements they have seen in the films and series they like. These areas revolved around nature elements they would like to see, such as flower meadows and cherry blossom trees (Respondent 5).

In addition to experiencing elements from nature, respondent 5 expressed their wish to visit a Japanese shrine and receiving a fortune note (Respondent 5), which I believe refers to the practise of *omikuji* in Japan.

Seemingly in Japanese culture, receiving *omikuji* at shrines is a popular practise that goes back a thousand years in history. Its purpose is to tell fortunes for the future and often includes predicaments for work relations, studies, health and love. The *omikuji* are drawn at the shrines and can contain both bad and good fortunes. If a good fortune note is drawn it can be brought with the individual. However, if a bad luck note is received, it is common to tie the notes at a given area close to the shrines (JNTO, 2016).

The wish to visit a Japanese shrine and receiving a fortune note related to what respondent 5 had seen in anime series and films. This practise seemed to be sought after, as candidate 5 expressed the wish to undergo the same practises as they had seen their anime characters do numerous times and to recognize elements they had seen in shrines in real life (Respondent

5), which strengthens the theory of Kirillova et al. (2018) and their description of merging fantasy and reality in terms of re-living scenes.

The latter answers also tell me that the wish or motivation to undergo anime-induced travels is related with a merging of fiction and reality. Can candidate 5 and their drive to conduct the anime travels relate to a wish to experience fictional worlds in real life? In order to discuss this, I believe it is important to note that respondent 5's answers could also be related to Crompton's (1979) definition of relaxation and leisure as a pursuing of interests.

What is driving the respondent to conduct anime-induced travels could also be a merging of fantasy and reality, but it would also be because the respondent would want to pursue their interests. As a main motivation for conducting anime travels to Japan is however related to the wish to merge fantasy with reality (Kirillova et al., 2018). In regard to the latter statement, the reason for my thoughts is due to candidate 5's wish to experience areas in Japan that are similar to elements and landscape they have seen in anime series and films that they like, including Japanese shrines (Respondent 5). The fictional world in this sense would refer to elements seen in anime series and films, while reality are the physical elements or places seen in anime. From the interview findings, respondent 5 describes their wish as:

"*To see something that is very typical for the country and the culture you have seen portrayed in television series or been mentioned in episodes in a series and such, I think that would give me more*" (Respondent 5).

Respondent 5 also expressed this answer with a connection to being recommended anime locations by other anime enthusiasts and expressed that it would perhaps be more memorable traveling to such locations (Respondent 5).

The theories of merging fantasy with reality and traveling to pursue interests can both be related to wanting to escape mundane life, as Crompton's (1979) description of escape refers to. Traveling on anime journeys in it could perhaps be due to being motivated to escape everyday routines but can relate to other motivational factors. Together with these theories, respondent 5's motivation regarding traveling out interests correlates well with escape.

7.3.2 Traveling to meet individuals with the same interests

Traveling to meet like-minded individuals with the same interests as themselves is also one of the motivators revealed in my empirical interviews when it comes to conducting anime-induced travels to Japan. This motivator was given as answers by respondent 1 and 2 from my interviews and relates to question three from my interviews especially: "*Have you travelled outside of Japan to places linked with anime? What kind of places were these and where was it?*"

Interaction

Since interacting with other individuals is the key element related to the motivator presented above, discussing Crompton's (1979) push factor *interaction* is interesting. Crompton (1979) argues that interacting with other individuals is an experience many leisure tourists aim to fulfil. These interactions are placed in different and foreign settings, outside the realms of the tourists' familiar surroundings. While some of the leisure tourists' wish is to exchange different views and opinions with others outside of familiar realms regarding certain matters, other tourists seek to form new social relations (Crompton, 1979).

These forms for interaction seem to correlate well with my empirical findings, as meeting other individuals with the same interests as oneself can result in exchanging information and forming new relationships. In Crompton's (1979) research, interacting with local communities seemed to be sought after by leisure tourists however, but was not always fulfilled due to communication difficulties, resulting in tourists interacting with other tourists. When it comes to my empirical findings, social interactions were shown to especially happen at cosplay conventions or events. According to Beeton (2016), the latter can be defined as fan events, where visitors can often meet celebrities from their favourite works such as at Comic Con (figure 7.3, 1). According to Okamoto (2015), the act of cosplaying is described as a part of anime tourist behaviour and is described as an activity where individuals dress up as favourite fictional characters (JNTO, n.d. c, JNTO, 2011). In addition to big conventions, cosplayers also often attend smaller events (Okamoto, 2015).

7.3 Figure 1: Comic Con London

Photograph by: (MCM Comic Con London, 2017)

As the main objective seemed to be meeting other individuals with the same interests as themselves (Respondent 1 and 2), interacting with local communities did not seem to correlate well with my findings. Instead, respondent 1 and 2 seem to wish to interact with other anime or cosplay fans, especially at conventions. Such events are also perfect places for fans of the same community to meet up and exchange their thoughts and ideas revolving around specific fandoms. Such fandoms can be characterized as 'imagined communities' according to Anderson p. 224 (cited in Sabre, 2016, p. 06), where participants in such communities have common interests, but do not necessarily know each other personally. Sabre (2016) describes that being a fan of something includes one self's imaginaries regarding what one is a fan of, but also the feeling of being a part of a bigger community where everybody shares the same interests. Being a part of such communities can perhaps also create a sense of belongingness in society? As mentioned in chapter three, Kirillova et al. (2018) discuss that one of the motivators for Chinese anime enthusiasts to conduct anime travels to Japan related to feeling like a part of society. For the latter to be a motivator, I believe that it is first important to uncover what type of anime enthusiast one identifies oneself with. According to Kirillova et al. (2018), otakus are showed to emphasize the motivator social belonging the highest amongst all anime enthusiasts.

In the first part of this thesis, I discussed the relevance of what type of anime enthusiast the Norwegian anime admirers could be defined as and concluded with that both respondent 1 and 2 was not in the category of otaku, due to the respondents to not wanting to identify themselves as such (respondent 1) and due to too little involvement in the world of anime (respondent 2). Although the respondents did not identify themselves as otakus, they could perhaps still want to feel like a part of a social group. Perhaps the respondents seek to be part of 'imagined communities' and thus are motivated to conduct travels to cosplay conventions?

From my empirical findings, it seems that interacting with other individuals is what is pushing both respondent 1 and 2 to travel. Respondent 2 which answered that meeting others with the same interests was a motivator for anime-induced traveling, expressed that it is easier to engage in conversations when both have the same interests (Respondent 2). The latter answer can strengthen the theory about being part of fandoms, as discussed above.

Respondent 1's answer was slightly similar where they expressed that they are motivated to travel by the wish to meet other individuals that fancies the same anime series and films such as themselves. Since the respondent expressed that they are planning to start cosplaying (Respondent 1), this answer tells me that the respondent wishes to interact with like-minded individuals at cosplay conventions. Kirillova et al. (2018) and their research on Chinese anime tourist motivators, revealed that interaction in terms of cosplaying was a big travel motivator in wanting to travel to Japan. Here, the act of cosplaying in order to feel closer to favourite characters was emphasized, which can be connected to the category of fantasy and fiction, as cosplayers dress up as fictional characters in real life (Kirillova et al., 2018).

At the conventions, the respondent expressed that they wished to take photographs with individuals, seemingly in cosplay costumes (Respondent 1). Due to the latter, in addition to being pushed to travel by interaction with others, respondent 1 also seems motivated to visit cosplay conventions to dress up and to immerse themselves in a fictional world. As mentioned in the beginning of this chapter, I described respondent 1's imaginaries regarding cosplay conventions in terms of immersing oneself in another world due to meeting cosplayers dressed up as characters from ones favourite series and films. Respondent 1 also expressed the act of cosplaying themselves as a source of immersion into another world (Respondent 1). Perhaps cosplaying can be applied to Caughey's (cited in Reijnders, 2016, p. 674) argument revolving around living in two worlds? According to Caughey (cited in Reijnders, 2016, p. 674), humans live in two separate worlds where one is built on fiction and the other one is the existing reality we live in today, whereas the existing reality is experienced through our senses and requires physical involvement, while the fictional world is based on imagination. Although cosplaying is a physical activity, perhaps it can relate to a fictional world as well? As cosplayers dress up as fictional characters, they often enter another role. It is not unusual for cosplayers to copy the looks and characteristics of a character as accurately as possible. For some it comes with the activity of cosplaying and for others it is way of showing admiration to a character according to Winge, and Caffrey (cited

in Kincaid, 2016, web). When dressing up, cosplayers are present in the existing reality due to cosplaying being a physical activity, but they are also present in a fictional world. I believe that this world can have been created in individuals' mind, as imaginaries refer to an individual phenomenon (Salazar, 2010), or are something cosplayers create together. Here I believe imagined communities play a part, as they are described as fandoms where members share the same interests according to Anderson, p. 224 (cited in Sabre, 2016, p. 06).

Respondent 1 also expressed a wish to visit locations where they had the opportunity to experience the same atmosphere that they recognize from anime (Respondent 1), which is like respondent 5's answer, which also wishes to feel a similar atmosphere (Respondent 5).

7.3.3 Theme parks and anime

The last motivator relates to anime theme parks and revolves around answers given by respondent 3. During the interview, the respondent showed an interest in visiting amusement or theme parks, instead of real-life locations that have been featured in anime series or films. When asked what would motivate them to visit theme parks, the respondent's answer seemed to relate to if they would be in Japan or not, and not necessarily travel to Japan to visit these locations. In relation to the latter answer, the respondent expressed that if possible; they would want to visit the amusement parks if they were themed after anime that the respondent likes. The respondent also expressed that they would like to experience what theme parks have created in accordance to anime, and to experience it first-hand instead of just absorbing it on screen (Respondent 3).

Tailored experiences

According to Beeton (2016), on-site location visitation is often enough motivation for film tourists to conduct film-induced travels, where the actual film locations are situated. The practise of visiting theme or amusement parks falls under the category of commercial off-locations, which in addition often revolves around film studios and museums (Beeton, 2016). In accordance to respondent 3 and their answers, theme or amusement parks seem to correlate best with the description of film studio theme parks, as presented by Beeton, (2016). In this description, the film studio theme parks are defined as locations where no filming have been taking place, but are mainly built for tourism (Beeton, 2016).

Although the theme and amusement parks respondent 3 expressed a wish to visit are not actual anime locations that have been featured in anime, they are still locations where anime enthusiasts can indulge themselves in anime experiences. While some anime enthusiasts seek out real life locations used in anime, others have a stronger wish to experience anime through other activities. As mentioned, respondent 3 had imaginaries and perceptions regarding activities at theme parks, such as different rides and carousels that have been shown in anime where characters have visited amusement parks (Respondent 3). The answer was given when asked what the respondent would expect to experience at anime locations.

In the *Background description* of this thesis, I presented several theme parks in Japan that either features anime or are anime attractions, where two of these theme parks can be found in JNTO's (2013) *Practical Travel Guide – Animation in Japan* such as J-World Tokyo and Fuji-Q Highland. Universal Studios Japan can also be considered an anime location, as they feature seasonal shows and attractions related to anime, such as the One Piece Premier Show and a 4D show about the anime *Sailor Moon* (Universal Studios Japan, n.d. a, Universal Studios Japan, n.d. b).

Are tailored experiences such as the latter's, enough motivation for anime enthusiasts to conduct anime travels to Japan? In regards to respondent 3's answer and what most theme park experiences entail, I believe that the answer to this question is both yes and no. I also believe that how strong a motivator is in terms of visiting anime theme parks, is related to how immersed an anime enthusiast is in the world of anime. As mentioned by Lin and Tu (cited in Kirillov et al., 2018, p. 269), an otaku would perhaps feel a stronger need to visit real life locations that have been featured in anime, than an anime fan or anime audience, due to their involvement with the world of anime. Due to this, perhaps the anime fans and anime audience would find it more fulfilling to visit anime theme and amusement parks, instead of real-life locations? As discussed earlier in this analysis, I argued that respondent 3 could perhaps fit the definition of both an anime fan and anime audience. I concluded with that the respondent fits the description of an anime fan, due to their interest for particular anime, and to visit theme parks related with the anime, or anime series they like in general (Respondent 3). Despite this discussion, respondent 3 could also be described as one that watches anime from time to time and is not as invested in the world of anime (Kirillova et al., 2018). The latter relates to the answers respondent 3 gave in regards to if visiting anime locations is important to them, and what motivates them to conduct such travels. As mentioned, the respondent expressed that if they had been in Japan, they would try to visit amusement parks,

if they were themed after anime they like (Respondent 3). This tells me that the motivator presented would not alone be enough motivation to conduct anime-induced travels to Japan. Again, if the respondent were an otaku fan, perhaps this motivation would be strong enough.

Kirillova et al. (2018) argue that tailored experiences such as Disneyland are created in order to fulfil its fans' fantasies and imaginaries, differentiating them from locations featured in anime that are real life locations. The latter statement strengthens the argument on how involved one is in the anime world affects your travel destination, as discussed by Kasai and Hsu (cited in Kirillova et al., 2018, p. 269).

However, I also believe otaku fans would find tailored experiences fulfilling. Universal Studios Japan and their tailored products revolving around anime could perhaps be enough to attract otaku fans to their products, if the fans would be very invested in the anime.

Chapter 8: Conclusion

In conclusion of my research project, there are several factors that can determine what motivates Norwegian anime enthusiasts to conduct anime-induced travels to Japan. In the first part of my analysis, I discussed motivations that I believe is common for the anime enthusiasts. Thereafter I discussed the individual motivations given in my semi-structured interviews, such as 'traveling out of interest', 'traveling to meet individuals with the same interests' and 'experiencing anime through theme parks'.

I first started to discuss imaginaries regarding anime and film. As Connell p. 1024, Lean et al., and Urry and Larsen (cited in Reijnders, 2016, p. 673), discusses, film fans will often create imaginaries during the consumption of films and television shows. Sabre (2016) also discusses that French anime tourists are driven to anime locations in Japan due to creating imaginations regarding anime beforehand. Regarding this, I discussed how I believe that anime fans' main motivation to conduct anime travels was or is due to the wish of merging fantasy with reality, which is also a popular motivation amongst Chinese anime admirers according to Kirillova et al. (2018). The results from my interviews showed that not only does the Norwegian anime enthusiasts have imaginaries regarding real life anime locations, but also imaginations connected with anime theme parks and cosplay conventions. These imaginaries were described as activities and expectations the respondents had in regards to such places. Tourist behaviour was also discussed.

Anime travel motivations was also discussed in terms of common motivations and the *Experience Realms* model that revolves around four different realms such as entertainment, education, escape and esthetics, which all help characterize an experience. The entertainment realm was discussed as a stage where entertainment is passively absorbed, for example by the consumption of film and television (Pine II & Gilmore, 1999). In the analysis, I discussed that the entertainment realm can be connected to film imaginaries, in terms of imagining anime before conducting anime travels. I also discussed how anime tourism companies could attract anime tourists, as well as tourism expectations and where to find information about anime travels.

The escape realm was discussed in line with combining fiction and reality and film imaginaries, in regards to the Norwegian anime enthusiasts' motivations for conducting anime travels. As mentioned, the latter realm revolves around being active and immersed in an

experience (Pine II & Gilmore, 1999), and was discussed as the practise of visiting anime locations.

Anime tourism motivators were discussed in the education realm as travelling due to a wish of experiencing novelty or travelling to learn. As mentioned, participants in educational experiences are actively involved, but they absorb rather than immerse (Pine II & Gilmore, 1999). The interview results revealed that several of the interview candidates showed an interest in other aspects of the Japanese culture, such as food (Respondent 3 and 4) and world war history (Respondent 5). It was also discussed that the Norwegian anime enthusiasts gain knowledge about Japanese culture during the consumption of anime and that they could be motivated to conduct anime travels in order to learn.

Last but not least, the esthetics realm was discussed in terms of how the anime enthusiasts could be motivated to conduct anime-induced travels in relation to esthetics, if the enthusiasts would be motivated to experience aesthetics of a real life anime location or at anime museums, such as the Ghibli Museum. Respondent 2's experience of visiting anime pop-up cafés was also discussed in terms of being an esthetic experience (Respondent 2). In regards to the latter, my own experiences were also discussed.

8.1 Characteristics of anime enthusiasts

After discussing anime motivation in terms of the *Experience Realms* model, I tried placing the Norwegian enthusiasts in terms of what type of anime enthusiast they fit the description of. Kasai and Hsu (cited in Kirillova et al., 2018, p. 269) discussed that how important it is for anime enthusiasts to travel to anime locations is connected to how much one is involved in the world of anime, therefore discussing anime enthusiast types was important, as Kirillova et al. (2018) also discusses in terms of their research. As mentioned, Kirillova et al. (2018) distinguish between three different groups of anime enthusiasts: The otakus, anime fans, and the general anime audience. Respondent 1 and 5 were discussed as fitting the description of otakus, due to their involvement in the world of anime and knowledge about the phenomenon as Lin and Tu (cited in Kirillova et al., 2018, p. 269) discusses otakus are described as. However, respondent 1 seemed hesitant when it came to recognize their interest for anime as a part of their identity, due to other individuals' thoughts and perceptions regarding anime as

something negative. Such individuals were described as someone with no understanding of anime (Respondent 1).

In contrast to respondent 1, respondent 5 could identify themselves as an otaku, but not to the point of being overly addicted to anime. The respondent seemed to possess great knowledge about anime both in terms of recurring elements in anime and cultural elements shown in anime (Respondent 5) that made them fit the description of otakus well.

Respondent 6 was also discussed as fitting the description of otakus, even though they did not directly identify themselves as the latter. The reason for this discussion was due to their interest in anime meaning a lot to them and that anime had been their main hobby for years (Respondent 6).

I discussed whether or not respondent 4 fit the description of Kirillova et al. (2018)'s description of anime fans where individuals are described as possessing a certain degree of anime knowledge but are not as immersed in the anime world. The respondent could however also fit the description of otakus, whereas mentioned, individuals are greatly immersed in the world of anime and possesses great knowledge about said world according to Lin and Tu (cited in Kirillova et al., 2018, p. 269). I did not conclude on either type however, but rather argued that respondent 4 could be a combination of both otaku and anime fan, due to their similarities with both types.

Lastly, I discussed what type of anime enthusiast respondent 2 and 3 seemed to fit the description of. Both respondents expressed that they do not consume as much anime as they used to before, but rather watch it from time to time (Respondent 2 and 3), which characterizes anime audience enthusiasts. However, since both the respondents seemed to have knowledge about certain anime, I also discussed that they could fit the anime fan description by Kirillova et al. (2018).

8.2 Individual motivations

In addition to film imaginaries and merging fantasy with real life, I discussed motivations on an individual level. I discussed that the different tourism motivations answered by the Norwegian anime enthusiasts could be discussed in terms of other theories. 'Traveling out of interest' was revealed by three of the respondents, and answers given could be related to theories such as the push factors relaxation and leisure, as well as escape. Respondent 4's

motivations seemed to be related to leisure and relaxation travels, while respondent 5's motivators seemed to be related to escape and a wish to pursuing interests.

For the motivator of 'traveling to meet individuals with the same interests', theories regarding being motivated to conduct travels in terms of interaction were discussed, as well as Okamoto's (2015) theory regarding the otaku behaviour of cosplaying. Respondent 1 and 2 gave this motivator in terms of visiting cosplay conventions, where they could meet like-minded individuals and exchange interests (Respondent 1 and 2). I also discussed if the respondents would fit the theory of wanting to belong in a social group by Kirillova et al. (2018), especially by being a part of 'imagined communities' as discussed by Anderson, p. 224 (cited in Sabre, 2016, p. 06).

Respondent 3 provided the last motivator during interviews, which revolved around 'experiencing anime through theme parks'. The latter answer revolved around experiencing carousels and activities at anime theme parks, and to experience what theme parks have created in accordance to anime (Respondent 3). Theories about visiting on-site locations were also discussed in terms of motivation to conduct anime travels.

8.3 Further implications and research

As mentioned in the *Introduction* of this thesis, there is little information about Norwegian anime fans and anime literature in general in Norwegian literature studies. As a suggestion to further implications, perhaps an idea could be to conduct more research regarding this?

Appendix 1:

INTERVIEW GUIDE

Brief introduction: Anime pilgrimage

Anime pilgrimage is a form for tourism that has grown and gained popularity for the last twenty years. The concept of this phenomenon has a strong connection with film tourism, where the main idea is to travel to locations that have been used in movies or TV shows. The concept in anime pilgrimage is the same, but the locations are instead linked with anime TV shows, movies, or places with a connection to anime, such as events, theme parks, or museums (Okamoto, 2015; Beeton, 2016).

Questions

1. Have you heard about or are you familiar with the concept of anime pilgrimage?

2. Have you conducted anime pilgrimage travel(s) before, or visited locations with a connection to anime in Japan?
   a. If yes, did it live up to your expectations?
   b. If no, is it something you are interested in doing? What do you expect to see and experience when conducting travels like these?

3. Have you travelled outside of Japan to places linked with anime? What kind of places were these and where was it?

4. Do you have any motivations to conduct these kinds of (anime pilgrimage) travels? Which ones?

5. Is it important for you to visit anime locations? In what way?

6. Would you say that your interest in anime is a part of your identity? In what way?

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