



SCHOOL OF BUSINESS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES
AARHUS UNIVERSITY

Over policed and relatively well protected

Ethnographic insights on ethnic minority parents' perceptions of the police

PhD Dissertation

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Centre for Alcohol and Drug Research

2022

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Centre for Alcohol and Drug Research
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Handed in for assessment: 10-10-2022

Public defense: 30-01-2023

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Acknowledgements

With this PhD project, I have been so lucky as to be taken through an inspiring, transformative process – which Jock Young reminded us ought to be the case for any scientific endeavor. I am therefore grateful to all who along the way took their time to engage with me and my project.

First and foremost, thank you, Shadi. You opened Blomsterengen to me, which transformed my understanding of the everyday life in ghettoized neighbourhoods. I can only hope that my research will have further transformative effects on the forces you struggle with to improve the lives of your community members.

Thank you to my supervisors, Torsten and Geoffrey, who through encouragement and critical engagement transformed my understanding of the scientific process. Althusser was challenged, which gave room for the ethnographer.

Thank you to the PhD group, for on several occasions transforming fear to courage, uncertainty to understanding, doubt to motivation, boredom to laughter and loneliness to company.

Thank you to all the colleagues at the Centre for Drug and Alcohol research, especially the ‘policing project team’, who through port-Tuesdays, lunch-breaks, conferences, and engaged academic discussions transformed my fears of a lonely yet dedicated PhD existence to a thoroughly joyful and inspiring time. I am grateful for the friendships developed here.

Thank you to the criminologists at Aalborg University and to the ethnologists at the University of Copenhagen for the teaching opportunities, and the transformative experiences that inspired me to take on a teaching career.

Thank you, John Pratt and Jordan Andersen at Victoria University, for transforming my understanding of the Danish criminal justice system through a comparative lens. This perspective has been invaluable for understanding what is at work in the field I study, and what is in store if Denmark isn’t mindful of its penological development.

To Mike Rowe, thank you, for opening the world of Terry Pra..., ehm, I mean for sharing your enthusiasm for ethnography with me. Your encouragements to undergo the process of ‘becoming an ethnographer’ transformed my understanding of the craft and made me enjoy the writing.

And last, thank you Mie, for, well, transforming my life in many unexpected ways. But not least for your engagement in and encouragement to carry out the fieldwork. Your thoughts and reflections inspired me to do my best for unfolding the marginalization and everyday struggles in the field. Your support and interest has been invaluable, thank you!

Contents

List of publications	3
English Summary	4
Dansk resumé	10
Chapter 1 Problematizing the relation between ethnic minority communities and the police in Denmark	
Introduction	17
Findings from international research	19
Nordic studies of minority-police relations	22
Political directions of the policing of ethnic minority communities in Denmark.....	25
Danish anti-ghettoization policies.....	25
Danish anti-gang policies	33
Policy synergy, stigmatization, and status differentiation.....	37
Research question.....	40
Chapter 2 Theoretical framework	
Researching citizen-police relations	43
Police encounters and citizen perceptions of the police.....	43
Social context and police perceptions	47
Legal consciousness and the study of law from an everyday life perspective	50
Chapter 3 Methodology, data and field	
Methods: ethnography, interviews and conversations.....	56
Identification of the field, gaining access, and the interlocutors	59
Positionality.....	67
Ethical considerations and used data	70
Coding of the data.....	74

Chapter 4 Findings from the fieldwork and presentations of the publications

The many perceptions of the police	77
Findings published in articles.....	77
Perceiving the Police from the 'ghetto'	80
Blomsterengen – a neighbourhood of many voices	80
Managing crime and deviance	88
Social dynamics in the community.....	125
Policing, punishment and notions of justice.....	146

Chapter 5 Concluding perspectives and scientific contributions

Answering the research question	197
Bifurcated policing of ethnic minorities in Denmark.....	197
Perceptions of the police amongst ethnic minority parents	199
Future perspectives for community-police relations in Blomsterengen.....	204
Scientific contributions	206
Concluding perspectives	209

References	212
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Appendices.....	224
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List of publications

Madsen, M. (2021). Calling the Police from the 'ghetto': Legal Consciousness amongst Ethnic Minority Parents, *Nordic Journal of Criminology*, 22:2, 185-202
DOI: [10.1080/2578983X.2021.1985246](https://doi.org/10.1080/2578983X.2021.1985246)

Madsen, M. & Kammergaard, T. (2022). Dining with the Police: Resistance and Acceptance of Community Policing, *Nordic Journal of Studies in Policing*, 9:1, 1–15
<https://doi.org/10.18261/njsp.9.1.6>

Madsen, M. (in review). Exceptionalism for most, Excess for Other: The Legal Foundation of a Bifurcated Criminal Justice System in Denmark, submitted to *European Journal of Criminology*

English Summary

This dissertation explores how ethnic minority parents living in ghettoized neighbourhoods in Denmark, where gangs operate, view the police. The focus on minority parents has become relevant in light of recent policy discussions about and within ethnic minority communities, where the police have gained a greater role in managing social problems and preventing crime and delinquency in these communities. Especially anti-gang and -ghetto policies have led to increased policing of these communities. At the same time, gang crime has become an increasing concern for the wider Danish society as well as for the residents in the neighbourhoods where gang members live and where the gangs operate. Ethnic minority parents living in these neighbourhoods are thus caught between their fear of violent gangs, which also recruit their children, and an ever more intensive police presence. Despite these pressures, we still know very little about how ethnic minority parents view the police. From the international literature, however, we know that such situations often lead to a strained relationship between the police and the minority communities because the communities tend to feel over policed, yet under protected. Whether such a sense has developed in Denmark is the topic of this dissertation.

The recent political problematization of ethnic minority communities is explored here in Appendix 3, which presents a policy analysis of three policies aimed at reducing gang crime. The article, entitled 'Exceptionalism for most, Excess for Others: The Legal Foundation of a Bifurcated Criminal Justice System in Denmark', finds that the gang policies formulated since 2009 considered together with the so-called 'ghetto' policies formulated since 2010, led to a status differentiation in the public view of the ethnic minority population in Denmark. The result was a differentiated treatment of the ethnic minority population by the public authorities, including the police. The article shows how the first set of anti-gang policies from 2009 introduced an intended bifurcation into the Danish penal code with the formulation of a 'gang section' allowing for the doubling of sentences for gang-related crimes. With the 'gang section' in place, a selected population group (gang members) can thus be treated more strictly in the otherwise lenient Danish criminal justice system. In order for the anti-gang measures to be implemented effectively, the police were now charged with

documenting suspected gang affiliation. This task entailed an enhanced surveillance and monitoring of the gangs and of those on their periphery. Subsequent anti-gang policies extended this possibility of differentiated treatment, with continued increased sentences for gang-related crimes, revoking of prisoner's rights for those imprisoned for gang-related crimes, and reducing options for rehabilitative treatment. These policy measures stand in contrast to the traditional rehabilitation focus in the Danish criminal justice system. Instead, the anti-gang measures focused on the containment of dangerous individuals. The anti-gang packages however also strengthened so called 'EXIT programs' for gang members who wanted to leave the gang milieu. Here, those inclined to leave to the gang milieu would gain access to more traditional rehabilitative treatment along with support for developing a life outside the gang milieu. Lenient and rehabilitative treatment thus became a conditioned penal treatment, reserved for some groups of offenders but not all. Alongside these punitive aspects, the police were also granted new methods for managing gang crime and of preventing potential gang conflicts. These methods were based mainly on proactive policing practices of stop-and-search and enhanced use of pretrial detention in order to get suspected dangerous individuals off the streets quickly. This differentiated and punitive treatment tied to anti-gang measures were implemented alongside anti-ghettoization policies. In these polices there has also been found a differentiated treatment of ethnic minority residents in ghettoized neighbourhoods, though mainly in regards to access to social support initiatives, but also in regards to the implementation of community policing practices. As a result of this combination of anti-gang and -ghetto policies, there has developed an increased risk of a strained relation between the police and ethnic minority communities.

Whether such a relationship has in fact developed was explored in the Ph.D. project though an ethnographic field study in a single ghettoized neighbourhood, here anonymized as 'Blomsterengen'. Blomsterengen was one of the neighbourhoods that figured on the Danish ghetto list, which was implemented as part of the Danish 'anti-ghettoization' strategy from 2010, and it was a community where youth gangs were operating and recruiting. The ethnographic study focused particularly on how the ethnic minority parents in Blomsterengen perceived the police. The ethnic minority community living in Blomsterengen had experiences of being policed based on both

anti-gang and -ghetto policies. Residents also struggled with gang crime in their everyday lives. The findings from this field study are presented in the analytical chapter of this dissertation, entitled 'Perceiving the Police from the 'ghetto'' and in the two articles in Appendices 1 and 2, entitled 'Calling the Police from the 'Ghetto': Legal Consciousness amongst Ethnic Minority Parents', and 'Dining with the Police: Resistance and Acceptance of Community Policing'.

The chapter 'Perceiving the Police from the 'Ghetto'' presents an analysis of how the police figured in the legal consciousness of the interlocutors who participated, and thus offers a more comprehensive analysis of how the parents viewed the police than was presented in the two articles. Three overall themes were identified in the data. The first theme addressed how the police figured in the consciousness of the interlocutors with regard to the management of crime and deviance. The second theme covered how perceptions of the police developed with regard to internal social dynamics in the community. The third theme explored how experiences of how the police operated in the neighbourhood and treated community members influenced the perceptions of the police. The analysis also focuses on how police cooperation with the criminal justice system and social service institutions influenced how the police were viewed. The analysis demonstrated that there was not a single shared perception of the police amongst the parents, but rather a plurality of perceptions. Individual interlocutors even had different views of the police depending on situational, social and experiential circumstances.

In the article 'Calling the Police from the 'Ghetto'', the diverse perceptions were presented with regard to the topic of police cooperativeness, by addressing how parents assessed the degree to which they could rely on the police to manage crime and deviance in their neighbourhood. The article shows that parents conceptualized and problematized different forms of crime and deviance differently, which led them to assess whether or not they wanted police involvement. It shows how in certain cases, the police were believed to exacerbate the situation. In fact, most parents could relate narratives of police acting in an unfair or discriminatory manner, which led to some hesitancy to call the police. In other cases, situational circumstances would overrule the hesitancy, and parents were more inclined to cooperate with the police in the management of crime and deviance. This was especially the case when certain

situations were perceived as particularly dangerous or when acts of crime and deviance directly affected the law-abiding or uninvolved residents in Blomsterengen. Hesitancy about calling the police for help increased when the parents believed that the consequences of calling the police would be too severe for the troublemakers or would negatively affect the parents own status in the community. The article shows that although Danish anti-gang and anti-ghetto policies might operate with status differentiation that can lead to strained relations between the police and the community, the problem of crime and deviance was a shared concern of both parents and the police, thus providing a groundwork for cooperation. With regard to what the parents saw as less severe forms of crime and deviance, however, the Danish anti-gang and anti-ghetto policies had a negative influence on their cooperation with the police. Parents' reservations about cooperating with police lay with what they saw as unreasonably harsh penal consequences. Hence, instead of resorting to formal legal measures, the parents were motivated to find informal means of managing crime and deviance, thus avoiding the police. For the parents in Blomsterengen, therefore, cooperating with the police presented them with a dilemma. The parents had to decide when to protect the youth engaged in deviant and criminal behaviours from a harsh penal system, and when crime and deviance had become severe enough to threaten the life and welfare for residents in Blomsterengen.

In 'Dining with the Police', the varying perceptions were used in an extended case study of how some parents accepted a specific community policing initiative where the local police wanted to visit the local youth club for shared dinners, while other parents actively resisted the initiative. The article shows that resistance to the dinner initiative was part of a reaction to the excessive policing of the neighbourhood that came in the wake of the anti-gang and anti-ghetto policies. Some residents experienced a confusion of police agendas across different policing approaches. These residents interpreted the police's dinner initiative as part of a control agenda, and in order to protect the local youth from further surveillance by the police, these parents resisted the initiative. In contrast, in cases where parents interpreted the dinner initiative as a means to repair the conflicting relation between local youth and the police, they actively accepted police initiative. The shared dinner case also revealed that parents' acceptance of police presence in the local youth club was linked to social dynamics

within the community that had little to do with the police. Residents who were tired of crime and deviance accepted the initiative on principle, and they saw acceptance of the initiative as a marker of being a responsible parent. Thus, when the parents' understanding of crime and deviance aligned with the views of the police, they expressed an unconditioned support of the police so as to distance themselves from those community members they perceived as irresponsible. The main finding presented in this article is that ethnic minority parents interpret the police based on how they had experienced their community being policed in the past, and on their views of the consequences of policing for residents. The analysis demonstrates how the community policing initiative mainly resonated with those community groups who already trusted the police, while I failed at building more trust with those community groups who had an initial distrust in the police, and thereby show that other strategies have to be developed in order to promote more trust in the police in neighbourhoods like Blomsterengen.

In conclusion, the parents in the study seemed divided in their perceptions of the police. Not only did they hold different perceptions of the police, these different perceptions also reflected an internal social division between different community groups. The social divisions within the community also seemed to be reinforced by the anti-gang and -ghetto policies. The anti-gang policies spurred a division between parents and those local youth who created trouble for the community, while the anti-ghetto policies spurred a division between the parents who viewed themselves as 'responsible and those these parents deemed 'irresponsible' families. These distancing processes seemed to have had a positive influence on the perceptions of the police, since more support for the police was noted based on the distancing from youth engaged in crime and deviance and the families who failed to take care of their children. The research literature, however show that positive views of the police following internal division in marginalized communities often reflect an increased fear of criminal victimization by law-abiding residents. This raises a concern about whether the positive views of the police found in Blomsterengen also reflect a greater sense of insecurity by the residents living there.

The dissertation contributes to the research field of penological development in the Scandinavia, including the ongoing research on penal exceptionalism, as well as to the

less studied research field of how ethnic minority communities relate to the police. Within this latter research field, it contributes with empirical insights into the parent group, which has often been overlooked in favour of minority youth in previous studies. While this study has focused on representing a broad range of different parents from Blomsterengen, more research is still needed in order to investigate how other types of families relate to the police, including more isolated families, families where parents are actively engaged in crime, families with stronger religious convictions, and families with poor Danish and English skills. A focus on broad representation has come at the cost of deeper knowledge from the respective family's lives. Hence, additional qualitative studies will certainly add further nuances to how the police figure in the legal consciousness of ethnic minority parents.

Dansk resumé

I denne afhandling undersøges det hvordan anden etniske minoritetsforældre, der bor i ghettoiserede boligområder i Danmark, hvor bander huserer, ser på politiet. Fokuset på minoritetsforældre er blevet aktuelt som følge af senere tiders politiske diskussioner omhandlende etniske minoritetsmiljøer, diskussioner hvor politiet har fået en til stadighed større rolle i håndteringen af sociale problemer og i at forebyggende afvigende adfærd og kriminalitet i disse miljøer. Især bande- og ghettopolitikker har medført en øget polititilstedeværelse i miljøerne. Samtidig har bandekriminalitet udviklet sig og er blevet en større bekymring for både det bredere danske samfund såvel som for beboere i de boligområder hvor bandemedlemmer bor og opererer. Anden etniske minoritetsforældre der bor i sådanne områder er dermed fanget imellem frygten for voldelig bandekriminalitet, som også aktivt rekruttere deres børn, og en intensiveret polititilstedeværelse. På trods af disse udfordringer ved vi meget lidt om hvordan den forældregruppe anser politiet. Fra international forskningslitteratur på området ved vi dog at sådanne omstændigheder gerne medfører anstrængte forhold mellem politi og etniske minoritets fællesskaber, fordi de skaber en følelse af for meget politi tilstedeværelse, der dog ikke skaber en følelse af at blive beskyttet.

Den senere tids problematisering af anden etniske minoritetsmiljøer er undersøgt i afhandlingens bilag 3, der præsenterer en policy analyse af tre hinanden efterfølgende politikker for at håndtere bandekriminalitet. Artiklen, der er kaldt 'Exceptionalism for most, Excess for Others: The Legal Foundation of a Bifurcated Criminal Justice System in Denmark', viser at bandepolitikkerne der er formulerede siden 2009 i sammenhæng med ghettostrategierne der er formuleret siden 2010, har skabt en status differentiering i offentligheden syn på etniske minoritetsmiljøer i Danmark. Det har resulteret i en forskelsbehandlingen af etniske minoritetsgrupper af offentlige autoriteter, herunder politiet. Artiklen viser hvordan den første 'bande pakke' fra 2009 introducerede et bevidst delt syn (bifurcation) på gerningsmænd i dansk retspraksis ved at indføre en 'bandeparagraf' i straffeloven der muliggjorde at fordoble straffen for banderelateret kriminalitet. Med bandeparagraffen på plads kunne udvalgte grupper (her bandemedlemmer) dermed blive behandlet strengere end hvad der

traditionelt bliver i det relativt milde danske fængselsvæsen. For at anti-bande initiativerne kunne effektueres blev politiet gjort ansvarlig for dokumentere bandetilhørsforhold. Denne opgave medførte øget overvågning og monitorering af bander og af dem i periferien af bande miljøet. Efterfølgende 'bande pakker' udvidede muligheden for forskelsbehandling i straffesystemet, med yderligere skærper for banderelateret kriminalitet, begrænsede rettighederne for fanger dømt for bandekriminalitet, og ved at begrænse rehabiliterende tilbud. Disse politiske tiltag stod i kontrast til det traditionelle rehabiliterings orienterede danske fængselsvæsen. I stedet fokuserede bande tiltagene på indespærring af farlige individer. Men bande politikken styrkede dog også de såkaldte EXIT-programmer for de bandemedlemmer der ønskede at forlade bandemiljøet. I de programmer kunne de som ville forlade miljøet opnå adgang til de mere traditionel rehabiliterende behandling, og samtidig få støtte til at skabe sig et liv udenfor miljøet. Mild og rehabiliterende behandling blev dermed gjort til en betinget strafpraksis, reserveret for nogle grupper af indsatte men ikke alle. Sideløbende med de straffende aspekter blev politiet og udstyret med nye metoder til at håndtere bande kriminalitet og til at forebygge bande konflikters opblussen. De metoder var primært funderet i proaktive politipraksisser der gik på at stoppe og visitere borgere og en udvidet brug af varetægtsfængsling for at mistænkte farlige individer hurtigt væk fra gaden. Denne differentierede of straffende behandling i bandetiltagene blev udviklet sideløbende med ghettopolitikker. I disse politikker blev der også introduceret forskelsbehandling af etniske minoritets beboere i ghettoiserede boligområder, dog hovedsageligt i forhold til velfærdsydelse, men også i forhold til udviklingen af lokal politi indsatser. Med kombinationen af bande- og ghettopolitikkerne udviklede der sig dermed en større risiko for at et anstrengt forhold mellem politiet og de etniske minoritetsmiljøer.

Hvorvidt sådan et anstrengt forhold faktisk havde udviklet sig blev undersøgt i ph.d. projektet gennem et etnografisk feltstudie af et enkelt ghettoiseret boligområde, her anonymiseret som 'Blomsterengen'. Blomsterengen var et område der figurerede på den danske ghetto liste, som blev udviklet som led i den danske ghetto politik fra 2010, og det var også et område hvor der huserede bander. Det etnografiske studie fokuserede særligt på hvordan etniske minoritets forældre så på politiet. Det etniske minoritetsfællesskab i området havde erfaringer med politipraksisser baserede i både

bande og ghettopolitikkerne. Og beboere i området kæmpede også med bandekriminalitet i deres dagligliv. Fundene fra feltarbejdet er præsenteret i afhandlingens analytiske kapitel 'Perceiving the Police from the 'ghetto'' og i de to artikler der er vedlagt som bilag 1 og 2, kaldet 'Calling the Police from the 'Ghetto': Legal Consciousness amongst Ethnic Minority Parents', og 'Dining with the Police: Resistance and Acceptance of Community Policing'.

Kapitlet 'Perceiving the Police from the 'Ghetto'' præsenterer en analyse af hvordan politiet figurerede i deltagernes retsbevidsthed, og er dermed en mere omfattende og komplet analyse af hvordan forældrene så på politiet end det var muligt at vise i artiklerne. Tre overordnede temaer blev identificeret i datamaterialet. Det første handlede om hvordan politiet figurerede i deltagernes bevidsthed i forhold til håndtering af kriminalitet og afvigende adfærd. Det andet tema omhandlede hvordan syn på politiet afhang af interne sociale dynamikker i miljøet. Det tredje tema udforskede hvordan erfaringer med hvordan politiet opererede i området og hvordan de behandlede dem i miljøet, indvirkede på synet på politiet. Analysen adresserer også hvordan politiets samarbejde med fængselsvæsnet og med kommunale myndigheder influerede synet på politiet. I analysen fremgår det at der ikke herskede én delt måde hvorpå forældrene så på politiet på, men at der i stedet var en mangfoldighed af syn på politiet. Individuelle deltagere havde endda forskellige syn på politiet alt efter situationelle, sociale og erfaringsmæssige omstændigheder.

I artiklen 'Calling the Police from the 'Ghetto'', blev mangfoldigheden af syn på politiet relateret til emnet politisamarbejde, ved at undersøge i hvilken grad forældrene vurderede at politiet at de kunne stole på at politiet kunne håndtere kriminalitet og afvigende adfærd i området. Artiklen viser at forældrene konceptualiserede og problematiserede forskellige former for kriminalitet og afvigende adfærd forskelligt, hvilket ledte til forskellige vurderinger af hvorvidt de ville involvere politiet eller ej. Det bliver vist hvordan politiet i nogle situationer opleves som forværende på problemet. Faktisk kunne de fleste forældre berette fortællinger om politiet der arbejder på uretfærdige og diskriminerende måder, hvilket ledte til en tøven i forhold til at ringe til politiet. Andre gange ville situationelle omstændigheder dog trumfe den tøven, og gøre forældrene mere tilbøjelige til at samarbejde med politiet i håndteringen af kriminalitet og afvigende adfærd. Det handlede i særdeleshed om situationer som af

forældrene blev beskrevet som farlige eller hvor kriminelle og afvigende handlinger fik større konsekvenser for de lovlydige og ikkeinvolverede beboere i Blomsterengen. Tøven omkring at tilkalde hjælp fra politiet steg også når forældre mente at konsekvenserne ved at inddrage politiet blev for store for ballademagerne eller hvis det ville have en negativ indflydelse på forældrenes status i miljøet. I artiklen kan man se hvordan at godt nok medfører de Danske bande- og ghettopolitikker en status differentiering der fører til en øget risiko for at et anstrengt forhold mellem politiet og minoritetsmiljø udvikler sig, men problemerne med kriminalitet og afvigende var en delt problemstilling mellem politiet og miljøet og giver grobund for samarbejde. I forhold til det forældrene så som minde alvorlige former for kriminalitet og afvigende adfærd blev politikkerne set som havende en negativ indvirken på samarbejdsvilligheden med politiet. Forældrenes reservationer for samarbejde i de situationer gik på det de anså som urimelige strenge retslige konsekvenser. I stedet for at tage formelle retslige handlinger med adfærden, blev forældrene motiverede til at finde uformelle måder at håndtere kriminalitet og afvigende adfærd på, og dermed omgå politiet. For forældrene i Blomsterengen udgjorde politisamarbejde dermed et dilemma. Forældrene skulle afgøre hvornår de skulle beskytte de unge der stod for kriminaliteten og balladen mod et hårdt straffesystem, og hvornår problemerne blev alvorlige nok til at true livet og velfærden for beboerne i Blomsterengen.

I 'Dining with the Police', blev de mangfoldige syn på politiet brugt i et 'udvidet case studie' af hvordan nogle forældre accepterede et specifikt lokal politi initiativ om at politiet ville besøge den lokale ungdomsklub og deltage en fælles aftensmåltid, mens andre forældre modsatte sig initiativet. I artiklen vises det af modstand mod initiativet var en reaktion på den intensive polititilstedeværelse i område der fulgte med bande- og ghettopolitikkerne. Nogle beboere oplevede en forvirring omkring politiets agenda på tværs af de forskellige politiindsatser. Denne gruppe beboere tolkede aftensmåltidsinitiativet som del af en kontrol agenda, og for at beskytte de unge mod politiets overvågning modsatte forældrene sig initiativet. Modsat, i de tilfælde hvor forældre anså initiativet som en måde at reparere den konfliktfyldte relation mellem områdets unge og politiet, der blev initiativet aktivt accepteret.

Aftensmåltidsinitiativet afslørede også hvordan forældres accept af initiativet hang sammen med lokale social dynamikker i det etniske minoritetsmiljø hvilket som

udgangspunkt ikke havde meget at gøre med politiet. Beboere som var trætte af kriminalitet og forstyrrende opførsel accepterede initiativet, og anså accepten som en del af det at være en ansvarlig forælder. Dermed fremgår at når forældres syn på kriminalitet og afvigende adfærd overlapper med politiets, så udtrykte forældrene en ubetinget støtte til politiet og tog dermed afstand til de grupper i miljøet de anså for at være uansvarlige. Hovedfundet i artiklen er at etniske minoritetsforældre tolkning af politiets indsatser afhæng af deres erfaringer med hvordan de tidligere havde oplevede at blive behandlet af politiet, og af deres syn på konsekvenserne politiets arbejde havde for beboerne. Analysen viser hvordan lokal politiindsatsen hovedsageligt resonerede med de dele af det etniske minoritetsmiljø som i forvejen havde tillid til politiet, mens det mislykkedes i at opbygge tillid i de grupper der i forvejen var mistillidsfulde, og viser dermed at der skal andre strategier til for at promovere mere tillid i områder som Blomsterengen.

Konklusionen er, at forældrene der deltog i undersøgelsen havde delte syn på politiet. Ikke alene havde forældrene forskellige syn på politiet fra hinanden, så reflekterede de forskellige syn på politiet en intern social differentiering i det etniske minoritetsmiljø. Bandepolitikken skabte splid mellem forældrene og de unge der stod for kriminaliteten og den forstyrrende adfærd i området, mens ghettopolitikken i højere grad skabte splid mellem de forældregrupper der anså sig selv som ansvarlige, og dem de anså for at være uansvarlige forældre. Disse distanceringsprocesser så ud til at have en positiv indflydelse på synet på politiet, da mere støtte til politiet blev i tale sat i relation til distanceringen fra de unge og deres familier. Forskningslitteratur viser dog at sådanne positive syn på politiet i forlængelse af social splittelse i marginaliserede fællesskaber gerne bunder i en større frygt for at blive ofre for kriminalitet hos lovlidige beboere. Det rejser spørgsmålet om hvorvidt de relative positive syn på politiet som blev fundet i studiet dækker over en større utryghed blandt beboerne i Blomsterengen.

Afhandlingen bidrager til forskningen inden for rets udviklingen i Skandinavien, blandt andet til den fortløbende diskussion om retslig ekseptionalisme, og til det mindre udforskede område omkring etniske minoritetsmiljøer forhold til politiet. Inden for sidstnævnte felt bidrager studiet med empirisk viden om forældregruppen i miljøet, som hidtil har været relativt overset i den Danske forskning. Selvom studiet har haft fokus på at repræsentere så bredt et udsnit af forældregruppen fra Blomsterengen

som muligt, så er der stadig rum for yderligere studier der undersøger flere former for familiers forhold til politiet, deriblandt mere socialt isolerede forældre, forældre der er aktivt engagerede i en kriminel livsstil, mere religiøse forældre, og forældre med ringe danske og engelske sprogkunderskaber. Og fokuset på bred repræsentation skete på bekostning af en dybere indsigt i de respektive families liv. Derfor kan yderligere kvalitative studier være med til at nuancere fundene af hvordan politiet figurere i etniske minoritetsforældres retsbevidsthed.

Chapter 1

Problematizing the relation between ethnic minority communities and the police in Denmark

Introduction

Over the past few decades, as a result of increased concerns with gang crime and issues of ghettoization, the policing of ethnic minority communities in Denmark has been vigorously debated. This dissertation seeks to highlight the voices from within the problematized and debated ethnic minority communities. It describes how the ethnic minority parents who reside in a neighbourhood perceived as a 'ghetto' view the police. These ethnic minority voices have been studied through an ethnographic fieldwork in a neighbourhood that figure on the so called 'ghettolist' in Denmark. In order to link the minority population's views of the Danish police to the political development of the policing of ethnic minority populations, the dissertation also presents a policy study of how ethnic minority populations in Denmark have been constructed as an object of special police attention in recent years.

The dissertation concludes a Ph.D. project that has been part of a larger research endeavour focusing on how Denmark's ethnic minority population perceives the police force, where other colleagues have researched the perspective of ethnic minority youth. The findings from the Ph.D. project is presented in three research articles and this dissertation. As such, one article (Appendix 1) addresses police cooperation amongst the parents, while another article (Appendix 2) shows how parents articulate their resistance or acceptance of community policing. Finally, the third article (Appendix 3) illustrates how the political problematization of 'gang crime', following the rise of ethnic minority gangs in Denmark, has led to the development of a bifurcated criminal justice system, where a selected population group are treated more harshly than traditional penal customs in Denmark would prescribe. A basic conclusion in articles 1 and 2 is that the parents who participated in the ethnographic study voiced a multitude of views on the police. This diversity of parents' views about the police, and the ways in which the views are described, is presented in this dissertation. Hence, the main finding of the research presented here is that contrary to many essentializing depictions of ethnic minority populations, the community studied here did not voice a single shared view about the police. Rather, the community was home to different parents and families, with different concerns and backgrounds, all of which made them view the police in differing and even conflicting ways. As article 1 shows, the community contained instances of cooperation with the police as well as

parents who were reticent about cooperating. And as appendix 2 demonstrates, there was both acceptance and resistance of community policing approaches amongst the parents in the community. These differing views existed even despite a shared public stigmatization of the neighbourhood and its residents, the status differentiation that came with the stigmatization, and despite shared trouble with crime and deviance, where especially gangs were a common source of annoyance and insecurity.

The policing of ethnic minority communities is not a new research area in Denmark. But it is not a thoroughly studied topic either. The lack of deeper studies is partly due to the relatively brief history of immigration to Denmark. Some immigration took place during the 1960s, mainly in the form of 'guest workers' who in theory came temporarily to Denmark to work and were then supposed to return to their countries of origin. Not all did, however, and from the 1980s, Denmark began to receive more long-term and permanent immigrants, first in the form of 'family reunification', and later on as refugees granted political asylum from countries, mainly from the Middle east and Africa. Consequently, today Denmark has a more diverse population, with well-established ethnic minority citizens being part of the general population. This increase in the amount and diversity of the immigrant population has been accompanied by often intense debates about the integration of immigrants into Danish society. Especially from the 1990s and early 2000s, concerns over integration became a hot political topic, including concerns over the development of immigrant 'ghettos' and the development of street gangs (for the history of immigration to Denmark, see: Olwig & Pærregaard, 2007; Olwig, Larsen & Rytter, 2013). Alongside these problematizations of the ethnic minority population groups, problematizations of the treatment of these population groups by public institutions also developed. Especially the policing and discrimination of minorities within the legal system has been problematized. Hence, Holmberg and Kyvsgaard (2003) found that ethnic minority citizens were more likely to be arrested after being charged, more likely to be remanded in custody without being subsequently convicted, and were also more likely not to be convicted following being charged for a crime (Holmberg & Kyvsgaard, 2003). These findings indicated an overrepresentation of ethnic minority citizens in the criminal statistics, and it was concluded that a police bias had to be part of the reason for this (Holmberg & Kyvsgaard, 2003, pp. 137-140). This study thus revealed how law

enforcement in Denmark had already in the early 00's a systemic discrimination of the ethnic minority populations. The same year, a report (Ansel-Henry & Jespersen, 2003) was published that looked more closely at how ethnic minority youth and the police experienced their encounters in the public spaces. This report revealed that conflicts erupted during some encounters, while others proceeded calmly. But what was noted as more troubling was that both the youth and the policed described a 'generalized hostile relation' and general state of conflict, with intervals of relative peace (Ansel-Henry & Jespersen., 2003, p. 71). These relations of conflict between minority youth and the police were found to be rooted in the youth's more general sense of marginalization (Ansel-Henry & Jespersen., 2003, p. 71). Hence, already at this point in the history of immigration to Denmark, over two decades ago, ethnic minority citizens found themselves in marginalized positions in society and had developed a strained relationship to the police. Although these findings were new in Denmark, they were not necessarily surprising in light of the international research literature on the policing of ethnic minority populations. This literature will be briefly presented in the following section, after which we return to more recent research on minority-police relations as they have unfolded in Denmark and other Nordic countries.

Findings from international research

That ethnic minority populations are at risk of developing a strained relationship with the police is a general finding in the international research on the topic. This is especially true in the UK, where the research on the policing of ethnic minorities has a longer history. One point to start describing this history is April 1993. While waiting for a bus, Stephen Lawrence, a young Black youth from southeast London, was stabbed to death by a group of white youth. The murder in itself was a tragedy, especially since there was no doubt that it was a racially motivated act. But the tragedy did not end with Lawrence's murder. The police investigation that followed has been described as failing to bring justice on all accounts. The investigation was revealed to be so incompetently carried out that it became a major scandal in the history of British policing, several years after the murder, it was decided to make an inquiry into the investigative process. In 1999, The Macpherson Report concluded that incompetence, institutional racism and poor leadership were causes behind the failed investigation into what was revealed to be a rather obvious case. The Macpherson Report noted

that the police had been able to arrest and charge the assailants only four days following the murder. It was not until 2012, however, that the murderers were actually put on trial, and only following the inquiry and legislative changes that would allow the case to be reopened. Although the Macpherson Inquiry examined the death and investigation of the murder of Stephen Lawrence, it opened up an old wound in Britain's history of policing – that of tensions between ethnic minority communities and the police. As part of the report, the representative of the Black Church Leaders was quoted of saying: 'The experience of black people over the last 30 years has been that we have been over policed and to a large extent under protected' (Macpherson, 1999, 45.7) Immediately following this quote, Macpherson noted: 'That theme was heard everywhere we went.' This conclusion emerged from the case of Stephen Lawrence, pointing out that the incompetence and racism documented in the inquiry was part of the general experience of minority communities in Britain. The notion of being 'over-policed yet under-protected' raised a crucial question: If the police do not protect the community, then what are they doing there? As a result of the unclear state of affairs for minority communities, being extensively policed yet hardly protected from crime, the inquiry concluded that there was a widespread lack of trustworthy formal protection for minority communities across Britain.

Over-policing and under-protection have since been researched and documented internationally (Canada: Carmichael & Kent, 2014; Crichlow, 2014; Quiroutte et al., 2016, USA: Balto, 2019; Densley, 2021; Harris et al., 2020; UK: Bowling, 2007; Lea & Young, 1993; Nijjar, 2018), while a range of other studies have addressed this theme in different contexts. More of these will be covered in section 2 about researching citizen-police relations. The general finding has been that ethnic minority populations across the Western world have been seen as objects of control. Moreover, their status as legal citizens with the right to equal protection by the police has been jeopardized in some places in order to protect the wider society from issues of insecurity attributed to these communities. What the Macpherson Report documented was thus the result of developments that had taken place over a longer period of time, where the police as an institution had come to view ethnic minority citizens more as an object of control than as citizens to protect. This finding was an old wound in the British history of the policing of ethnic minority communities. A decade earlier, in fact, a special police

operation in Brixton (Operation Swamp 81) aimed at addressing street crime through extensive stop-and-search practices, had sparked widespread riots in ethnic minority communities in Britain. Following the riots, Lord Scarman was commissioned to make an enquiry into why the riots developed as they did. The Scarman Report concluded that the riots were the result of longstanding resentments, especially with regard to the ethnic minority communities being disproportionately and discriminatory policed (Jones, 1982). In a follow-up study, Jones (1982) noted that 'The 1981 summer riots throughout Britain's inner cities not only sent shock waves through the political establishment but also brought policing into the center of the political arena' (p. 5). The riots also brought the policing of ethnic minority communities into the academic arena and motivated a dedicated research interest into the development of build-up resentments. Among these scholars, Lea & Young argued that a vicious spiral of deteriorating police-community relations had developed, where the police increasingly relied on 'military policing practices' while moving away from 'consensus policing', meaning that instead of working with the community to address crime and deviance, the police came to perceive the community as an object to be controlled (Lea & Young, 1982, p.10-13). As a result, the community became alienated from the police, and cooperation and trust between the parties eroded, which only pushed the police further from consensus and toward a more military style of policing (these thoughts were later unfolded more thoroughly in Lea & Young, 1993). This dynamic of the police and the community moving further and further apart, getting more and more alienated from one another, is what gradually moves the police towards brutal practices, according to Lea and Young.

Like over-policing, riots stemming from marginalized communities have inspired research on police-community relations in the US (Wacquant, 2008, chap. 1), in the UK (Hall 1999; Lea & Young, 1993; Jefferson, 2012), in France (Fassin, 2013; Wacquant, 2008, chap.1) and in The Netherlands (Bouabad, 2016) to give some examples. In the wake of the more spectacular riots and the observed everyday over-policing, researchers have focused attention on how ethnic minority communities perceive the police in general (Bowling & Philips, 2007; Engel & Swartz, 2014; Klein, 2012; Meehan & Ponder, 2002; Miller et al., 2008; Peck, 2015; Sharp & Atherton, 2007). The findings of these studies reveal that many ethnic minority communities feel alienated because

of stereotypical and discriminatory policing practices, combined with brutal, harassing and humiliating treatment. However, there are found differences in the severity of the treatment, and some raise questions about whether the generally noted negative view of the police develops everywhere ethnic minority communities are heavily policed (Germany, for instance, might be an exception; see Hunold et al., 2016, though other studies might reveal a different perspective: Bucerius, 2014). For instance, there is much focus on how police use lethal force in the U.S. and Canada (Balto, 2020; Carmichael & Kent, 2014; Densley, 2021; Miller, 2014), while this issue is less problematized in a UK and EU context. This might indicate that differences in the application of lethal force might exist across the Atlantic. Nonetheless, the studies paint a picture of a strained relationship between police and minority communities, making police cooperation and trust a preeminent research topic. When Danish research on the topic, as early as 2003, could document systemic discrimination, general marginalization and conflicts between the police and ethnic minority youth, the question arises as to whether ethnic minority communities in Denmark have now, two decades later, developed a similarly strained relationship and built up resentments, as depicted in so much of the international literature. In this light, let us now examine minority-police relations in the Nordic area.

Nordic studies of minority-police relations

More recently, the notion of ‘over-policing and under-protection’ has had its echoes in Scandinavia as well – most directly in an essay by Mulinari (2022), where it was noted that: ‘Given the accentuation of law and order policies in the Nordic countries that in particular are targeting ethnic minorities and racialized communities, this research agenda is of paramount importance’ (Mulinari, 2022, p. 68). His remarks reflect the fact that several Nordic policing studies have shown stereotypical policing practices to be widespread in the Nordic region (Feinstein, 2015; Holmberg, 2000; Høigård, 2011; Mulinari & Keskinen, 2020; Petterson, 2013; Sollund, 2006; 2007; Uhnö, 2015). Though stereotypical policing practices have been documented as early as 2003 in Denmark, little research attention has been paid to these issues in a Danish context, especially in terms of how it has been perceived and experienced by members of ethnic minority communities themselves. There has been some attention towards how police encounters influence a sense of belonging and identity formation amongst

ethnic minority youth (Koefoed & Simonsen, 2010), and how police encounters are experienced as a form of Othering that make ethnic minority youth feel differentiated from majority society (Jensen, 2007). Some scholars have examined how the police are viewed among those ethnic minority youth who are part of the criminal subculture (Kalkan, 2021). Studies of riots, crime and extremism has also included discussions of how encounters with the police lead to 'counter-citizenship' (Soei, 2018). The topic of community-police relations has also been included in some research on ghettoization (Johansen, 2013; Johansen and Jensen, 2017). Findings from the wider research project, of which this Ph.D. project has been part, have further developed our knowledge of how ethnic minority youth in Denmark and other Nordic countries view the police today. It has been documented how 'minor harassments' during everyday encounters with the police maintain a conflictual relation between ethnic minority youth and the police which in turn influences compliance with law enforcement from the youth (Haller et al., 2018). Also documented amongst ethnic minority youth were narratives of violence, insults and humiliation, that they experienced as 'moral violence' (Haller et al., 2020). Such experiences were found to lead ethnic minority youth to feel that the police perceived them as a threat, thus inhibiting their sense of belonging to society (Solhjell et al., 2019). Such suspicion, alongside violent and humiliating treatment by the police, echoes the conflicting relations between ethnic minority youth and the police described by Ansel-Henry & Jespersen (2003). With new technologies developing, the filming of police encounters on smartphones was found to be used as a means to address the power balance during such conflicting encounters (Søgaard et al., 2022). To feel viewed as a threat by the police was also found to have consequences for the social relations among ethnic minority youth growing up together. Ethnic minority youth had to manage friendships while risking being seen as a criminal, a practice which they found to be a difficult balancing act (Haller et al., 2022). Minority youth also expressed a degree of ambiguity in their relations with the police. While upset about police harassment, violence and unjustified police attention, they also voiced satisfaction with police efforts to protect them (Saarikkomäki et al., 2020). Research on the police perspective on encounters with ethnic minority youth has also shown how the police have tried to improve relations with youth in order to minimize conflicts (Kammersgaard et al., 2021). Summarizing the Nordic experiences of ethnic minority youth, we also find many

similarities with the findings from the international literature. Besides Johansen's study, the Danish studies, however, mainly address how ethnic minority male youth, often from criminal milieus, perceive and encounter the police. As such a knowledge gap still exists regarding how the broader ethnic minority communities perceive the police.

The Danish National Police (Rigspolitiet) offer some further insights on the perceptions of the police among residents in disadvantaged neighbourhoods characterized by high numbers of ethnic minority residents. In their annual reporting on citizen safety and trust in the police, with a special focus on neighbourhoods with large percentages of ethnic minority residents, respondents were asked whether they believe the police will help them if needed. This question was used as a measure of trust in the police. In 2017, the national average of respondents who answered 'Yes' was 79.2%, where 77% answered 'Yes' in the selected disadvantaged neighbourhoods (Danish National Police, 2018). In 2019, the percentages for indications of trust were 82.6% in the national average and 84.6% in the selected disadvantaged neighbourhoods (Danish National Police, 2020). Though not a comprehensive run through of the findings from the Danish national police, these statistics indicate that trust in the police is generally quite high in Denmark, including in disadvantaged neighbourhoods where ethnic minority communities also reside. In 2019, the level of trust was actually higher in the disadvantaged neighbourhoods. It should be noted, however, that the measurement is quite narrow in its focus and omits questions as to satisfaction with how the police operate in the neighbourhoods, experiences with police brutality, etc., thus omitting any assessment of the encounters between community members and the police.

We thus see some studies that indicate an over-policing of ethnic minorities in Denmark, while police reports indicate a relatively high level of trust in the police within neighbourhoods with large proportions of ethnic minority residents. In light of the international literature, which tends to associate over-policing to communities being alienated from the police, these indications seem contradictory, thus leaving an open invitation for closer research scrutiny as to how ethnic minority communities in Denmark perceive the police. This is especially pertinent in light of political developments that have taken place in Denmark, where ethnic minority communities

have been represented as problematic population groups in need of extra policing. The political developments will be discussed in the following section.

Political directions of the policing of ethnic minority communities in Denmark

As Mulinari concluded in his essay on over-policing in Scandinavia, recent political developments lend an urgency to the issue of ethnic minority populations' perception of the police. And Denmark is no exception to this. It is general knowledge that the police as a public institution is politically directed – Reiner's instructive book 'The Politics of the Police' (2010) makes this very clear. In recent decades, Denmark has seen a range of policies that problematize social dynamics within ethnic minority communities, and the police have played a central role in addressing these problems. The policies can in this regard be seen as political directives of how the police ought to approach the ethnic minority communities. Especially the anti-ghetto and anti-gang policies includes such directions, and with the development of these two policy strands, the policing of ethnic minority communities in Denmark has changed markedly since the early 2000s.

Danish anti-ghettoization policies

Before delving into the presentation of the anti-ghettoization policies, a note on the 'ghetto' term is called for. As will be clear from the following presentation, some neighbourhoods in Denmark are publicly labelled ghettos. There are however sociological debates on whether it makes analytical and historical sense to invoke this term in regards to understanding the social dynamics within the publicly termed ghettos in Denmark. Especially Wacquant has argued that the ghetto term is wrongfully applied in a Danish context, and even goes as far as to describe the Danish cases as anti-ghettos (Schultz Larsen, 2011). His argument is, shortly summarized, that a 'ghetto' in a sociological-historic perspective is a community that closes itself off, from the surrounding society become self-sustaining – either as a result of internal or external pressure. What Wacquant finds across Europe today is not communities that do so, rather they seem to be bridged with their surrounding societies, yet still marginalized (Wacquant, 2016). Larsen argues that 'dilapidated neighbourhoods' seem

a more fitting, sociological term for the Danish neighbourhoods publicly perceived as ghettos. Throughout this dissertation, I will refer to the neighbourhoods as 'ghettoized', in order to acknowledge that it is a quality bestowed upon the neighbourhoods and the communities residing there. And by being bestowed this quality, they also become treated as such by the police as well as other public and civil institutions and organizations.

In 2004, the Danish government published a strategy report on anti-ghettoization (Government, 2004). In the introduction, it was noted that ghettoization was not a new phenomenon, but the government regretted that the issue was growing, despite several years of integrative measures to prevent the development. The report described how ghettoization was a barrier that prevented ethnic minority residents in some disadvantaged neighbourhoods from utilizing the options and possibilities in the modern Danish democratic society. Ghettoization was thus mainly perceived to be a barrier to the integration of immigrants into Danish society. The blame for this negative development was placed on the failed integration and labour market policies of previous years (Government, 2004, p.7), and the immigrant residents were viewed as victims of failed political regulation. In the report a 'ghetto' was defined as a physically, socially, culturally and economically segregated and disadvantaged neighbourhood. The report describes the main issue of ghettoization as the inflow of less resourceful families into already disadvantaged neighbourhoods (Government, 2004, p.9). Thus, the main mechanisms addressed in the strategy had to do with residential segregation, and measures to control who obtained the right to reside in these neighbourhoods in the future. To a large extent, the anti-ghettoization policy was an effort to alter the character of the neighbourhoods from predominantly social housing areas to mixed housing neighbourhoods containing both public housing as well as privately-owned properties. A secondary effect of mixing the pool of residents was to insure social upwards mobility for the disadvantaged families. It is noteworthy that the only mention of police and police officers in the whole report is in relation to this mobility. By mixing residents from a range of professions, local minority youth would be expected to have more role models who could inspire them towards different career paths. It was thus mentioned that by having more police officers moving to the neighbourhoods, more local youth would see it as a potential career path

(Government, 2004, p. 42). Noteworthy by its absence in the report is any mention of crime prevention, though the report notes that levels of crime and deviance are higher in ghettoized neighbourhoods compared to other neighbourhoods, and that street gangs and violence was of special concern (Government, 2004, p. 44). The problem of crime was described in terms of three concerns: deviant youth waste their own potential for living a conventional life, they make other residents feel insecure, and they impede the development of the neighbourhoods by scaring away the more resourceful residents. The solution to the crime problem was described as the mobilization of schools, municipalities and educational institutions and the greater involvement and responsabilization of parents (Government, 2004, p. 44-45). The solution to crime and deviance was thus perceived to be a stronger focus on education for marginalized youth in the neighbourhoods. The 2004 strategy thus had very limited focus on crime and deviance, and the police did not figure as a central institution to dealing with the whole issue of ghettoization. This changed markedly, however, with the next anti-ghettoization strategy.

The 2010 strategy and the making of a 'ghetto list'

In 2010 a new anti-ghettoization strategy was published. Whereas the 2004 strategy aimed to halt the development of ghettoization, the 2010 strategy proclaimed that ghettos had now developed:

'But today, there are places in Denmark where Danish values no longer prevail. And where those rules that govern the rest of society do not have the same effect. This is how it is in part of the neighbourhoods, that we in public term 'ghettos' (Government, 2010, p. 5, own translation)

Where ghettoization previously had been problematized as a barrier to integration, it was now reconfigured to denote a set of problems. Ghettos were now characterized as 'parallel societies' – communities where values other than Danish values dominated, and where informal authorities (e.g., Islamic Imams, patriarchs or street gangs) were believed to dominate instead of the formal public authorities. Part of the new strategy was to introduce a clear definition of when a neighbourhood had developed into a ghetto. Three criteria were presented to be used as identifying characteristics of a

ghetto in order for a list of ghettos to be formulated. The 'ghetto list' would then be updated annually in order to track the development of countering ghettoization. Thus, any neighbourhood with more than 1000 residents that fulfilled at least two of the three following criteria figured on the ghetto list: 1) at least 50 % of the residents being immigrants or dependents of immigrants from non-Western countries; 2) at least 40 % of the residents being neither in school, job training or having 'ties to the labour market', i.e. employment or receiving unemployment benefits/job training/looking for work; 3) and at least 270 per 10,-000 residents have been convicted of a crime (Government, 2010, p. 38). The 2010 strategy thus commenced a practice of identifying some neighbourhoods as being ghettos, thus *ghettoizing* those neighbourhoods in the public eye.

In this anti-ghettoization strategy, crime and policing gained increased attention. This was especially due to changes in the problematization of ghettoization, where several aspects of criminal and deviant behaviour were included, as were issues of trust in the police and the wider criminal justice system in Denmark. Hence, according to the report:

'Many residents in the ghettos live with crime, violence and vandalism as part of their everyday lives. The police and other authorities encounter resistance in the ghettos when they arrive to do their job. Because groups of deviant youth disturb and harass them. Because it is difficult to get local residents to talk and to cooperate with the police, among others. And because apparently there are different rules and norms prevailing in the ghettos than in the surrounding society. The government will not accept that there are areas in Denmark where other rules dominate – and where rules and norms are enforced by others than the public authorities.' (Government, 2010, p. 31, own translation)

The police, as an institution, was given the task of counteracting some of the central aspects of the development toward parallel society. Part of the strategy, therefore, was to have the Danish National Police develop a 'national plan' to ensure a strong, focused and consistent police presence in high-crime neighbourhoods (Government,

2010, p. 31). This plan was intended to focus on visible policing, rapid response and strict consequences for young troublemakers, utilizing youth-contracts and youth orders, extending zone bans to keep troublemakers away from public areas, to stimulate trust in and respect for the broader criminal justice system by being responsive to community needs, and through broad cooperation with the local community and other public institutions and civil society organizations, to work to prevent youth crime in general. In cases of more severe crime and delinquency, the police, together with the municipality, were stipulated to ensure rapid case processing of local youth criminals (Government, 2010, p. 32). In addition, the strategy promoted the use of CCTV surveillance, and it gave the police and related authorities the option of making first-time offences conditioned on youth's penal record. The police were expected to engage in crime preventive counselling with housing associations in order to minimize crime and insecurity (Government, 2010, p. 33). Throughout the strategy paper, it was noted that parts of these tools and goals were related to wider political initiatives, for instance a general effort to address youth crime (Government, 2010, p. 34), to address crimes against civil servants and obstruction of the work of public authorities (Government, 2010, p.35), and to take up anti-gang initiatives (Government, 2010, p. 35). The policy also envisioned that the police would play a part in addressing the resident composition, through participating in decision-making on whether a released convict could or should move out of a neighbourhood that was on the ghetto list. Although this was only a strategy paper, and therefore did not necessarily reflect whether the police were already engaged in these activities, the strategy none the less indicates a major change in how the police were envisioned as a key political actor in trying to combat those elements of ghettoization that had to do with crime, deviant behaviour and lack of trust and respect in public authorities.

In 2011, the Danish National Police published an orientation document regarding the development of the 'national plan' demanded in the ghetto strategy (Danish National Police, 2011). Here it was noted that the actual plan was an internal document (Danish National Police, 2011, p. 3). In general terms the orientation document described that every police district that had neighbourhoods from the ghetto list in their area of operation had to develop locally-based plans of action to fulfil the requirements of the

ghetto strategy and to adhere to the internal national plan for the police (Danish National Police, 2011, p. 5). In summary, the strategy was noted to cover the following:

'The strategy plan prescribes that the police districts, through a balanced offensive effort and through presence, visibility, prevention and investigative measures, in cooperation with external actors, including the local community, should prevent and combat crime and insecurity in the selected neighbourhoods and the crime that originates from these neighbourhoods.' (Danish National Police, 2011, p. 4)

This statement gave an idea of the scope of the internal strategy. In policing ghettoized neighbourhoods, the police sought to have a strong physical presence in the areas and to cooperate with both public institutions and local actors, all in order to address the crime and deviance taking place within the neighbourhoods, as well as crime that springs from these neighbourhoods. Besides adhering to the requirements of the ghetto strategy, the orientation paper further noted that the police had introduced goals to increase the number of charges for violations of the penal code committed in the neighbourhoods (Danish National Police, 2011, p. 4), a goal which is interesting in regards to the discussion of overrepresentation of ethnic minority populations in the criminal justice system. It was thus clear through this document that the ghetto strategy from 2010 had a direct influence on how Danish police districts organized their approach to policing of ghettoized neighbourhoods.

The 2013 strategy and the introduction of new criteria

In 2013, the anti-ghettoization strategy was extended and developed upon. The main change was in the criteria for being termed a ghetto, with two additional criteria introduced, and it was proclaimed that public housing associations with more than 1000 residents which fulfilled three of the now five criteria would be considered ghettos. The two additional criteria were: 1) more than 60% of the residents aged 30-59 years of age have no vocational or higher education; and 2) that the average income for taxable residents over 15 years of age was 60% below that of the average for the same group within the region (Government, 2013, p. 5). In terms of policing, the main difference was an enhanced focus on exchange of information between the

police and the housing association. In this way, the police could inform the housing association that certain residents had been found guilty of a crime, enabling the housing association to begin the process of evicting an undesirable tenant, with the possibility to 'get off' the ghetto list (Government, 2013, p. 7). The policy also mentioned that the police were to have a more visible presence in the neighbourhoods. Thus, the strategy did not introduce any major changes to the policing of ethnic minority communities, but rather smoothed the lines of communication between the police institution and the public housing associations.

The 2018 strategy and loss of political patience

Again in 2018, a new addition to the anti-ghettoization strategy was issued. This was meant as the final strategy paper, with the ambitious title of 'no ghettos in 2030'. To ensure this goal, the anti-ghettoization strategy now introduced the possibility of physical demolition of entire blocks of flats in those neighbourhood that still remained on the ghetto list by 2030 (Government, 2018, part 1). The 2018 strategy paper also presented changes in the criteria for an area to be placed on the ghetto list, and also started distinguishing between definitions of mere 'disadvantaged neighbourhoods' and 'ghettos' (Government, 2018, p. 11). The proposed changes in the strategy paper were however not decided during the subsequent parliament debates. Instead, a series of other revisions were implemented instead (Ministry of Transport, Edifice and Housing, 2018). The redefinition of 'ghetto' applied to any public housing association with more than 1000 residents, and where at least 50 % of the residents were immigrants or descendants from immigrants from non-Western countries, that met at least two of the following four criteria:

1. Where more than 40% of the residents in the age between 18-64 were without 'ties to the labour market or enrolled in education measured on average over the preceding two years;
2. Where the number of residents convicted of offences against the penal code, weapons law or law on drugs was at least three times the national average, measured as an average over the preceding two years;
3. Where more than 60% of the residents aged 30-59 had only basic education.

4. Where the average gross income for taxable residents aged 15-64, excluding those in enrolled in education, was 55 % less than the regional gross income.

Thus, a large amount of ethnic minority residents now became a mandatory criterion for making the list, illustrating a central problematization of ethnic minority residents over other social issues. An additional distinction between 'ghettos' and 'hard ghettos' were also introduced in the 2018 strategy. Hard ghettos were those that had been on the ghetto list for at least four consecutive years. The housing associations of these hard ghettos were requested in the strategy to develop a development plan that would reduce the amount of social housing units to less than 40 % of the neighbourhood, if necessary through demolitions. With regard to policing, the 2018 strategy extended upon the previously established initiatives, maintaining a focus on police presence and visibility. Like the 2010 strategy, the Danish National Police were asked to define a national plan for policing of the ghettoized (Government, 2018, p. 22). In comparison to the previous strategies, it introduced a new focus towards getting the more hardcore criminals off the streets, and proposed a targeted police effort to have these individuals prosecuted (Government, 2018, p. 22). Also, the police were granted a new tool: tougher sentencing zones, which meant that the police could declare that crimes committed within a defined area would receive double sentences (Government, 2018, p. 23). This was to be used when conflicts had erupted in the neighbourhoods, in order to deter the conflicting parts in escalating the conflicts. These zones became popularly known as 'double punishment zones'.

The 2021 strategy and the focus on preventing new ghettos from developing

The latest addition to the anti-ghettoization strategies came in 2021. This strategy sought to revitalize the 2004 problematization somewhat, in that it focussed on issues of integration related to the clustering of ethnic minority families. It maintained the goal of 'no ghettos in Denmark in 2030' (Ministry of the interior and Housing, 2021a, p. 8). The 2021 strategy extended its focus to address neighbourhoods considered 'at risk' of becoming ghettos by establishing a list of all residential areas where at least 30% of residents were immigrants or descendants from non-Western countries, and that were distinguishable from the 'wider society socially and economically' (Ministry of the interior and Housing, 2021a, p. 10). The strategy thus stressed the need to

prevent the ghettoization of these neighbourhoods, but it introduced no substantive changes to the previous strategies. Alongside the presentation of this policy strategy, the minister of housing at the time also started to phase out the 'ghetto' term, and instead problematizing 'parallel societies' – though this has no other practical consequences than the list is now termed 'the parallel society list, formerly known as the ghettolist' (Ministry of interior and Housing, 2021b)

In summary, across a range of strategy papers, successive governments have problematized ghettoization in Denmark, and from 2010, onwards the police became a central element in countering ghettoization. As a result, neighbourhoods with large proportion of residents with ethnic minority background became subject to a strong police presence in their everyday lives. This presence took the form of patrols in public areas as well as coordinated social work conducted by welfare institutions for the residents and in the form of cooperation between police and the public housing associations. Thus, the police took on a proactive, reactive and plural presence with respect to ghettoized neighbourhoods.

Danish anti-gang policies

Even though outlaw motorcycle gangs have a longer history in Denmark, gangs with ethnic minority youth have a more recent history. It was only in the late 1990s that concerns arose about 'street gangs' from ethnic minority communities (Koch, 1999). In 2005, the Danish National Police published a status and strategy paper on 'group-related crime', where it was concluded that these 'groups with criminal activities' were composed of ethnic minority men, with another form of gang organization than the more hierarchically organized Danish motorcycle gangs (Danish National Police, 2005, p. 2). It was mentioned that these groups should be considered gangs, although the police considered 'street gangs' to be a misleading term, choosing instead to distinguish between several forms of 'criminal groupings' (Danish National Police, 2005, p. 2). Strategy wise, individual police districts were made responsible for developing concrete plans for addressing the issue, but they were strongly advised to focus on identifying individuals, coordinating a preventive effort with other welfare institutions connected to the individual, and to focus on reactive measures for offences in order to show the youth that there were consequences for delinquent

behaviour (Danish National Police, 2005, p. 4). And where criminal groups were a concern for neighbourhood-based communities, the local policing units were advised to carry out a preventive and reactive approach. The general approach was thus individual preventive work. In 2008, the Danish National Police published a status report on gang issues, listing and describing the larger and more organized criminal groupings, which were monitored by the national police rather than the individual police districts (Danish National Police, 2008). In the report, the police termed the groups a 'gang milieu' (Danish National Police, 2008, p. 3). By the end of 2007, the National Police were monitoring 141 individuals with gang with ties to 14 criminal groups. Additional groups existed, but were, as mentioned, monitored by local police districts. Although the groups in the gang milieu were engaged in more serious offences in the penal code, law of narcotics, and law of weapons, the actual statistics indicate that the milieu was rather small. The issue of gang crime was by and large managed by the police as they would manage other types of criminal activity at the time, which meant that the police were engaged in preventive work, focused on investigating offences, and they monitored the gang milieu in order to gather intelligence that could be used to prosecute gang members for specific crimes. This traditional-policing approach would soon change, however. In 2008, a major gang conflict erupted in Copenhagen, where some of the more organized ethnic minority gangs confronted the more established motorcycle gangs and challenged their control over the drug trade. This gang conflict introduced a hitherto unseen careless use of fire arms in the public in Denmark, which made it a threat to the wider society. Thus, in 2009, the Danish government presented a set of anti-gang measures, known as a 'gang package' aimed at supporting the police's efforts to manage gang-related crime. This was to be the first of range of 'gang packages'.

The first gang package

When the Minister of Justice proposed the first gang package to the Danish Parliament in 2009, he noted that gang conflicts had become so serious that 'random, ordinary citizens' were put in harm's way', and that this development called for 'extraordinary tough countermeasures' (Minister of Justice, 2009). The new problem with gang crime was that it now reached out of the gang milieu, and put uninvolved citizens at risk. It had become a general societal problem so to speak. The proposed countermeasures

mainly included harsher sentences for gang-related crimes, especially where weapons were involved. Most noteworthy was the introduction of a gang-specific subsection into the Danish penal code which allowed for double-length sentences for gang-related offences (L501, 2009). Focus was also on enabling the police to get gang members off the streets, through extended use of pre- and post-trial detention, extending zone bans to keep individuals away from conflict areas and public spaces, and limiting the options for probation and early release, and other prisoners' rights for imprisoned gang members. The police were tasked with monitoring individual gang members, making gathering intelligence a key element of anti-gang work. The police also gained access to better investigative tools, such as wiretapping (according to Danish regulations, this tool is to be used mainly with regards to crimes that might yield up to six or more years in prison). The problematization thus represented gang members as a dangerous element in a free society, and the solution became that of rapid and longer incarceration of gang members in order to bring safety back to society.

The second gang package

This first gang package, however, proved insufficient to halt the development of violence emanating from the gang milieu. Thus, in 2014, following a second wave of gang shootings, a second gang package was proposed to parliament (L733, 2014). Besides stressing the need for social preventive work, this package had a strong focus on pressuring gang members and other individuals with ties to the gang milieu. Thus, zone bans were extended to cover broader areas, municipalities were to focus on expelling gangs from venues they used as clubs, and the police were allocated further resources in order to 'stress' gang members by making them feel that they were constantly being watched. The main content of the 2014 package, continued to be tougher sentences, by enlarging the number of offences for which gang members would receive double-length sentences. However, with more gang members in prison, gang conflicts had now moved into the prisons as well. It was therefore made easier to transfer convicted gang members to other prisons, in order to manage the level of gang conflicts inside the prison institutions. These new troubles in the prison, however, did not deter the politicians from focusing on long-term incarceration of gang members. Freedom-oriented rights and options were thus still curtailed for gang members. The second gang package however included a focus on providing the gang

members a way out of the milieu, and thus strengthened the so-called EXIT program, for gang members who wanted help to leave the gang milieu. By entering an EXIT program, they would gain access to normal conditions for serving a sentence as well as coordinated support to return to a life in freedom out the gang milieu. Although the second package retained the stress on incarceration from the first package, it introduced a responsabilization element with the EXIT focus. Here, gang members were allowed the option to decide how they would be treated in the criminal justice system by deciding whether or not to stay in the gang. Rhetorically, this was a choice of belonging to the gang milieu or to the larger society.

The third gang package

Gang violence, however, continued to prevail in Danish society, and in 2017 the government found it necessary to enact a third gang package, especially since the nature of violence seemed to have grown more severe why police and politicians were talking of a brutalization in the gang milieu (Minister of Justice, 2017). Through 35 separate measures, the government sought to provide safety and security for Danish citizens, getting gangs off the streets, and putting pressure on gang members. Though the measures addressed new areas of gang crime, the nature of the measures were not new. The third gang package built upon the foundation already laid by the previous packages. Hence, it introduced tougher sentences for more gang-related offences, such as extortion of business owners and for offences that could spur conflicts in the milieu – previously, the focus had been on offenses committed as part of conflicts. It now became easier to close club venues. Courts were granted the option of prohibiting convicted gang members from taking up residence in the municipality where their offences were committed for up to ten years, thus extending the punishment beyond the actual prison sentence. Exerting pressure on gang members meant going after status symbols, such as their leased luxury cars, obstructing their nightlife activities through working with property owners and bouncers to keep gang members excluded from nightclubs.

Altogether, the gang packages introduced a strong focus on long-term incarceration for gang-related offences, with little concern for rehabilitation. Instead, the main objective has become to keep gang members locked up in prisons for as long as possible – unless they choose to leave the milieu behind. This is part of a proactive

police effort to prevent gang conflicts from erupting and putting innocent bystanders at risk. Proactive measures also entail a stronger police awareness about the activities carried out within the gang milieu, including knowledge who are part of the gang network. Stop and frisk, zone bans and pretrial detention were to be essential tools in the police toolbox for managing gang crime.

Policy synergy, stigmatization, and status differentiation

Seen together the anti-gang and -ghetto policies have directed the police towards a stronger focus on the ethnic minority communities, though neither policy strand limits its initiative to solely addressing and problematizing ethnicity. The ghetto policies, however, have a clear focus on strengthening the integration of immigrants. However, it is only in the later policies that ethnic origin was a criterion for a residential area being on the ghetto list. The gang policies are meant to deal with both traditional ethnic Danish motorcycle gangs as well as ethnic minority street gangs, so it cannot be said to address ethnicity in its own right. In a discursive frame, however, it is noteworthy how the gang policies from the 2000's and 2010s, with their proactive and incarceration focus, differ from the initiatives taken to contain the MC gang wars from the 1980s and 1990s, which were firmly rooted in a traditionalist reactive policing and investigatory approach (Strand, 2011). Further studies in policy development might reveal what role the presence of 'foreigners' played in the problem representation that underpinned the change from reactive to proactive policing. Recent Nordic penology research certainly indicates that issues of foreigners and immigrants increasingly motivate penal policies (Barker, 2018; Mulinari & Keskinen, 2020; Gundhus, 2020; 2021; Aas, 2014).

The anti-ghetto and anti-gang policies have also enabled a range of multifaceted policing practices that end up targeting ethnic minority communities. The ghetto policies inscribe the Danish policing of ethnic minority communities in the history of 'community policing', with a focus on local engagement, cooperation and accountability (Brogden & Nijhar, 2005). They add plural policing, through partnerships with other public institutions working in the communities (Loader, 2000; Squires, 2006; Thacher, 2001). At the same time, both the anti-ghetto and anti-gang policies have introduced a strong proactive and law-and-order-oriented approach to policing ethnic minority communities, with incarceration of dangerous individuals as a key element.

These differing policing practices endow the police with a range of roles and objectives in their interaction with community members. At the same time, the police find themselves in a grey zone between state control and local accountability, a dilemma documented in other countries where community policing approaches have been employed (Brogden & Nijhar, 2005; Garland, 2001; Innes et al., 2020; Larsson, 2017; Liederback et al., 2008; Reiner, 2010; Somerville, 2009; Squires, 2006). Loader's term 'ambient policing' seems to grasp the nature of the multi-faceted policing approach (Loader, 2006), where institutional segregation is challenged by a hybridization of police work and a coordinated approach across institutions (Dahl et al., 2022; Strype et al., 2014; Thacher, 2001). Loader warns that such a pervasive presence of the police might confuse community members about why exactly the police are engaging with the community. The multi-faceted approach, for all its ostensible benefits, might also become a barrier for promoting trust in the police.

Besides confusing the community members in regards to their purpose in interacting with the community, recent research on the policing of ghettos around the Western world has voiced concern for how such policies influence the social life of community members due to stigmatization. Especially Wacquant's studies in territorial stigmatization has addressed this topic, where he 'insist that the proper object of inquiry is not the place itself and its residents but the multilevel structural processes whereby persons are selected, thrust and maintained in marginal locations, as well as the social webs and cultural forms they subsequently develop therein' (Wacquant, 2016, p. 1078). Wacquant proposes that researchers should study the 'state' level of selecting, thrusting and maintaining some population groups in problem categories, as well as a 'citizen' level of how people react to being selected, thrust and maintained in such categories. As part of the state perspective, Wacquant describes how the police have been enrolled in the 'thrusting and maintaining' part of ghettoization by being charged with the responsibility to contain and control the selected population groups and the social disorder they are represented to cause (Wacquant, 2007, p. 70). Those people selected and thrust into the ghetto category, Wacquant notes, subsequently 'engage in coping strategies of mutual distancing, lateral denigration, retreat into the private sphere and neighbourhood flight that converge to foster diffidence and disidentification, distend local social ties and thus curtail their capacity

for proximate social control and collective action' (Wacquant, 2016, p. 1083). By forcing residents to develop such strategies, territorial stigmatization has severe consequences for the social dynamics within communities residing there, especially following the increased police attention they receive based on their stigma. In other studies of the policing of marginalized communities, such stigmatization has been found to only deepen already existing social divisions between different subgroups within communities, alienating some groups from the police while others develop stronger ties to the control institutions (see esp. Hancock, 2001; Herbert, 2006; Lyon, 1999; Merry, 1981; Walklate & Evans, 1999 for studies of relations between police and marginalized communities). That the Danish ghetto policies constitute a territorial stigma has been firmly documented (Christensen & Jensen, 2012, chap.4; Schultz Larsen, 2014; 2018; Schultz Larsen & Delica, 2019). Moreover, the residents in Danish stigmatized communities have developed, along the lines described by Wacquant, the 'coping strategies' mentioned by Wacquant (Christensen & Jensen, 2012, chap.5; Jensen & Christensen, 2012; Jensen, Prieur & Skjott-Larsen, 2020), although additional research could elaborate on the varieties of these strategies and address the issue of community diversity more directly. Lacking in the Danish research, however, is an analysis of how the territorial stigma has influenced those institutions working with the residents in the stigmatized neighbourhoods, especially the police.

From a different research perspective, the anti-gang and -ghetto policies have also been studied discursively, although the ghetto policies have received considerably more attention here (Freisleben, 2016; Seeman, 2021; Simonsen, 2016) than the gang policies (Nilsson & Delica, 2015). Especially Seeman's study (2021) is noteworthy in regards to the present study. In her study, Seeman revealed how the ghetto stigma entailed a status differentiation between ethnic minority groups and other citizens in Denmark, a differentiation that she found legitimized a differentiated treatment of ethnic minority ghetto residents in ghettoized neighbourhoods compared to the majority of the population in their access to social services. The differentiation also entailed the controlling and containing policing practices included in the ghetto strategies, which were distinct for ghettoized neighbourhoods but not implemented widely in Danish society. Within the criminological literature, differential treatment is known as 'bifurcation' (Hudson, 1993; Ruggiero, 2013), and has been described as

specific population groups being perceived differently in the eyes of the state, and thereby treated differently by law enforcement agencies and in the criminal justice systems. The article in Appendix 3, 'Exceptionalism for Most, Excess for Others', shows how the gang policies establish a bifurcation of gang members and inscribe it into the Danish penal code¹. Gang membership is described as an individual's choice of not belonging to society, thus legitimizing untraditional methods of control and penal treatment directed towards those classified as belonging the gang milieu. Although these policing and penal measures are carried out in an effort to ensure safety and security to law-abiding citizens, such differentiated treatment comes with a cost with regards to access to justice and equality before the law for the selected target groups. Considering the article in appendix 3 and that of Seeman together, we can observe a kind of policy synergy, such that different policy areas reinforce one another. Hence, the policing of the ghetto overlaps with the policing of gangs, while residents in the ghettoized neighbourhoods, where gangs also operate, are subject to community policing initiatives, intensive surveillance, and harsh punitive consequences for breaking the law. Both Seeman's study and the article in Appendix 3, however, operate solely on a policy and law level, which is why further studies are needed in order to examine how such political developments influence both the practice of the employees in the public institutions directed by the polices, and the everyday lives of targeted citizen groups, including their perceptions of and relation to welfare, penal and law enforcement institutions. It is this latter theme which is the agenda of this dissertation.

Research question

The policy study presented in Appendix 3, seen together with other studies of the ghetto policies, thus motivated a research interest in how status differentiation and bifurcated penal treatment was experienced from the perspective of ethnic minority

¹ The data behind the article consists of documents concerning the legal content of the gang packages: L501 (2009) for the first packages, L733 (2014) for the second package, and the agreement paper summarizing the total amount of law changes for the third package (ministry for justice, 2017), as well as minister's presentational speeches to the Danish parliament for the first and second gang packages (minister of justice 2009; 2014), and the speech delivered at a press conference for the announcement of the third gang package (minister of justice, 2017) as well as the text in the agreement paper of the package (ministry for justice, 2017). Not included is thus parliamentary debates on the law changes and on public media perspectives on the theme. The sole focus is on the legal changes, and the arguments legitimizing them.

communities in Denmark. This led to the formulation of the following research question for the main empirical study of Ph.D. project:

Following the development of anti-ghetto and anti-gang policies, and in light of the trouble with deviance and crime in their neighbourhoods, how do ethnic minority parents residing in ghettoized neighbourhoods where gangs operate perceive the police in Denmark?

It was decided to focus narrowly on those affected most directly by the policies, which led to the selection of a community affected by both ghetto and gang policies. The adults in this study were narrowed down to parents, again in order to focus on those most influenced by the policies. Since these policies mainly address youth crime and deviance, or youth at risk of being drawn into criminal activities, the parents were most likely to have experiences with police encounters through their children. Parents, it was also assumed, might also be concerned about the crime and deviance in their neighbourhood, as well as gang activities. After all, both they and their children were at risk of both victimization and of being recruiting by the gangs. Investigating the attitudes of parents thus seemed to form a good prism for identifying the complex dynamics of managing crime, police attention and stigmatization in a Danish context. A focus on a diverse group of parents within the same community was attempted in order to investigate whether parents with different backgrounds and positions in society held different perceptions of the police, especially in order to challenge stereotypical and unwarranted assumptions about a homogenous and shared distrust of the police held by all those residing in ghettoized communities.

Chapter 2

Theoretical framework

Researching citizen-police relations

Since the 1980's a vast body of literature on citizen-police relations has developed. This research has been especially concerned with how the relationship is perceived from the citizen perspective, notably with regard to disadvantaged and marginalized citizens. Not surprisingly, the research often revolves around a curiosity about whether the police are viewed negatively or positively from the citizen perspective and the factors sustaining these attitudes. The research can roughly be divided into two main categories: those that find police practice and police encounters to be the dominant cause behind citizens' perception of the police, and those that find perceptions of the police to be based on more practical, everyday life considerations. This debate on what to focus upon has influenced the method chosen for the empirical study of this Ph.D. project, why a brief introduction to both positions will be given here before turning to the methods and data section.

Police encounters and citizen perceptions of the police

Studies of perceptions of procedural justice represent a strong research field in the first category, arguing that perceptions of the police develop out of assessments of whether the police act and behave fairly (Tyler, 2003). Such subjective judgements have been found to influence whether the police are perceived as legitimate in the eyes of citizens, which in turn affects the level of trust in and cooperation with the police (Tyler & Fagan, 2008; Tyler, 2001; Tyler, 2011) and citizens' willingness to comply with the law (Tyler, 2003). Fairness is generally found to be closely linked to notions of neutrality, respect, dignity and of being treated in accordance with one's rights (Tyler, 2003, pp. 298-299). A range of procedural justice studies have described how ethnic minority communities experience police encounters and how these encounters affect perceptions of police legitimacy. Generally, Tyler notes that perceptions of procedural justice remain the main factor affecting police legitimacy, and hence for trust and cooperation, across ethnic minority groups (Tyler & Fagan, 2008, p. 250; Tyler, 2001; Tyler, 2003, pp. 311-312). However, studies have also found that ethnic minority populations generally report experiences of poor treatment by the police (Donner et al., 2015, p. 161). Together, these findings indicate that ethnic minority communities experience policing practices to be illegitimate to a greater degree than majority communities (Tyler, 2003, pp. 294-295). Differences in levels of

trust in the police across different ethnic population groups have also been pointed out by Tyler (2011, p. 259), leading to questions about how to change and organize policing practices so that they better accord with citizens' views of what constitutes proper policing (Tyler, 2011, p. 263). In a study of how young men from socio-economically disadvantaged neighbourhoods assessed the police, Gau and Brunson (2010) found that order maintenance policing strategies were strongly tied to their perceptions of procedural injustice. Respondents found the frequent stop-and-searches to be especially annoying, combined with a feeling that the frequent searches were due to their social status which led them to describe the policing practice as harassment (Gau & Brunson, 2010, p. 272). Gau and Brunson also noted that their respondents compared their treatment to how they believed others were treated, and concluded that extra police attention given them was motivated by their clothing or neighbourhood of residency, leading them to perceive the police as acting unfairly (Gau & Brunson, 2010, p. 272). Lastly, Gau and Brunson noted that the policing practices were accompanied by verbal harassment of the young men. Regardless of whether such behaviour on the part of the police was part of their policing strategy, its effect was that it increased the likelihood that the youth would perceive the policing practices as unjustified treatment (Gau & Brunson, 2010, p. 273). The proactive element of order maintenance policing was discussed by Gau and Brunson, since this policing approach introduced a risk that the young men would be stopped without any further charges or sanctions being filed. Formal sanctions would have indicated that the stop was justified, but when stops were groundless, the potential result would be 'informal outcomes such as shame, embarrassment, anger, and feelings that one's personal integrity has been violated' (Gau & Brunson, 2010, p. 273). These findings led Gau and Brunson to conclude that:

'Police agencies that embrace order maintenance, therefore, need to be aware of the possible ramifications of this strategy; specifically, they need to cast a keen eye toward the collateral consequences of waging a battle against social disorder. Police-community relations are already strained in many cities and neighborhoods, especially those that are socially and economically distressed (Renauer, 2007; see also Klinger, 1997; Sampson

& Bartusch, 1998), and aggressive order maintenance could hit these shaky alliances particularly hard.’ (Gau & Brunson, 2010, p. 273)

In a later study, Gau and Brunson examined what kinds of policing practices motivated neighbourhood residents to avoid police involvement in their strategies for managing crime and deviance (Gau & Brunson, 2015). Generally, they found that residents from the most disadvantaged neighbourhoods reported higher levels of procedural injustice (Gau & Brunson, 2015, pp.142,143), and the study supported their previous findings presented above with regard to proactive policing practices: ‘Despite their admitted involvement in minor or even serious deviance, respondents reported that the vast majority of their involuntary police contacts involved stops that occurred when they were “doing nothing wrong”’ (Gau & Brunson, 2015, p. 141). The study also revealed that such unwarranted and involuntary police encounters were accompanied by provocative police behaviour: ‘Respondents described how involuntary police encounters often began with visibly agitated officers, speaking rudely, thereby setting a negative tone that sometimes resulted in study participants being uncooperative and responding in kind’ (Gau & Brunson, 2015, p.141). Where the rude police behaviour was found to result in uncooperativeness among the residents during the encounter, long-term negative opinions of the police were also found to develop from a confusion over the reasons for the involuntary encounters: ‘Study participants described being confused regarding which actions might subject them to officers’ seemingly undiscerning gaze (e.g., traveling to or from school, wearing red, wearing blue, running, walking, standing, and so on)’ (Gau & Brunson, 2015, p. 141). From these findings, Gau and Brunson conclude that:

‘The findings from the present study add to previous research by underscoring how self-help strategies (e.g., adopting a tough demeanor, traveling in groups) are both a consequence and a cause of the schism between young males and police officers. The alienation and mistrust that flows both ways is fueled by each side’s reaction to the other.’ (Gau & Brunson, 2015, p.144)

Gau & Brunson argue that the behaviour of being self-reliant causes the residents to appear even more suspicious to a police force following aggressive and proactive

policing strategies. Thus, they find that policing practices form part of a negative spiral of conflict-ridden resident-police relationships, a vicious spiral also described by Tyler (2003, p. 287). As a consequence of lost trust in the police, Jackson et al., (2013) documents a general acceptance of violence as a form of social control, such that violence is found to be more widespread within minority communities with a widespread distrust in the police illustrating how police perceptions influence the wider social dynamics in marginalized communities. Tyler and Fagan (2008) report similar findings, although their study focuses on a phenomenon quite the opposite of self-help, namely police cooperation among residents in different ethnically dominated neighbourhoods. In this study, perceptions of justice in police practices are found to be the main factor behind cooperation, which is in line with previous procedural justice studies. Moreover, they also report that when the police are viewed as legitimate, minority communities are also more likely to work together within the community to actively engage with crime management (Tyler & Fagan, 2008, p. 263). In the discussion, Tyler and Fagan note that their study supports previous studies where experiences of being profiled by the police within ethnic minority communities erode perceptions of police legitimacy, thus supporting Gau and Brunson's findings that inexplicable reasons for police attention are one of the primary factors behind the development of perceptions of procedural injustice within ethnic minority communities (Tyler & Fagan, 2008, p. 265). Tyler et al. (2015) document the same findings, arguing that proactive policing practices communicate a general suspicion and distrust to those targeted by such practices (Tyler et al., 2015, pp. 630-631). According to Tyler, attention by the police, who represent society at large, carries a symbolic status representation of those targeted, why ethnic minority communities might develop feelings of inferiority and stigmatization based on excessive police attention (Tyler et al., 2015, p.631). However, Tyler notes:

'... there is not a single procedure that is universally regarded as fair. People's views of the attributes of a fair procedure vary when the procedure is being used to resolve different types of problems.' (Tyler, 2003, p. 301)

This is why it is important not to generalize such findings – the exact same policing practices might be perceived differently in other contexts, or among minorities in another country.

Social context and police perceptions

Though the procedural justice approach has been rigorously applied in a variety of studies, it has its limitations. Pennington, for example, notes that a narrow study of the relation between an individual and a legal institution misses the social context within which the notion of fairness is formed by the individual; Pennington’s study takes place in a family context (2015, p. 915). Pennington thereby argues that relations to non-legal actors, with whom encounters with legal institutions are discussed, influence perceptions of legitimacy. Brick et al., (2009) has also noted that subcultural ties and community ties had a stronger influence on attitudes of the police than did policing practices, showing the social context to be highly influential as well. Novich and Hunt (2018) found that evaluations of fairness of police encounters were based on situational circumstances rather than policing practices in and of themselves, indicating that the same practices might be perceived as acceptable in some situations and unfair in others. In a Scandinavian context, Saarikkomaki et al., (2020) found that situational circumstances as well as concerns of belonging influenced whether police encounters were perceived as just:

‘Our findings suggest that a more complex understanding of procedural justice is needed where notions of belonging are considered. Furthermore, our findings propose a more complete approach where ambiguity and multi-sided evaluations are noted. Although unfairly experienced treatment and suspicion were reoccurring themes, ethnic minority youth’s relations with the police were nevertheless ambiguous, including both positive and negative perceptions, and an understanding for police work and a trust in the police organisations. The relations are, at the same time, shaped and influenced by feelings of being both suspected and protected.’ (Saarikkomaki et al., 2020, pp. 11-12).

They argue that minority youth base their evaluation of police fairness on a comparison of how they perceive others to be treated by the police. Saarikkomaki et

al. found that ethnic minority youth had ambiguous views of the police, and that they maintained a high level of trust even when they said that they were unfairly treated (Saarikkomaki et al., 2020, pp. 12-13). Wästerfors and Alm (2019) likewise find that ethnic minority youth in Sweden develop their perceptions of the police through a complex mixture of factors. Hence, the youth:

'discussed values such as fairness, neutrality, dignity and trustworthy motives by comparing expressive examples and situations, invoking others' or shared experiences, showing closeness to or distance from the involved actors and their category membership, and by indicating how negatively their neighborhoods are typically framed by others. They narrated and evaluated the police in a web of quite concrete comparisons and identifications, politically charged and experientially multilayered.'
(Wästerfors & Alm, 2019, p. 185).

Tyler somewhat accedes to this criticism, pointing out that police performance and distributive justice also influence legitimacy, trust and cooperation (Tyler & Fagan, 2008). He also hints towards broader 'social dilemmas' within communities as related to perceptions of procedural justice of policing practices (e.g., Tyler & Fagan, 2008, p. 262).

When viewing citizen-police relations from a broader perspective, other themes also emerge in the international literature. Bradford and Jackson (2016) found that police cooperation, though influenced by policing practices, was part of a broader effort of social control within neighbourhoods, and that despite questionable policing practices, the police were generally perceived as the guardian of proper moral values in society. Carr et al. echo this view in a study on trust in the police amongst youth in different ethnically dominated high-crime neighbourhoods and notes: 'youth can be negatively disposed toward police but retain the notion of an idealized police force and perceive the rule of law as the foundation for crime reduction' (Carr et al., 2007, p.470). Together, these examples show that a general need for social control in one's proximate surroundings generally motivates police cooperation based on a notion that the police are ideally the proper authority in such matters. Carr has also previously noted a development towards more involvement of public control institutions in

parochial (informal social control) strategies of managing crime and deviance (Carr, 2003), and Warner also found calling the police to be a form of indirect informal social control in communities with low levels of social cohesion and internal trust (Warner, 2007). In such studies, the perceptions of the police are thus not only the result of direct encounters with police, but also the result of how citizens relate *to one another* in problematic situations, where the restoration of order is needed.

According to Jackson and Bradford, confidence in the police is based on an experienced social alignment between citizen and police values, meaning that when the police embody community values, confidence increases (Jackson & Bradford, 2010). This finding indicates that not only policing practices, but also the values read into them by citizens influence assessments of procedural justice. Hancock reaches a similar conclusion when she describes how police involvement is based on their ability to act in accordance with community sensibilities towards disadvantaged community members (Hancock, 2001, pp. 167-170). In Hancock's study, sensibilities also refer the police's ability to address the social problems behind problematic behaviour, indicating that perceptions of proper as well as effective police intervention determined the level of confidence in the police. Zahnov et al. argue similarly in regards to a study of people living in communities where violence is frequent, where they find higher levels of police confidence based on experienced police effectiveness in managing the violence (Zahnov et al., 2017). However, when the police fail to properly and effectively manage crime and deviance, legal cynicism is found to develop. Citizens lose trust in the ability of law enforcement to help and protect them (Hertogh, 2018; Sampson & Bartuch, 1998).

From the review above, it is clear that there are studies that show how perceptions of the police are based on evaluations of police practices, while other studies highlight how contextual factors provide the interpretive frame for how citizens view the police. Although some debate exists as to whether which understanding has the most influence on the perceptions of the police, the findings are not mutually exclusive. In this light, the Ph.D. project was designed to make it possible to give equal attention to both perspectives. By drawing on the legal consciousness tradition both methodologically and analytically, this project has developed an explorative approach to studying police perceptions among ethnic minority parents. I will therefore

introduce the legal consciousness tradition before I move on to the methods section, and also explicate how it has inspired the Ph.D. project. This introduction to legal consciousness studies is also included since both appendix 1 and 2, as well as the analysis provided later in this dissertation, draws on the research tradition analytically. Appendix 1 and the analysis that follows in this dissertation does so directly, while appendix 2 is indirectly influenced in that it addresses the same analytical focal points as are particular to the theory, though the analysis is ordered around the empirical presentation of an extended case study (Evans & Handelmann, 2006) rather than a study of legal consciousness per se.

Legal consciousness and the study of law from an everyday life perspective

Legal consciousness theory is an analytical framework that highlight's people's notions of law, its institutions and its agents. A legal consciousness approach favours rich and detailed empirical insight over broad, often survey-based, data sets where little meaning is attached to answers and statements, and is today a rich and diverse research tradition, with different strands highlighting and focussing on various aspects of people's relationship to 'law' (Chua & Engel, 2019). According to Chua and Engel, the diverse strands are connected by a shared interest in three 'elements of subjectivity': 1) **worldview**, how people perceive the world around them and their place in that world; 2) **perceptions**, how people perceive and interpret specific events based on experiences from engaging with the world around them; and 3) **decisions**, how people decide to act based on their worldview and perceptions of what happens around them, not least with regard to decisions on whether to engage with the law (Chua & Engel, 2019, pp. 336-337). Chua and Engel argue that different 'schools' have developed within the legal consciousness tradition that draw differently on these elements. By mainly following Merry (1990) and Ewick & Silbey (1998), this Ph.D. project is positioned within the 'hegemony school' (Chua & Engel, 2019, pp. 339-340). Here, the main interest lies in how the operations of law influence the 'thoughts and actions of ordinary people' (Chua & Engel, 2019, p. 339), and thus how people relate to law in their everyday lives. This hegemony school is part of the 'critical legal consciousness' tradition (Silbey, 2005), where the central question is on how law obtains hegemonic status in society: what is it that makes people accept law, engage

law, or if not, resist and avoid law? This interest has led researchers within this position to observe how law is appropriated by people as they go about their daily lives. For Merry, legal consciousness thus becomes a study of how law reproduces itself through how 'people understand and use law' (Merry, 1990, p. 5). This view is echoed by Ewick and Silbey, who study how people 'define, think about, and use law' (Ewick & Silbey, 1998, p. 28).

In her study of working-class Americans taking issues to court, Merry presents an approach to studying legal consciousness in people's active engagement with the justice system (Merry, 1990). As such, she develops a conception of legal consciousness as processual in nature, where continual experiences of engaging with law and its institutions changes one's consciousness of what is relevant to put before the law and what one can expect from the following legal process (Merry, 1990, p. 5). In the first instance of this process of development of a legal consciousness there is a *legal conceptualization of events and situations* (Merry, 1990, p. 37). Such conceptualizations are thus either confirmed or refuted through *experiences* from taking legal action on the very conceptualization (Merry, 1990, p. 5,170). The result is a progressively more 'skilled' user of the legal system with conceptions of the law more attuned to the actual workings of law (Merry, 1990, p. 170). Within this framework, Merry spurs researchers to be mindful of how people 'conceptualize' their surroundings by invoking notions related to law when they talk as well as when they act – what Chua and Engels call subjective perceptions and decisions. Merry also points out that a legal consciousness always stands in relation to a situation. Rather than studying 'attitudes' as abstract and self-conscious things (Merry, 1990, pp. 5-6), Merry shows how conceptualizations and acts are situationally specific, revealing complexities and contradictions in how people perceive law with regard to different and specific situational circumstances that originate in their everyday lives (Merry, 1990, p. 37). And rather than confusing 'consciousness' with being 'self-conscious', Merry argues that consciousness is a habituated phenomenon revealed through talk, i.e. the conceptualizations voiced, as well as through acts and practice, i.e. the learned and embodied practical knowledge obtained from everyday life (Merry, 1990, p. 5). In sum, Merry proposes a study of how people conceptualize the world around them in legal terms, of how these conceptions are grounded in experiences' of engaging with

the legal system, and of how these ever more nuanced conceptualizations affect people's interactions with law and its institutions in their everyday lives.

Ewick and Silbey develop a similar processual understanding of legal consciousness, which they see as 'participation' in legal activities (Ewick & Silbey, 1998, p. 247). It is through such participation that law's hegemony is reproduced in society, which is the central question of their study. Much like Merry's dynamic between conceptualizations of the law being challenged by experiences, Ewick and Silbey find that experiences of differences between the ideal of law and the practice of law form legal consciousness (Ewick & Silbey, 1998, pp.230,248). Researching legal consciousness in this approach is thus a task of understanding people's expectations of how law ought to work, and of how they experience it to work in practice. In line with Merry's theory, it is necessary here to ask how law ought to work with regard to 'something' – situations, events, problems. These issues arise as part of the everyday lives of people, why everyday life becomes the *raison d'être* of legal action according to Ewick and Silbey (1998, p. 249). What this means is that whenever concerns arise with regard to family, economics, or neighbourhood dynamics, there is always an opening for people to perceive these issues from a legal perspective, based on their ideal notion of law. In this approach, understandings of law are therefore intrinsically bound up in people everyday life; where they live, how they live, where they work, their family status, their medical situation, and not least, the state and society to which they belong and the rights they claim.

In both Merry's and Ewick and Silbey's study, this everyday life perspective is central, for people's expectations about the law are based on everyday concerns. These concerns stand in contrast to a legal system which is more concerned with law as it is in the books (Silbey, 2005) and with institutional frames for how these laws work. This opposition between people's everyday concerns and law in the books leaves citizens with experiences of having their concerns ignored or transformed into institutionalized issues that are abstracted from their original, everyday-based concerns (Merry, 1990, chap.7). Without this grounding in everyday lives, little can be grasped about what law really means for the citizens, or to other people of different and less stable legal status (Abrego, 2011). Studying the meaning of law in everyday life thus entails looking at 'situated practices and repertoires of action' (Silbey, 2005, p. 338) that people choose

from and adhere to in order to manage their everyday lives. Ewick and Silbey remind their readers that such choices are made in consideration of the available resources (economic, social, cultural) from which different actions are taken and of moral interpretations of proper actions to take in the context of the situation (Ewick & Silbey, 1998, pp.42,232). Thus, social and moral concerns are part of ascribing meaning to the use of law, not only evaluations of law in isolation.

A last point to highlight regarding the theory is that one individual is not equated with one form of consciousness. Just as situations vary, forms of law are legion, such that people relate differently to law in different contexts (Ewick & Silbey, 1998, p. 5; Merry, 1990, p. 5). This means that people might avoid the police in some situations, while readily calling upon them in others. This point underscores the need to research police perceptions in context rather than as abstract attitudes, not least to reveal nuances and variations that might both challenge essentializing dichotomous ideas of whether particular population groups view law in a positive or a negative light (Merry, 1990. p. 5-6; Silbey, 2005, pp. 337-338, 240-241).

Although the everyday concerns of ethnic minority parents receive both methodological and analytical attention in this Ph.D. project and the publications that derive from it, it should be noted that the topic of this dissertation is not everyday life in such a community. It is about how the police are perceived in the context of that particular everyday life.

Central to both Merry and Ewick and Silbey is how people tell stories of situations they conceptualize in legal terms, and of how they have experienced encounters with legal actors and institutions, and how they now believe those actors and institutions are relevant to activate in managing and navigating the situations. Sarat and Kearn summarize this in the following quote, where I have exchanged the word 'law' with 'police' in order to make it clearer for the context of the present study:

'To see [the police] in everyday life means going to small towns, to rural places, and to urban neighbourhoods and looking at the way people in those places come to terms with, use, or ignore [the police] as they construct their own local universe of legal values and behavior.' (edited, Sarat & Kearn, 1993, p.60).

Based on this interpretive approach to researching perceptions of the police among citizens, this Ph.D. project took an exploratory approach, both methodologically and analytically. Methodologically, as will be described in the next section, an ethnographic approach was taken to allow for an exploratory understanding of how the everyday context of living in a ghettoized neighbourhood influenced the perceptions of the police. Analytically, the legal consciousness approach has inspired an inductive process of identifying how the interlocutors formed their views of the police based on references to particular situational circumstances and to specific experiences of relying on and encounters with the police. There is less focus on abstract evaluations of the police and more on how ethnic minority parents describe how they 'understand and use' the police, as well as on how they 'construct their own local universe of legal values and behaviour' regarding situational and experiential interpretations. With regard to the previously described dichotomy of whether it is police practices or the wider social context that affect how people perceive the police, the legal consciousness approach allows for both perspectives to be included in the analysis by asking how ethnic minority parents conceptualize everyday troubles in legal terms, and how they interpret the police's ability to be relevant for their navigation of legal matters in their everyday life based on experiences of how the police operate.

Chapter 3

Methodology, data and field

Methods: ethnography, interviews and conversations

In order to procure empirical data that would accommodate both an explorative curiosity as well as contextualized conceptions of the police among ethnic minority parents, an ethnographic approach was taken. Drawing on Madison's notion of 'critical ethnography' (Madison, 2020), arguing strongly for a form of ethnography as 'dialogic performance' (Madison, 2020, pp. 164,169-170), it was possible to carry out a relatively short fieldwork over a ten-month period. A clear focus on experiences and interpretations of the policing of the community was maintained, while the participants also were invited to participate actively in the co-construction of the data as interlocutors, thus opening the topic up for the researcher. The co-construction entailed that the interlocutors would be confronted with predefined topics, themes and even prejudice. However, they would be asked to comment on these predefined notions and bring forth their perspectives on the same issues, drawing on experiences from their everyday lives, pointing to contextual circumstances to be considered, elaborating on how and why they would see something differently or why they agreed. Through such dialogue, the meaning they ascribed to their surroundings became observable. Consequently, the findings presented in Appendices 1 and 2, and in this dissertation reflects my own attempt at making sense of the interlocutors' sense-making (Fernandez & Herzfeld, 2014, pp. 56-57), which is why the following chapters will alternate between a first and a third person perspective so as to reveal both the researcher's and interlocutors' influence on the process, which I hope to be a 'good-enough' ethnography despite my subjectivity's both limiting and enabling characteristics (Scheper-Hughes, 1993).

Besides contributing insights into the way that interlocutors make sense of the world around them, ethnography has a second strength that was of great value to the study. As an outsider to the field of interest, I approached the study based on preconceived ideas and notions. Some of these were academic, having studied the literature on the topic. My literature study influenced my view of the field as a place of marginalization and structural disadvantages related to ethnicity. From this position, my preconceptions were partially grounded in an empathetic indignation on behalf of the population group to be studied. However, as especially Bourgois and Wacquant remind critical ethnographers, even marginalized population groups engage in wrongdoing,

partake in their own suffering, and endorse and accept their own domination (Bourgois, 2003, p. 11-18; Wacquant, 2002). This study of interlocutors' reflections and their everyday lives made it possible to maintain a critical gaze towards my own empathetic perception of the field. Other preconceptions were based on me being a citizen in the same society as the population group, although being differently positioned. I was thus not without internalized notions of ghetto life, gangs, crime and deviance in my approach to the field – even though I had an academic distance to the very same topics. I therefore also had to challenge my own prejudice about life in a ghettoized neighbourhood, a process in which I was helped by being located in the middle of what I had preconceptions about. I thus attempted to conduct a transformative ethnography (Young, 2011), that would take me personally through a process of enlightenment so that I could present findings that might increase our understanding of life in ghettoized neighbourhoods. In addition, as a researcher who wanted to engage with the public and political discourse on these matters, I felt a need to represent the debate through my presence in the field as well, and listen to the interlocutors' ideas about being stigmatized. With this confession, I agree with Hancock, who notes that: 'police and other policy-makers, and indeed criminologists, often make unwarranted assumptions about community responses to crime and disorder' (Hancock, 2001, p. 148). Following Madison, the ethnographer has an ethical imperative to be aware of as well as actively engage with such 'unwarranted assumptions' through dialogue (Madison, 2020, p.164). Fassin argues that ethnography has two heuristic properties that make it suitable for taking on unwarranted assumptions: through *uncovery*, observations confront discursive propositions with facts from the ground, thus revealing discrepancies between the said and the done, the presumed and the actual (Fassin, 2017, p. 5). Through *discovery*, ethnography is mindful of progressive elaboration of knowledge through emergence of meaning – thus, although preconceptions exist, the ethnographer is part of a process where new ideas emerge (Fassin, 2017, p. 5-6). Similarly, Madison notes that especially critical ethnography:

'takes us beneath surface appearances, disrupts the status quo, and unsettles both neutrality and taken-for-granted assumptions by bringing to light underlying and obscure operations of power and control' and 'on

the ground of the Other [...] we now begin to probe other possibilities that will challenge institutions, regimes of knowledge, and social practices that limit choices, constrain meaning, and denigrate identities and communities.' (Madison, 2020, p. 4).

In this light, assumptions, unwarranted or not, academic or public, are not necessarily something to be denied or avoided. Hence, I did not try to explain anything away during the fieldwork. On the contrary, the dialogic element of the fieldwork compelled me to voice the presumptions, confront interlocutors with my at-the-moment understanding of their situation and perceptions. By being aware of my preconceptions, I could actively challenge them in the meeting with 'the Other' through dialogue.

There is some debate among ethnographers about the methodology of the ethnography (Madison, 2020, p. 3-4). In this study, ethnography has been used as a strategy for gaining access to a field that represents the population group of interest. Although I participated in their everyday life to some degree, and although I could observe the social relations between community members, participant-observation was not my primary method. Submersion into the field was meant to enable trusting and contextual interviews and instrumental conversations with interlocutors, which is why the primary data for the analysis will be dialogue based. Hence, my ethnographic observations were primarily intended to identify possible interlocutors and to be drawn upon during interviews and conversations so as to open up more specific, rather than general, discussions with the interlocutors. The interviews were generally structured as 'topical interviews' (Madison, 2020, p. 35), where I had prepared themes that the interlocutors were asked to reflect upon; parenting, police experiences, crime and deviance, ghetto stigmatization and discrimination, biography and background. The interviews were generally structured around a biographical interest in the interviewee, thus probing for 'personal narratives' of specific events and experiences that could substantiate more general reflections with regard to the topics (Madison, 2020, p. 35). In the following, I will account for the process of gaining access to field, building trust and selecting interlocutors, and of navigating ethical dilemmas.

Identification of the field, gaining access, and the interlocutors

Having decided early on to focus my attention on how ethnic minority parents residing in neighbourhoods on the ghetto list and where gangs operated perceived the police, I decided to focus on a single neighbourhood. Acknowledging that the marginalized status of the population of interest might be a barrier for access to both communities as well as to relations to individual interlocutors, it seemed better to focus my energy on exploring one neighbourhood and to delve deeper into a single community of ethnic minority parents rather than working across neighbourhoods with only the more easily accessible individuals. By targeting a single community, it would also be possible to work in a more dedicated way towards uncovering nuances and differences between community members. I could actively seek out different groups of parents and work on motivating them to participate in the study.

After having tried to contact different groups, organizations and individuals working with, or living in, such neighbourhoods, a personal friend of mine helped me get in touch with Shadi, a young man, activist, entrepreneur and resident in one of the middle-sized neighbourhoods on the ghetto list. Shadi is a pseudonym, like all other names of the interlocutors mentioned in this study. Shadi lives in the neighbourhood I have called Blomsterengen (meaning flower field). I met with Shadi and explained my project to him, stressing that my goal was to somehow get behind the prejudices and public images of so-called 'ghetto residents'. I wanted to hear their own perspectives about how it was to live in such areas, and I was especially interested in their encounters with the police. Initially, Shadi was a bit reluctant to help me, since he received a lot of requests from journalists and outside researchers and often got very little out of it. Nevertheless, after discussing the project and my intention to visit Blomsterengen regularly over a year's time, with a purely academic interest, he said that he would assist me. He ended up offering me a workplace in a community house where he also worked, right in the middle of Blomsterengen. This was an activity centre for the local residents, where they could meet in interest groups, form organizations, and where volunteers could run projects. Shadi ended up being my primary gatekeeper in the area, helping me getting in touch with different people, inviting me to events, and he was also a formidable resource for helping me reflect on

and refine my observations, as well as helping me gain access to different community members. During late evening and dinner talks, I could run ideas and understandings by him, and he would let me know through brute honesty if I was missing something, as well as indicate when I was on to something of interest for the community. Shadi was not a parent himself, so I chose early on not to try and make him an interlocutor but to keep this gatekeeper relationship with him.

Although Blomsterengen is anonymized, a few words about the place and its history would set a good frame for picturing the everyday life of the residents living there. Blomsterengen is by no means a large public housing estate, though big enough to meet the 'a least a thousand residents' needed to 'qualify' for the ghetto list. The buildings are mainly residential – apartment blocks, with apartments known to be of good size for middle- to large-sized families. Some were terrace houses, although apartment blocks dominated the neighbourhood. Blomsterengen has a central commercial area with a supermarket, some shops and fast-food establishments. On a personal note, the town's best and most authentic falafel rolls were sold there. But the neighbourhood was integrated with the surrounding city. It had no clear boundary, that set apart from other public housing estates or apartment blocks. There were other shopping options just across the street, and reaching the rest of the city by car or public transport was easy and fast. Within the neighbourhood, however, there was a sense of separation from the surrounding city since the buildings formed a closed public space with playgrounds, grass areas, football fields, youth club locales and the community house and public locales.

Blomsterengen had been on and off the ghetto list for several years, and the local housing association was active in trying to get the community off the list, in line with the ghetto strategies to regenerate the neighbourhood and work to improve the social condition of the community. The association thus ran projects to get local youth on career paths, working to engage parents to take more responsibility for their children's lives, and also running everyday activities to stimulate a more active and engaged community. Blomsterengen primarily made the ghettolist because of the levels of employment, education and average income, though a periodically high crime rate also spurred on the ghettoization of the neighbourhood. Especially troubling was that gang conflicts had moved into the neighbourhood. Over the years, there had been smaller

groups of troublesome youth, every generation of boys had some who took a criminal path instead of going on with education and employment. But as the gangs in Denmark became more organized and started expanding their territories, Blomsterengen became a site of more organised and violent gang activity. When I began my field work, there had developed a sort of local understanding that the summer months were the 'gang season'. As such, the summer break was anticipated with both traditional joy and with strong anxiety at the same time. Everyday crime and deviance, however, did not notably disturb the rhythm of life in Blomsterengen. In all the days and hours spent there I never witnessed any directly criminal or violent act. Many parents revealed that they actually did not know where and how the criminal activity operated, assuming that it took place mainly at night or in secluded parts of the neighbourhood where no one could see what was going on. Crime and deviance, however, had a profound psychological presence in the Blomsterengen, at least compared to other areas I personally have lived and visited in Denmark. Crime and deviance were a daily topic of discussion among the residents, most of whom had pre-formed opinions and stories of crime and troublemaking. Whether this discrepancy between rare observable crime and strong mental awareness of crime was due to actual high levels of crime or the result of a lot of talk about crime and deviance in the neighbourhood is difficult to say. However, it is clear that the emergence of more severe and violent crime in the neighbourhood seemed to have raised a more general anxiety about crime and for the parents, the fear that even minor troublemaking among their children could lead to more serious crime. Another reason for the strong mental focus on crime and deviance could also be the heavy presence of police in the neighbourhood. Police presence in Blomsterengen also worked as a reminder of the risk of crime in the neighbourhood. Blomsterengen lay within the district of a local police department, so that local police officers would quite casually patrol the neighbourhood, greeting and chatting with residents on their way. They would visit the youth club, the communal houses, and attend activities and social gatherings in the neighbourhood. Although they were relaxed and welcoming in their approach, they did arrive in uniform, fully equipped with gun in the belt and other utilities, and thus had a certain authoritative presence when they showed up. In the city of which Blomsterengen is part, there is also a centralized preventive unit that worked in the neighbourhood, working more specifically with some individuals, in contrast to the

more general operations of the local police officers. These preventive officers were thus rarely seen, and they were known mainly by those who had had actual encounters with them. In addition, the community was also patrolled by 'city cops', normal beat officers who drove about the city and responded to calls from citizens. Being strangers to the residents, these city cops were experienced as more detached from the people they addressed than were the local district officers. It was the city cops who were described as those conducting random stop-and-frisk searches, who might have dogs with them, and were in general more harsh and sometimes downright brutal in their contact to locals. Besides this formal police presence in Blomsterengen, the local housing association, youth club on other public institutions and activities worked closely with the police. These institutions can thus be seen as part of a 'policing web' of plural policing activities. In total, it seems fair to conclude that Blomsterengen was a policed neighbourhood.

The community house that Shadi opened up for me also ended up being a perfect spot from which to work. Local residents would come and go, ensuring that my presence was broadly noticed quite rapidly in the neighbourhood. It also provided a flow of movement where local residents came to me, such that I easily got to know a lot of people early on. And at the same time, all I had to do was to get off the chair and out the door, and I would be in the middle of a neighbourhood where I could meet and greet people. There were especially three fathers, whom I met at the communal house who eventually became interlocutors, presented here:

Tariq was a father in his 40's with a Middle Eastern background. He had grown up in Blomsterengen, and was now living a somewhat withdrawn life in the neighbourhood, not participating in many activities, and I only rarely encountered him during my fieldwork. As a youth, Tariq had been involved in criminal activities, which however ended abruptly when he was sentenced to a short term in prison, after which he chose to leave the criminal life behind. Instead he focused on family life, with his ethnic Danish girlfriend and their children. Tariq was very open about life in Blomsterengen, both about his youth and about life as a law-abiding adult. He could thus reveal inside knowledge about how life was for the local youth and the trouble they had with getting a foothold in life, revealing an empathetic understanding of their situation. Simultaneously however, he was very tired of the problems that the local

troublemakers brought to the neighbourhood. Having left that lifestyle behind him, he knew that it was possible to choose a different lifestyle, and this understanding of life options influenced his opinions about crime management and his view of the police.

Noah, a man in his 20's with a Middle-Eastern background, showed up at the communal house one day, and people greeted him like he had just returned after a long holiday. Noah had in fact just been released from prison, after a longer sentence. It was not his first time in prison. Noah had until recently been one of the core criminals in the neighbourhood, but he had now gained early release because of his willingness to turn his life around. While being in prison, his wife had given birth to his first child, who he brought with him to the communal house one day, to everyone's delight. Noah was very eager to talk during the fieldwork, although interviews did not sit well with him. We therefore ended up having a range of conversations whenever we met, and he was a gold mine of reflections on the police, offering both criminal and law-abiding perspectives. It was exciting to observe how Noah attempted to turn his life around in a neighbourhood that was excessively policed.

Zaid was in his 40's, had an African background and struggled somewhat in life. His Danish was not so good, and he had a hard time finding permanent employment. However, he took what he could and was grateful. He had never been part of any delinquent groups in Blomsterengen and was generally annoyed by the neighbourhood's negative reputation, which he attributed to the troublemakers. Zaid was active in public life and would often come by the communal house to hang out, but he was not the centre of attention when he was there. We would often have conversations on the side line of gatherings, or when he came by during the day when no one else was there. His wife lived abroad with their children, but they were working on getting her to Denmark. Meanwhile he would sometimes visit them, and on other occasions, they would visit him in Blomsterengen.

Besides these three fathers, it was also at the communal house that I met Yahia, Kader, Abdi and Farouk. These were all young men from the neighbourhood, and good friends of Shadi and other interlocutors. They were, however, not parents, so I decided not to engage directly with them in terms of data collection. Yahia and Kader became part of my ethnographic observations because of their active engagement in the public life in

Blomsterengen. Like Shadi, they ended up as valuable sparring partners on my project, inspiring me with their ideas, elaborating on neighbourhood history and the like.

Through Shadi, I was also introduced to another public venue in the neighbourhood which I will call the 'public house'. This was the office of the local housing association, but it was also intended to be a centre for activities for local residents. Here there were free coffee during the day, public breakfast, and locals would gather with employees from the housing association as well as with janitors and those employed to maintain the public areas. Once a week there was also a communal dinner for local residents and other guests. During Halloween and other holidays, the public house would also host activities for children and their families. For many youths in the area, the public house was also a second home. They would go there right after school to hang out and play with each other until their parents got off work. The public house was thus bustling with parent activity, and I made a routine of joining the breakfast and dinner activities whenever possible. It was here, and during activities related to the public house, that I encountered most of the parents who became my interlocuters, presented here:

Jamal was a local father in his 40's of Middle-Eastern background, worked in the local youth club. He thus held a dual position in the community as both a public employee and a local resident. Jamal had been a troublemaker in his youth and briefly flirted with crime. Taking a job at the youth club was part of his efforts to serve his community and work towards giving local youth the strength to withstand the lure of deviancy. He was eager to engage with my research project, since he saw it as important to have some local voices heard that could challenge the stigma of the neighbourhood. Moreover, he was willing to help me get in contact with other families in the community.

Adnaan, a local father in his 30's, had migrated with his family from the Middle East. He studied to be a social worker and had been involved in projects with local youth over the years. His interest in social work began when he was young himself. He and some friends had been asked to hang out with some 'at risk youth' in order to give them a place to be instead of in the streets, a job he was offered because he was respected by the local youth. Adnaan had grown up in the neighbourhood and was one

of the locals, and though he knew about the life 'on the street', he had never himself been involved in crime.

Haamid would now and again come by the public house and attend social activities. He was in his 60's, a veteran from his home country from the far East, and worked very hard to keep his own children who attended university, on a path of education. Haamid was one of the more religious parents whom I encountered, and also one of those who had migrated to Denmark as an adult. He generally kept his children away from public life in the Blomsterengen, urging them to spend time in other parts of the city, at work, or at home.

Hassan was another father who had migrated to Denmark as an adult from the Middle East. Now in his 60's, unemployed, he spent a lot of his time engaged in initiatives to work with the local youth hanging out in the streets. Hassan's own children were attending university, but he was extremely annoyed that they were treated by police as suspected troublemakers because of their neighbourhood of residency. In this regard, he was extremely indignant about issues of control, policing, and public institutions intervening in the social life of Blomsterengen.

Fatih was a young father in his early 30's from had migrated to Denmark from the Middle East as a child. He had early in life become involved in organized crime through ethnic Danish friends. When I met him, he had left that life behind, having turned to religion, and had established a family. Fatih generally struggled in life, living a precarious life of season based employment. On the borderline of being able to making it on his own and being in need of public support, he had constant worries about his family life and the family economy. Fatih was very active in the social life of the community and tried as best he could to do something for local deviant youth, but he was also upset that there was little support for his efforts, and in his experience, the public sector was not any good at preventive and pedagogical work.

Haneen was a young mother in her late 20's of Middle Eastern background. She would often hang out in the public house, and was part of most networks in the community, although never one of the central figures. She struggled economically, being a student when my fieldwork started and later looking for employment. Haneen had a natural inclination to be concerned with other struggling families in the community and would

often invite single mothers or others in difficult positions to participate in social activities.

Eman, a mother in her 30's with an African background, had grown up in Blomsterengen but had first lived in another European country before migrating to Denmark. Eman had several children with a man she had met abroad, and later left when she wanted to move back to her family in Denmark. Here she had a large family who helped her, although she should not be portrayed as someone in need of help. She was strong and had strong principles about being a good and active citizen. A Muslim, she wore a headscarf, but she also came across as a liberated woman whom no one could order around, as shown by her having lived abroad and leaving the father.

Laila was a mother in her late 30's, of Middle Eastern background. Laila had grown up in Blomsterengen and cared a lot about the welfare of the community, even about the local troublemakers and more struggling families. But she also worked to protect the community from trouble, having been part of a mother-patrol-group who would roam around the neighbourhood confronting troublesome young men or guarding the local supermarket in order to deter shoplifters. Laila held a part-time job in the neighbourhood, and she would often be around. All the children knew her, and she them.

Sanaa, a mother in her late 20's with Middle Eastern background, held an administrative job and was a local activist. Sanaa started projects, such as a mothers' group where local mothers could gather weekly to eat together and make activities for their children. Sanaa was also part of the parents' council in the youth club. In general, she advocated responsible parenting in the neighbourhood and took initiatives for projects that could actively engage members of the community. Sanaa was part of a network of like-minded mothers, and it was through her that I met **Rizwana** and other mothers whom I interviewed.

Rizwana, a mother in her 30's, was employed in the public healthcare industry. Although part of the network of mothers, she spent relatively little time in the public life in Blomsterengen. Her husband was also working, and they spent most of their

time at home with their kids focussing on a stable everyday life, with dinner time and homework.

Finally, **Salma** should be mentioned. She was ethnic Danish, a mother in her 40's and had grown up in Blomsterengen. Louisa was included in the project despite her ethnicity for two reasons: she had children with an ethnic minority man, such that her children were seen as ethnic minorities in the eyes of the public. One of her sons were also in pretrial detention throughout my fieldwork, and also afterwards, having participated in a gang-related shooting. Louisa could thus give insights into how she felt about the effects of the anti-gang measures. The story of Louisa's son was widely known in the community, and this figured as a topic across conversations with other interlocutors. Hence, Louisa's perspective seemed important as well. It should be noted, however, that Louisa should not be viewed as representing 'an ethnic minority perspective', and I have generally decided not to include her stories in the analysis, except in those contexts where she was present in the situations or was part of conversations, and where her perspective can serve to elaborate on her own situation.

Positionality

During the first months in Blomsterengen, I made it a point not to be too pushy in my approach to the residents. Although some interviews were conducted during this time, mainly because it seemed natural after having described to those I met exactly why I was there and they asked if I was interested in their perspective, I tried to stall the actual data gathering process a bit. I was keen on getting in touch with different types of parents, not just those who offered themselves up. I was also aware that many stories of encounters with the police might be quite personal or sensitive, so that an open conversation or interview might require a more developed, trusting relationship before delving into details. Madden notes how trust is essential to ethnography:

'Rapport-building is crucial to the ethnographic process and it can take some time to establish; one cannot afford to rush things, be too pushy and risk being alienated by one's participant group. The process is one of a 'gradual building up of trust'.' (Madden 2010:16).

I was therefore mindful of letting some time pass as I got to know people both in order to build trust at the individual level and also to establish a position in the field of being trustworthy, genuine and curious. When I presented the project to people, I stressed two important factors: I was not going to do a hit-and-run job, like journalists had been known to do in ghettoized areas (Soei, 2018, pp. 103-104), and I was first and foremost there to get to know the residents' own perspectives – not proving some points or searching for some specific story/angle. Not being pushy was from my point of view a way to prove these two points by showing them I was curious, but also not in a hurry. I would take my time, remaining in Blomsterengen for months, until I understood what was going on. And though I did not necessarily gather data in the initial part of the fieldwork, I acquired considerable knowledge about the field and the setting. I tried to get to know people on a general level, their families, children's names, their ages, etc. Who had grown up here, and who had moved to the area? Who were willing to talk to me, and who were reluctant – and why were they reluctant? Who would be interesting to talk to, and what different groups of informants that I should get to know? Are the youth willing to introduce me to their parents? Could I get to talk to parents together, or should our conversations be divided into talks with mothers and fathers separately? It was thus a time spend on planning data collection, building relations, trying to gain access and developing my position in the field.

One of the main challenges in regards to positionality in the field was to avoid alienation from possible interlocutors before a relation was established. I was therefore mindful of my interactions with some of the youth and young men, whom other adult residents might avoid because they perceived them as troublemakers. Although I was naturally curious about the youth, and easily got in to contact with them through Shadi, I had to show the adult residents that it was them I wanted to relate to. I therefore decided to spend my main time in the neighbourhood during periods when the parents were out and about, and I sought to remain in their proximity. I played with their kids and had everyday conversations about day care institutions and schools, and when I myself was about to become a father for the first time, I started talking with the more 'experienced' parents about the time what was in store for me as a father. This especially opened up relations with mothers in the community, which generally was a more difficult relation for me to establish. For example, when I started

to approach Sanaa and the other mothers in her network, she seemed reluctant to engage with me. One day I decided that the goal of the day was to break the reluctance. When Sanaa arrived with a group of other mothers outside the public house, I decided to go over and sit next to them with an attitude of wanting to talk. This resulted in them turning their backs on me and switching language from Danish to Arabic. Not exactly an invitation to join them, I however remained seated and saw an opening when one of the older mothers took out a bag of baby clothes and showed some of them around. The group were in some discussion about it I could not understand, but I excused myself for interrupting because I had a question about the clothes – how old would the baby be when they could fit that size? I explained that I myself was about to become a father in some months' time, and I was having a hard time figuring out what size to buy for a new-born. The mentioning of the expectancy of my first born made them all turn around suddenly with intense curiosity – what was the gender (I did not know), what names did we consider (I had some ideas), and did I want the clothes they were showing, since they were about to be passed on (I declined based on a notion that someone in the neighbourhood might be in greater need for free baby stuff). Half an hour later, I was invited to attend the 'mothers' group' that gathered every week in the communal house for dinner and for social activities for mothers and their children, and I was permitted to ask for interviews when I thought it useful.

It turned out that part of the mothers' reluctance towards talking to me was that they feared I was there to document the ghetto culture envisioned in the stigma of being in the ghetto. When I described my project to them, stressing that I wanted to get behind the ghetto discourse and get their perspective, Rizwana interrupted me, asking: 'But do you think this is a ghetto?!', demanding me to take a position on the matter. Trying to distance myself from the stigmatization, though still maintaining that some issues existed in the neighbourhood, I tried to take a stance somewhere between condemning and romanticizing the community, showing that I took seriously the stigma as well as the everyday challenges in the neighbourhood. It was a tough balancing act, but I thought it important to show them that I recognized the frustrations that also existed in the neighbourhood and in order to make them see that I took their perspective seriously and had not tried to paint a predefined picture. I also

sought to distance myself from the local troublemakers, to show the mothers that I did not approve of the behaviour that the mothers thought distressing. Based on the open relation I later obtained with several of the mothers in the group, I believe it was the right choice. That Rizwana felt a need to ask me about my opinion on the 'ghetto' classification of the neighbourhood can be interpreted as her reacting to the possible 'othering' inherent in the research interest, revealing how prominent the stigma is on the everyday life for residents in neighbourhoods like Blomsterengen (Jensen, 2009). It is noteworthy how intense her feelings were of being stigmatized, but also noteworthy how she challenged it right away. Rizwana was not the only one who reacted to my research interest, and during many of my interviews and conversations I actively engaged in dialogic performativity, where I performed a representative of the ghetto discourse and allowed my 'performed notions' to be challenged by the interlocutors – once a trusting relation had been established so that they knew we were performing.

Ethical considerations and used data

Neighbourhoods on the ghetto list are easily identifiable in a small country as Denmark, and are also extensively controlled and monitored. Thus, anonymization of Blomsterengen has been a major concern for me. The anonymization effort was not only with regard to the outside world, but also internally in the community. During the fieldwork, I made sure not to share personal information or to mention to others who actively engaged with me. This was mainly done to ensure that I did not unwittingly contribute to local divisions and conflicts between neighbours. My main concern, however, has been not to compromise the relation between interlocutors and public institutions, such as the housing association, the youth club or the police. The interlocutors would share with me their personal views about these institutions and, views they might not share with agents of the same institutions. Like Yates has described, if the institutions would obtain such knowledge through me and my publications, the research could have severe consequences for the interlocutor's life (Yates, 2004). I therefore hope the sparse information I have provided about my interlocutors' background and personalities is sufficient to keep their true identities blurred – yet at the same time not too sparse in order to give an idea about their respective positions from where they relate notions of the police.

A trustworthy companion throughout the field work was a notebook I had in my pocket. I used my notebook as a journal, taking notes from conversations and observations. I would note new questions or leads that I should follow up with my interlocutors. The notebook was thus a practical tool, helping me to recall what had happened and where to go. But the notebook also served ethical purposes. When I first entered the field, my presence was new to the interlocutors and residents in general. My positionality was thus obvious. Over time, however, I became part of the everyday life in Blomsterengen, and residents' awareness of me as an outsider with a scientific purpose for being there would now and again fade into the background. Residents and interlocutors would thus share anecdotes and opinions sometimes forgetting I might use those reflections as data. Keeping the notebook on the table in front of me and taking notes in public view thus helped me to remind those around me that I was actually listening, and listening with a purpose. This illustrates the situated ethics approach that I adopted during my fieldwork (Simons & Usher, 2000). As such, ethical dilemmas were managed throughout the whole process and not only during a reflection in the initial state of the project. It was especially consent that had to be managed situationally. All interlocutors gave their formal consent to participate in interviews or instrumental conversations. But there were also several grey areas. Sometimes I would have a conversation with someone, and someone else would join in. Sometimes, I would be observing a situation where some residents were present who did not know me. Such are the realities of ethnography, a messy business. Whenever possible, I would remind people about my research interest. But if they did not know me, and I had not had a chance to introduce myself and my project, I decided not to log their contributions in my notes in the form of data. However, I would note reminders to myself, to ask about it later, after I had had the time to present myself. Some initial conversations were thus kept unrecorded, some notes would be taken without reference to who had said or done what. And in the final writing of articles and dissertation, I also had ethical considerations about which notes and conversations I had received consent to use as data. This is also why the data mainly reflect the voices of the interlocutors presented above. In reality, I spoke with many more people, and many more voices were present. But if I did not receive verbal consent from people to be part of the project, I have refrained from using data from these conversations. Thus, the data behind this dissertation consists of 12 recorded

and transcribed interviews, 6 unrecorded interviews logged as notes and later reconstructed as conversational transcriptions, as well as notes from observations and conversations gathered over a ten-months period, with varied weekly presence in the neighbourhood. Only on very few occasions would a week pass without me visiting Blomsterengen. The community house acted in effect also as my work office during most of the period, why not all days and hours spend in the neighbourhood can count for field work, though it enabled a constant possibility of engaging with the field.

I also had to navigate ethics on my own behalf. I entered a field that in some regards posed a threat to my own security – it was, after all, a relatively speaking high-crime neighbourhood where gangs operated. This both raised smaller questions, like, should I bike to Blomsterengen and risk having my relatively expensive bike stolen? I did, and it was not. More severe risks however also had to be navigated. During the summer, a gang conflict was smouldering in Blomsterengen, and one evening, the police actually raided the communal house that I was using. Here, the police found work tools lying about, which they believed was placed strategically in case the house was attacked by an outside gang. Was I at risk of being caught in a gang conflict? A drive by shooting maybe? At the time, I was about to be a father for the first time, could I risk being harmed on behalf of my partner and unborn child? Not to overdramatize, but those questions came to mind. I talked to Shadi and others about it, and I decided the risk was so small that I could continue with the fieldwork, although I went home when the parents started leaving the public spaces as well.

I have also been aware of how the study might feed into what Bourgois refers to as the 'politics of representation' (Bourgois, 2003, pp. 11-18), referring to public debate on how disadvantaged neighbourhoods are talked about and approached in terms of policy. It is thus not without fear of feeding 'unwarranted assumptions' of an essentialized 'parallel society' that I provide a cultural analysis of how residents in a publicly stigmatized 'ghetto neighbourhood' relate to the police. Like Bourgois, however, I strongly believe it is an ethical responsibility for researchers to reveal the social life of marginalized population groups, also when it depicts their problematic and problematized practices. It is not the responsibility of the researcher to explain away misunderstood behaviour, but to depict the meaningfulness this behaviour has to the people who engage in it. Such knowledge might serve as a better foundation for

addressing crucial social issues and the problems affecting marginalized population groups. Thus, when I describe how some residents, in some situations, avoid the police, it is not demonstrable proof of some kind of alienated, parallel culture. That would be very far from what I found. Rather, I hope, through contextualized analysis, to elucidate some of the dilemmas and predicaments of the parents that can allow us to understand how and why they evaluate the police as they do. I will do my utmost to show the broad range of meaningful evaluations of the police I encountered across various types of parents. I will note disagreements and strives between community members, and I will try to depict the social life in Blomsterengen in its complexity. By doing so, I will show that members of the community shared a status position in society with a ghetto stigma, they shared a public space, with all the struggles that entailed. As a community, they faced threats from different forms of crime and deviance, especially gang crime. They also faced an authoritative gaze from both the police and social services, often related about as 'the municipality' by the interlocutors. Along with these commonalities, however, residents of Blomsterengen also differed greatly in regards to how they managed and handled these shared aspects of their everyday lives. They were individuals with their respective biographies, histories and life circumstances. People in Blomsterengen are just as different from one another as everyone else. I therefore strongly believe that it would be a misrepresentation to depict a group of residents from a neighbourhood on the ghetto list as some kind of homogeneous culture of shared values. Ghetto communities, no matter how they are defined and treated, are full of diversity.

I have also been mindful of the fact that I zoom in on one aspect of life in a ghettoized neighbourhood – the residents' relationship with the police. This creates the risk that my depiction will give the impression that people think a lot about the police, and that crime and deviance is a larger issue than it really is. This potential bias is unavoidable, as police-community relations were my main interest when I was talking with people in Blomsterengen. Here I can only remind the reader that this study is not a complete description of life in Blomsterengen. My purpose, rather, is to reveal how people in a stigmatized community perceive those who are supposed to protect them. There are a range of other problematic as well as unproblematic and harmonic aspects connected to the lives of the interlocutors that are not included here. I have done my utmost to

note this whenever possible throughout the publications and this dissertation in order to avoid a distorted representation of life in Blomsterengen.

Coding of the data

The data gathered, both from interviews, instrumental conversations, informal conversations and observations, included many details and insights into various topics about life in Blomsterengen. The coding process, which was conducted using NVivo, thus served as a necessary tool for identifying the data relevant for the topic of perceptions of the police, thus also of weeding out the findings less relevant for that theme. As covered in chapter 2, there were however a core interest in identifying the overlaps between police perceptions and everyday life considerations. The coding process was thus mostly inductive in the sense that it was the links between the police and concerns voiced by the parents that had to be identified, though this did not mean that predefined themes were not influencing the process. The predefined interest of the 'police', 'gang and ghetto policies' and 'parenting concerns, practices and responsibilities' influenced the identification of relevant data, and were used as an initial and rude thematic categorization of the data. Within these broader areas of interest, sub-codes were however developed inductively in order to focus on the lived experiences and linked perceptions voiced by the interlocutors. Thus, predefined terms merged with inductive themes identified. Some of the inductively generated codes however was later found not to relate to perceptions of the police, and were not included in the analysis' presented in the dissertation nor in publications. The codes were thus thematic in nature, and were generated cross-case (King and Harrocks, 2010, p.149-150), which means that the same general theme was identified across interviews, conversations and observations, but with the sub-codes included a systematic attention to nuances and variances as to how the topic were present in respective single case. The coding process, though messy in practice, somewhat follow the three stage thematic coding process described by King and Harrocks (2010, chap. 9) where a general reading of the data enable a descriptive coding within the respective 'data cases' (interview, conversation summary, field note), that was followed up by an interpretive coding where cross-case descriptions were linked under codes identified by a common theme in the descriptions, and finally a general thematic coding of categorizing the interpretive themes under broader themes. The themes

taken up in chapter 4 in this dissertation correlate roughly with these differently identified codes, though presenting them retrospectively with the broader thematic codes representing the three overall sections of the chapter, and the subsections representing the interpretive codes, and the nuances presented in those subsections representing the initial deceptive coding of data related across 'cases'.

Chapter 4

Findings from the fieldwork and presentations of the publications

The many perceptions of the police

Quite early on during the fieldwork with the parents in Blomsterengen, it became clear that I was not exploring a single shared legal consciousness about the police. Rather, I was documenting the various ways in which parents perceived the police, and the different factors that influenced these perceptions. Thus, even though all parents lived in the same neighbourhood, were all under the influence of Danish anti-ghetto and anti-gang policies, and while all struggled with the same troublemakers and gang members, the parents held quite different perceptions of the police. This multiplicity of perceptions was the most important finding of the fieldwork, and all publications based on the fieldwork has been concerned with unfolding this variety of perceptions.

In the following subsection, I summarize how the two articles ‘Calling the Police from the ‘ghetto’: Legal Consciousness of the Police amongst Ethnic Minority Parents,’ and ‘Dining with the Police: Resistance and Acceptance of Community Policing.’, respectively, provide answers to the research question guiding the Ph.D. project. Following the summary of the two articles, I present a third analysis of the data gathered during the fieldwork: ‘Perceiving the Police from the ‘ghetto’’. This third analysis elaborates many of the conceptualizations of the police documented during the fieldwork in a manner that could not be covered in the two previous articles.

Findings published in articles

In ‘**Calling the Police from the ‘ghetto’**’, the many perceptions were presented with regard to police cooperativeness. The approach taken was to examine the degree to which residents chose to rely on the police to manage crime and deviance in their neighbourhood. The article shows how parents conceptualized and problematized different forms of crime and deviance, and how the parents rationalized whether or not police involvement was warranted or desired in the different situations. The main finding in the article was that although most parents could tell stories of police unfairness, which led to some hesitancy to calling the police, situational circumstances would overrule the hesitancy and stimulate parents to cooperate with the police in dealing with what they viewed as more serious instances of crime and deviance. This was especially true for situations turned dangerous or when the acts of crime and deviance had broader consequences for the residents in Blomsterengen. In contrast,

they were more hesitant to cooperate with the police when the consequences of calling the police were believed to be too severe for the troublemakers and when a call was believed to affect the parents' own status in the community negatively. In regards to the research question for the project, the article shows that although the anti-ghetto and anti-gang policies might be based on a status differentiation, the problem of crime and deviance in the ghettoized neighbourhoods was also shared by parents. Hence, cooperation with the police was a prominent issue. With regard to less severe forms of crime and deviance, the policies reduced parent's willingness to cooperate with police, since the harsh penal consequence for gang-related offenders made some parents avoid formal prosecution when possible, thus motivating them to use other means to manage crime and deviance. Police cooperation in the wake of the anti-gang and anti-ghetto policies was thus a dilemma for the parents in Blomsterengen. They found themselves compelled to decide when to protect the youth engaged in deviant and criminal behaviour from what they viewed as an overly harsh penal system, and when the criminal or dangerous activity became serious enough to pose a threat, concern for the youth had to be put aside in order to restore safety and order to the neighbourhood.

In **'Dining with the Police'**, the varying perceptions were presented in an analysis of an extended case study of how some parents accepted a specific community policing initiative, where the local police wanted to visit the local youth club for shared dinners, while other parents actively resisted the initiative. The article draws on the perceptions of a few interlocutors who represent both resisting and accepting perceptions of the initiative, thus illustrating the different and contradictory perceptions of the police that co-existed in the same community. Concerning the research question, the article shows that resistance to the dinner initiative was part of a reaction against the excessive policing of the neighbourhood that followed the implementation of the anti-ghetto and anti-gang policies. Especially in regards to the confusing of police agendas across different policing approaches influenced the resistance. Thus, residents interpreted the dinner initiative as part of what they believed to be a control agenda, which can be linked to the anti-gang policies. As such they were sceptical of the initiative and therefore sought to protect their local youth from what they viewed as surveillance by the police. In contrast, there were other

parents who interpreted the dinner initiative as a means to repair the conflictual relations between local youth and the police, i.e., as a community policing initiative meant to reach out to the community. These parents accepted the initiative. Interestingly, the case also revealed that acceptance of the police initiative was linked to social dynamics within the community that had little to do with the police as such. Those residents who were frustrated by all the crime and deviance in the neighbourhood accepted the initiative on principle. They saw acceptance of the police's initiative as a marker of being a responsible parent. Thus, when residents' problematization of crime and deviance aligned with the anti-ghetto and anti-gang policies, acceptance was voiced by parents as a way of distancing themselves from the problematic resident groups. The main finding presented in this article, then, is that ethnic minority parents interpret the police intentions and actions based on how they have experienced their community being policed in the past, and how they assess the consequences this policing had had for them as community members. The ability of the police to have their initiative viewed positively by the residents was thus contingent on the police's ability to take the past experiences of the residents into consideration, especially in regards to promote trust in the sceptic groups of residents.

Although both articles were based on an analysis of the diverse perceptions found among the residents, neither article could contain the entire range of perceptions found. And although both articles revealed some of the elements that influenced how the interlocutors quoted in the articles perceived the police, neither article elaborated all the elements documented during the fieldwork. In order to provide a more comprehensive overview of these perceptions and the factors behind them, a third empirical analysis has been included in this dissertation, entitled 'Perceiving the Police from the 'ghetto''. Since this dissertation and the articles are based on the same data, some overlap between the empirical description presented here and those presented in the articles is unavoidable – it would be weird not to include central perceptions and elements in the comprehensive analysis, just because they have been presented in regards to more specific topics elsewhere.

Perceiving the Police from the 'ghetto'

The following analysis focuses on how perceptions of the police were formulated by the interlocutors who participated in the field study. Based on the legal consciousness approach described in chapter 2, the analysis revolves around an inductive categorization of the central themes that the interlocutors brought up when describing their views about the police. This thematic categorization has also been chosen because many interlocutors had different perceptions of the police based on the specific topic discussed. Hence, a single interlocutor did not necessarily possess a single, unified perception of the police. Rather their views about the police were nuanced and varied based on situational circumstances and their individual experiences of how the police operated in the neighbourhood and of how they treated residents. Three overall topics emerged from the data: 1) managing crime and deviance, 2) social community relations, and 3) policing, punishment and notions of justice. Before addressing these themes separately, an introductory situational analysis will show the need to unfold the many voices from Blomsterengen.

Blomsterengen – a neighbourhood of many voices

Blomsterengen was for the main part a delightful place to do field work. It was a vibrant neighbourhood, full of life, with children playing with each other on the playground, youth hanging out laughing, adults going from place to place. In the late afternoon, families gathered in the public areas, hanging out before returning home to put the children to bed. This depiction, of course, omits those who did not participate in public life, those families who remained in their homes, the youth who hung out in the more secluded corners of the neighbourhood, and also those who resided in Blomsterengen but mainly spent waking hours in the city. The delightful atmosphere in Blomsterengen, however, was the main observation from close to a year's field work in the neighbourhood. It was also valued by the residents, including the interlocutors whose voices will be heard in the following analysis. This positive atmosphere was also something the residents had to protect and care for. Drawing on Wacquant's notion of the ghetto as a battlefield (Wacquant, 2007, p. 70), there was an ongoing struggle within the neighbourhood over what constituted acceptable behaviour. This struggle took place between different groups of residents, but also between residents and the public institutions engaged in regenerating and controlling the neighbourhood.

Moreover, the residents did not agree on how to engage in this struggle, nor on what constituted the bounds of acceptable behaviour. Researching perceptions of the police in Blomsterengen, therefore, became a process of uncovering a complex set of perceptions about how to live together in a shared space. But it was also a study of how power operated in the neighbourhood through public institutions, and how the residents reacted to and lived with this power. During an interview where Jamal explained his reservations about calling the police, he summarized the complexity:

Jamal: Yeah, there are a lot people [who do not live here] who don't really get it ... there are a lot of factors to take into consideration [before calling the police] in such a neighbourhood. And actually, it is only those who live here who know and understand this. People from outside, they don't really get it.

Mads: Right, well, that's why I think research into this topic is important.

Jamal: Yes, so that this understanding is shared, and people get to understand that...

Mads: So, a call to the police is not just a call. There is more... there is more at stake.

Jamal: Exactly. More than just a [phone] call!

In Jamal's experience, other residents would react to a neighbour who decided to call the police. Hence, the decision to make the call was part of a complex set of social relations that had to be taken into consideration before a call was made. To give an idea of how this complex set of relations appeared in everyday life, and with inspiration from the early Manchester School (Kapferer, 2005), I will introduce this analytical section of the dissertation with a longer, empirically detailed situational analysis that reveal the influence of powerful outside institutions and the internal tensions among the residents.

The community meeting about a new safety initiative

Towards the end of my fieldwork period, I attended a community meeting called by Shadi, Kader and Yahir. They wanted to present a new initiative they

had develop and started over the summer in order to manage crime and deviance in the neighbourhood. Attending the meeting were several of the parents I had gotten to know, along with other local residents. There were also representatives from the housing association, local youth club, municipal administration, and one of the civilian preventive officers from the local police.

It was Shadi who opened the meeting: ‘Some months ago, a conflict was brewing between groups from here and from other parts of the city [this was common knowledge in the community]. It had the potential to develop into a conflict like that last one we had, with the gangs fighting over control of the neighbourhood. So, the three of us took it upon ourselves to do something about it, before it developed.’

Together, Shadi and Kader explained how they had had enough of a few young individuals from the neighbourhood who were making life in Blomsterengen unsafe for the rest of the residents. So, they had confronted those individuals, and demanded that they either abstain from their criminal activity or leave the neighbourhood. To make it clear that they were serious, they had excluded all those whom they knew to be involved in the brewing conflict from their social network. Shadi explained that he had made it clear that: ‘If you try and recruit some youth to do shit for your own gain, then it’s not only the community you are expelled from. It’s the neighbourhood!’ Moreover, they would be allowed back in only if they proved willing and able to refrain from crime and troublemaking. Shadi and the others also told how they had taken the initiative to establish a network of local residents who had agreed to protect the neighbourhood if trouble occurred. Through an SMS-chain, this network could be activated on short notice and brought together in sufficient numbers to deter troublemakers in the neighbourhood, be they local youth or outsiders. This network had been formed in order to confront those who did not heed the demands put forth. Now Shadi, Kader and Yahia wanted to broaden the initiative to also address minor crime and deviance, especially vandalism, in order to bring about a general change in the neighbourhood. They wanted not only to manage crime and deviance, but

also to change the image of the neighbourhood and to get it off the ghetto list.

The meeting here opened up for comments from the audience. Hassan was the first to speak up: 'But the responsibility lies with the police, the municipality, the professional institutions. Of course, it must be in cooperation with residents, but the institutions are responsible.'

To this, Shadi responded: 'But we have to be realistic, and this is why it's not sufficient with the police and the municipality. It is our lives, our children – us! So, we also have to take responsibility. Besides, it's some of our own who lure the outsiders to our neighbourhood and who engage in deviance. This is also why it's our responsibility.' Being realistic, according to Shadi, thus involved taking personal responsibility for one's own life and community. And it was also about acknowledging the limits to the kind of protection that the police could provide. Shadi stressed this point several times during the meeting, stating, for instance, the police might be able to work preventively, but when trouble started, it was too late. As an additional perspective, Shadi also noted that he believed that as a consequence of putting responsibility in the hands of the police, local residents refrained from acting on crime and deviance, not even calling the police when they witnessed a crime taking place. Thus, he emphasized, crime was allowed to continue in Blomsterengen. Shadi summed up his opinion in a vision for the neighbourhood: 'In the long run, the public system must leave, but we have to solve the issues first!' He thereby acknowledged the need to cooperate with the police, municipality and housing association, but also related that in his mind, these organs had to be held accountable to local residents, not the other way around.

Hassan's comment and Shadi's response raised the issue of responsibility for managing crime and deviance in the neighbourhood. This issue was taken up by others during the meeting as well. Fatih, for instance, stated: 'We pay our taxes so that the police can do it! The system *MUST* do it!'. He followed by saying that local families did not have the time to patrol the area when they also had to go to work, do homework with their children and such. This theme

was also taken up by Laila, who voiced a concern about reckless scooter driving in the neighbourhood. Shadi responded to her, that residents had to address the youth, and 'take the scooters if they refuse to listen'. To this both Hassan and Fatih exclaimed in concert that residents did not have the right to confiscate the scooters, and Hassan also stated that such way of addressing crime was 'militia style', as opposed to democratic and lawful. They thus challenged the legal legitimacy of the residents' own strategy of managing crime the way they saw fit.

The legitimacy problem was also taken up Fatih later when he stated: 'But you are about to make a new group, to have the power to stop the others. Groups fight groups!' Shadi felt compelled to respond to this accusation: 'Are you saying we are a gang?!', to which Yahia followed up: 'We are not! We're just a group of residents who've grown tired of all this.' Fatih underscored his point: 'Just as well, they only listen to you because you can beat them up. Those residents who cannot do that, they won't listen to.' Fatih also voiced a concern that any resident who confronted a deviant youth risked 'making enemies' with them, and thus risked their own personal safety. This was why he insisted on making the police responsible for managing crime and deviance, not locals. This concern was shared by a municipal employee present at the meeting who also warned against locals patrolling the area and the consequences it could have. Shadi responded to this concern by insisting that it was important to use the network set up by the initiative, so it was not the individual residents who had to confront the deviants, but a larger group who represented the residents who did so, with strength and authority in numbers.

Yahia brought up another issue of calling the police at the meeting, when he stated: 'There has been a taboo about the police, we must stop this and change it'. Laila gave an example of this taboo when she stated, in relation to the youth who drove recklessly on scooters, that: 'I give them two warnings, then I call the police. I'm sorry, but that's what I do.' Apparently, she had to say sorry for doing so. Fatih expressed a different form of reluctance towards calling the police invoking a theme of community loyalty: 'Snitches do not

survive in the ghetto!’ The leader from the local youth club reacted to this by stating that: ‘But where does this word [snitch] come from?! It is from the criminals! That is how they protect each other, so drop it, drop their rules. Use the police and the authorities.’ Shadi echoed this view, saying: ‘We have to move away from the ghetto-street-culture. We have to do it differently!’ This statement made Fatih agitated, and he almost yelled: ‘Four years ago, we stopped all this. Then someone came from outside the neighbourhood and started shooting. I was shot! And the police, they chose to interrogate ME, instead of THEM!’ Fatih’s confidence in the police’s ability to manage crime was very low following this experience.

Support for the initiative was also voiced at the meeting. The leader of the local youth club praised the idea of a resident-driven safety initiative.

However, in response to Shadi’s vision, that in the long run, the public system should leave the residents in peace, that ‘the club, that you won’t get rid of.

We are here to stay.’ Another participant who voiced her support was an elderly ethnic Danish woman: ‘Last time some youth made trouble, you were there in less than ten minutes. It’s SO important what you do, thank you. I cannot talk to them [the troublemakers], but you can. But the problem is not new, there have always been troublemakers here. It used to be Brian, today it is Mohammad. What you are doing is the right thing, but remember the families. There are some who do not have the skills and resources to take care of their children. Help them!’ The woman’s remarks sparked a long discussion of how to approach the families of deviant youth. Shadi’s opinion was that the initiative had to approach the parents and inform them of their children’s troubling behaviour. Kader agreed, adding that: ‘The housing association has to step up and expel those families who cannot control their children. That is what people will respect.’ This frustrated Laila, who commented: ‘It’s not fair that it has consequences for the parents. No parents wish that their children behave like this. It’s the friends who are responsible, not their parents. If we go after the parents, then it just gets worse and they become desperate – besides, in those cases where the families have been evicted, the parents are not here anymore, but the youth, they still come.’ Kader however did not give

up, and replied: 'the parents have to get in the game. It is not acceptable that they do not know what their children are in to, and that they just go to the shisha café while their children get in trouble.' Here Shadi joined in with his opinion: 'It's no use if the parents do not do anything, while we run around and try and stop and save the youth.'

Laila also felt strongly about the youth: 'The youth are stigmatized, lack home and work, and are looked down upon from all around. We also have to address that!' Similar statements were made during the meeting. The elderly lady who supported the initiative stressed that people from the outside looked down upon the neighbourhood because the residents did not have a lot of money, and Fatih almost despairingly proclaimed at one point: 'This is a ghetto! We are poor! That's why we have the problems we have.' Shadi's response to Laila was that the initiative intended to work with the municipality in order to help the youth, but he also stated: 'We will only help those who want to be helped... if all they want to do is shoot, then we won't waste time on helping them!' Kader agreed with Shadi: 'We cannot help anyone who doesn't want to be helped.' These comments did not reassure Laila, however. Shadi loosened up, explaining that it was important to always keep a door open for those who wanted to change their behaviour.

When the meeting ended, Shadi, Kader, Yahia, and some of the other residents who were part of the initiative went to a separate room. They were joined by the local police officer, who had remained quiet throughout the meeting. I also went into the room with them, and sat in the corner. The police officer quickly took charge of the conversation: 'Now, that went well. What we have to do now is... ', Shadi remained silent and leaned back in his chair as he let the officer direct the conversation, though he expressed a reluctant annoyance, giving a smug stare at the officer. I knew that Shadi had put a lot of energy into cooperating with the police about the initiative, but I also knew that he believed it to be a resident-driven project. From my outside perspective, it seemed like the police officer was trying to appropriate the initiative and take ownership of it.

It was an intense meeting, with topics the attendees felt strongly about. All participants agreed that crime and deviance were a problem that had to be dealt with. But was it a local responsibility to address the issue, or a police responsibility? Were the police even effective in dealing with crime and troublemakers, and could they be trusted to work in accordance with the residents' wishes and expectations? Were the families of the delinquent youth to be held responsible and thus suffer along with their children? Or were the troublemakers simply stigmatized and disadvantaged, more deserving of care than of the threat of expulsion? All these questions were raised during the meeting, and they also represent persistent themes in the interviews and conversations that I had with interlocutors. In its own way, the meeting thereby represented a general condition of the social life in Blomsterengen: that some aspects of the social life in Blomsterengen were common and shared, but residents held their own diverse and individualized opinions on the shared matters. There was a great diversity of voices in regards to what was deemed problematic behaviour, and in the proposed solutions to manage the troublemakers. This internal diversity is especially important to keep in mind in a context where neighbourhoods like Blomsterengen and the communities that belong to similar neighbourhoods are represented as homogenous entities and treated as such by policymakers. In the specific situation discussed here, crime and deviance were a commonly agreed upon problem that the residents shared. The dilemmas that the questions represent were also general for the community. The standpoints that people took regarding these dilemmas, however, were varied and multifaceted. Their solutions, so to speak, were individual. This individuality in the context of shared issues made studying perceptions of the police in Blomsterengen a complex task, since Blomsterengen was a neighbourhood with many voices. The following analysis will be organized around three central topics that the reflections of the police revolved around, and which we saw at play in the community meeting above: 1) the management of crime and deviance, 2) internal social relations in the community, and 3) experiences of police practices, punishment and issues of justice. Each theme will be addressed in its own section, where the individuals' understandings of these dilemmas will be described in detail, thus revealing how perceptions of the police developed in the context of the everyday lives of the interlocutors.

Managing crime and deviance

Across interviews and conversations with interlocutors, various forms of behaviour conceptualized as crime and deviance, and it was often in terms of these conceptualizations that they expressed views on and perceptions of the police. In this section, I first discuss the various forms of crime and deviance described by the interlocutors, before turning towards their reflections on the police role in managing the problematic behaviour. These reflections differed greatly across the interlocutors. Some would express a deep understanding of the local residents, typically the teenagers and young men, who engaged in such problematic behaviour, an attitude which sparked a sense of care and solidarity with the troublemakers. Others would describe pragmatic considerations of how best to make the trouble cease, while a third set of reflections emphasized protection of the neighbourhood residents. Some residents would express several of these concerns, based on what type of crime or deviance we were discussing, illustrating that different types of problems called for different ways of addressing the behaviour. This last point also reveals that one person did not hold one single consciousness, or attitude, of the police. Rather, their view about the police depended on the situation.

Crime and deviance had an elusive presence in Blomsterengen. I myself failed to observe much crime during the fieldwork, aside from occasional reckless and annoying scooter driving and the smell of marijuana on a few occasions. Most crime was either invisible in the public space, or episodic in nature, such that being 'lucky enough' to have been in the right place, at the right time was necessary to encounter it. Consequently, crime and deviance were discussed mainly retrospectively, either as topics during conversations, descriptions in interviews, or during the occasional meeting of a resident who suddenly had a black eye and an arm in a cast. Nevertheless, everyone residing in Blomsterengen had had some kind of personal experiences with crime and deviance, either as victim, witness, offender or through secondary knowledge of such experiences with close acquaintances. This intimacy with criminal behaviour had a profound influence on the parents' sense of belonging to the neighbourhood. Although the parents generally felt at ease in Blomsterengen, the elusive presence of crime introduced a sense of anxiety as well. Haneen and Laila both described this dual and contradictory way of feeling about the neighbourhood:

Haneen: 'And you know, my children do not roam around the neighbourhood at odd times like most of the other children out here. So, no. But the older they get, the more I will worry about it if we keep living here. Even though I'm really happy about living in Blomsterengen and the community we have, it's still a ghetto. But yeah, well, there are still many years until my children become teenagers.'

Laila: 'Sure, I know that it's a ghetto area, and it might not be the best place to live when you have children. But it's our neighbourhood, and they should not be allowed to ruin it.'

The ambiguous feelings about the neighbourhood as both a place of community with other families but also a 'ghetto', with the concerns it brings with it, was widely shared by the parents. Crime and deviance were here linked to the 'ghetto' term and was experienced as a condition when residing in the neighbourhood. In turn, accepting crime and deviance as a condition allowed some residents to normalize its existence, something Noah illustrated when I commented that the neighbourhood might seem to outsiders like a dangerous place to live:

Noah: 'What's so dangerous about it? [...] I know that there have been shootings once or twice, but people here are fine.'

As an outsider, such a casual attitude towards shootings in one's own neighbourhood seemed extreme. But not all interlocutors were as relaxed about the violence in Blomsterengen, and acceptance of crime and violence as a condition for living in Blomsterengen did not entail that residents would not problematize crime and deviance. And neither did it prevent them from reacting to criminal events when they occurred. In fact, it was such problematizations that interlocutors often invoked when describing their relation to and perception of the police. Normalization of criminal activities in one's neighbourhood and acceptance of crime resonate with other studies

of how residents living in high-crime neighbourhoods feel about and react to crime and deviance. Hancock, for example, in a study of community approaches to managing crime and safety, described the need to pay attention to 'local sensibilities and the conditions that underpin them' (Hancock, 2001, p. 181) when seeking to understand whether or not residents turn to the police. Hancock finds that only when formal anti-crime programs align with local definitions of problems and with preferred strategies for managing them will residents involve formal control organizations (Hancock, 2001, pp. 179-180). Central to this argument is that local residents often have a deep understanding of the social predicaments of troublemakers, and have social ties to them, which causes them to tolerate some problematic behaviour and makes it important to local residents that interventions address root causes of the problematic behaviour rather than superficial control initiatives that risk further marginalizing the people in question (Hancock, 2001, pp. 165-169). Whether residents cooperate with the police in managing crime and deviance depends on whether the police are trusted to address such root causes or not. Important to note here is that Hancock finds that different residents have different conceptualizations of problems, different understandings of root causes, and differ in their level of trust in the police's ability to manage the issues in a desired manner. Hancock, however, also notes that there are limits to toleration, when crime gets 'serious' (Hancock, 2001, p. 121), meaning dangerous, or for instance when criminal actions might put children at risk. Walklate and Evans conducted a somewhat similar study (1999), where they found great variations between different communities with regard to concerns about troublemakers. In a community with weak social ties, youth engaged in criminal behaviour were found to turn on the community, resulting in widespread fear of crime (Walklate & Evans, 1999, chap. 2). Here, community solidarity with their own troublemakers was low, being replaced by fear, and the residents were found to place responsibility for managing crime and deviancy on the authorities. In contrast, in a community with stronger social ties, community members were found to be more self-policing, based on a basic sense of security stemming from the knowledge that being local gave some protection from being victimized (Walklate & Evans, 1999, chap. 3). In the latter case, turning to the authorities were seen as grassing, which could undermine one's status in the community and thereby, the protection from victimization obtained by belonging to the community. Grassing was therefore

something to be done cautiously, and when deemed proper - even local criminals had a moral code for what was a legitimate crime, and what was immoral and thus fair to report to the authorities (Walklate & Evans, 1999, p.95). Walklate and Evans concluded that local belonging proved a better shield against crime and deviance than the police, who were experienced as ineffective when called upon. A general finding in legal consciousness studies is that experiences of ineffective law enforcement and justice system lead to general distrust in the authorities (Merry, 1990), what is often termed 'legal cynicism' when it develops into a general view (Carr et al., 2007). From these studies, we learn that crime is a problem to be managed by residents in high-crime neighbourhoods, and that the relationship between law-abiding residents and troublemakers influences how these issues are managed. When troublemakers are seen as part of the community, solidarity with their social predicament and reasons for their behaviour guide the management strategies, and the police are only called upon if it believed that they can help the troublemakers. If, on the other hand, the troublemakers are deemed a threat to the community, this solidarity erodes. In such situations, fear develops among the law-abiding residents, and the police will tend to be seen as those responsible for managing crime and deviance. These findings underline the importance of situated understandings of community life and crime, in order to understand the social dynamics that structure relations between police and a given community. Inspired by these studies, the following analysis first examines the local problem definitions among the interlocutors from Blomsterengen.

Youth deviancy and troublemaking

Youth deviancy was widespread in Blomsterengen, but it was relatively unproblematised by the interlocutors – it was rarely brought up by them. The troublemaking took many forms, but in general, it was behaviour which the residents found annoying (but not dangerous). This annoyance set it aside from more dangerous forms of crime and deviance, where other concerns were at play. Scooter driving serves as a good example of this, and it was one of the main forms of deviance the interlocutors talked about, having also been brought up during the community meeting held by Shadi. Scooters were annoying because of the noise they emitted, and during summer days this noise could become a constant background buzzing. But it was also annoying to walk around the neighbourhood, and suddenly have to evade a

reckless scooter driving at relative high speed towards you. In this way, scooters also posed a sort of danger to those walking about the neighbourhood. Besides scooter driving, vandalism was a major topic among some residents, especially since a lot of resources went to repairing and renovating vandalized property. Also mentioned was that youth would urinate in the staircases, set fire to containers, and throw trash around. Such behaviour was often described in relation to youth hanging out on street corners, who were out late in the evening without parent supervision. These youth would also be described as loud, shouting at people as they walked by, and as being intoxicated in public by drinking alcohol and smoking marijuana. All in all, such troublemakers had an annoying, threatening, and unpredictable presence in the public space of Blomsterengen. In a nostalgic moment, Haneen showed how annoying this presence was, compared to a time when there had been fewer ethnic minority youth and also less deviance in the neighbourhood:

Haneen: 'Just try and imagine, back then when there were almost no foreigners, right. Very quiet, neat area, no trash all around, and nobody who peed in the staircases. There were so clean, all the time, everywhere, you know.'

From this short quotation, one senses Haneen's nostalgia for a time without pee in the stairwells, and in general a more orderly neighbourhood. Eman voiced a different view on how deviance was a nuisance to her:

Eman: 'I do not like that they drive around on bikes till very late in the evening. And hang out with the older boys, that's just a no go. I think it's wrong, and they [the older boys] smoke that shit and do all sort of stuff. They [the older boys] do not consider the small children who are around, they don't! And I don't like that!'

In this statement, Eman voiced a concern that younger children would be attracted to deviancy because they saw it in the neighbourhood, making it an issue for parents who wanted their children to stay out of trouble. This concern was grounded in a generally

shared experience among the interlocutors that minor troublemaking was a first step towards more serious forms of crime later in life. Jamal described this experience when he described three categories of local youth that he operated with:

Jamal: 'We have those youth who require attention, then we have the well-behaved, and then we have the truly difficult ones, who really make trouble here.'

Those who required attention, according to Jamal, were those who for different reasons dropped after-school activities, stopped coming to the youth club, did not work, and who did not remain at home. Instead, they would hang out in the public spaces of the neighbourhood. Here they would observe and look up to older boys, who were often further down a deviant path, learning and developing behaviour that imitated them. In this understanding of youth life that Jamal gave, youth deviancy was thus seen as a first step towards a more criminal lifestyle. Noah, described during an interview, that he himself had started to hang out with friends in the street, which led first to vandalism, followed by bike theft and shoplifting of candy, and then starting on marijuana. When I met Noah, he had just been released from prison, underpinning what youth deviancy could lead to. Haneen also gave an example of someone she had known since childhood who had taken a criminal path:

Haneen: 'There is someone from here, he's a grown man now and is getting married. But I knew him before, you know, before he became what he is now. He used to hang with my husband's brother when they were kids, they were good friends and he was polite and very sweet. A good boy! Then all of a sudden he is destroyed, because he started hanging out with the wrong types. Then he started thinking that he had to be like them. Then when he became like them, he started thinking that he should be their leader, and then it just went crazy.'

Hassan had a different conceptualization of youth deviancy. Where Jamal talked about how the youth found inspiration for, fun and exciting activities, Hassan stressed that

youth deviancy was rooted in a hatred towards a 'system' that looked down upon them and gave them bad conditions for making something of themselves in the wider society. When they started to hang out, the youth could thus mirror themselves in the older deviants who voiced a stronger critique of the society at large and also offered an alternative lifestyle. Such hatred, according to Hassan, was especially the result of unjust police attention and failed attempts to help the youth by schools, youth clubs and social workers, leaving the youth with a feeling of being unwanted. According to Hassan, having such feelings in common with the more 'difficult' boys, as Jamal called them, made the younger generations imitate these older boys, adopting their behaviour and worldview. Hassan thus summarized the situation:

Hassan: 'Foreigners make trouble, but what is the solution? Right now, the solution is the problem! ... Youth throw stones at cars, set fire to containers, it should be solved, but with love, or else it leads to hate.'

Haamid had a third perspective on youth deviancy which revolved around lack of values. He revealed the perspective one evening, when he took me to a local club he had with other men from his country of origin. Here he had a conversation with one of the others, where they discussed Arabic youth in generalizing and slightly patronizing terms:

The other man stated: 'They generally don't think about each other and society. It's themselves first!' Haamid responded: 'They don't know what quality of life is'. He turned to me and explained that they would throw trash all over, and that an Arab boy had once started up his scooter while inside a staircase, causing a lot of smoke go up through the building. He had had to explain to the boy that it was a bad idea to do so – and then he also stopped. Haamid stressed that is was an example of the boy not having thought about his surroundings and how his actions influenced the life quality for those around him.

Besides being linked to an Arabic ethnicity, Haamid and the others in the club perceived youth troublemaking as the result of egoistic behaviour and an inability to consider how one's surroundings suffered from one's actions. Haamid and the other men in the club indicated that it was a matter of poor socialization and lack of values, which could be corrected by telling the youth how to behave. In this optic, youth deviancy was seen as the result of poor parenting.

Parents in Blomsterengen thus had differing explanations for youth deviancy: youth boredom, lack of adult supervision, a reaction to feeling excluded by society, and egoistic behaviour as a result of poor socialization. These understandings were not mutually exclusive, but they indicate how deviancy was conceptualized and problematized differently by parents in Blomsterengen. In the problematizations, we saw how the parents drew on everyday concerns when determining problematic behaviour. When youth made the neighbourhood appear disorderly, or disgusting, and when the youth exhibited disregard when they annoyed other residents and neighbours, they became troublemakers in the eyes of the interlocutors. However, deviancy was also problematized in regards to parenting. A troublemaking youth posed a threat to parents' efforts to keep their own children out of crime. The everyday concerns of parents were thus rooted in neighbourhood satisfaction and parenting concerns.

There was no clear boundary between deviancy and crime in the presentations of the interlocutors – different parents would provide differing conceptions of what was mere troublemaking and what was more serious criminal behaviour. The main distinguishing factor between deviancy and crime was when the parent felt that the act committed became more than a simple annoyance or nuisance. When behaviour turned dangerous, downright illegal, or in some way had consequences for others in the proximity of the act or for the wider community, it would be described in more serious terms and as a more concerning form of behaviour. This was the behaviour typically ascribed to the category of youth Jamal termed 'difficult' or 'heavy', those who really made trouble in the neighbourhood. We therefore now turn to what Jamal called 'real trouble'.

Violence, threats, harassment and reckless behaviour

Violence was often hinted at by parents in their discussions with me. For instance, during an interview with Sanaa, where we talked about parent responsibility, she was asked to come up with an example of problematic youth behaviour. What she came up with on the spot was: 'Well, let's say that there are some of the big boys, you know, who are fighting...'. Fighting was a ready example of what she would expect to encounter. Acts of violence, such as brawls, were common subjects of my discussions with parents. Besides brawls between local youth, where a local parent might know their families and could send them home, there were also narratives of more severe and difficult to manage forms of violence. Haneen, for instance, described a violent episode while she was waiting for a bus:

Haneen: 'We were waiting for the bus, and there were one... well, he was a foreigner [ethnic minority], a man who was shouting at his girlfriend, and he smacked her and such. And then a Somali man interrupted him, saying "Hey!", then the other guy turned to him yelling, maybe three times, "turn around!", "Don't not look this way!". The Somali guy turned away, but at one point he sort of looked again, and then the aggressive one just came at him with a fist to the nose – or was it the mouth, I can't remember – and he started bleeding. And not a soul at the bus stop said anything.'

Brawls like the ones Sanaa referred to were described as a form of internal dynamic among the youth, and thus did not necessary pose a risk to others in the vicinity. Haneen's story, however, revealed a proneness to violence among some individuals in Blomsterengen of which residents were acutely aware. Anyone encountering or confronting such a violent-prone individual risked violent victimization.

The distinction between youth brawls and violence-prone individuals illustrates that the parents differentiated between different forms and severity of violence. Where brawls could include fist-fighting and kicks, there were also stories of episodes where weapons were used. Laila, for instance, reflected back on an episode during an interview:

Laila: 'There were also the time... was it the previous year? The knife stabbing at the playground. Is it three years ago? Well, they stabbed someone at the playground in front of the children in the middle of the day.'

As we heard from Noah in the beginning of this subsection, shootings also took place in Blomsterengen. Situations like this, where weapons were noted, were generally referred to in more severe tones. The severity of violence was measured in terms of other factors than just weapons – for instance in terms of the number of people involved. This was often the case when groups of locals clashed with groups of outsiders. We return to this later, in the section on gang crime and outsiders. Such severe forms of violence stood in stark contrast to youth brawls, which were described by some parents as nothing more than a form of experimental, even playful, youth behaviour with little intention in the way of doing harm. Experimental and playful behaviour may sound inappropriate in this context, but it captures the reckless nature of youth behaviour that parents in Blomsterengen had to manage. The inappropriateness may be stronger when such recklessness puts the 'victims' at serious risk of harm. There was one story of such dangerous recklessness that everyone knew about in Blomsterengen. A road cuts through the neighbourhood, with a bridge over it for pedestrians and bicyclists, not to mention scooter-driving youth, to cross the road without crossing traffic. For a time, local youth would stand on the bridge, waiting for cars and buses to pass under it:

Sanaa: 'Stones were thrown in front of buses, sometimes even shopping carts were thrown at cars and buses. ... There were many at that time who did not drive there.'

The recklessness and unpredictability of such behaviour was thus a threat to those passing under the bridge, making transportation risky for both residents and outsiders, exemplified by Sanaa's statement that many would avoid driving under the bridge at the time. It is a form of random violence, with no intent to harm a specific person for any specific reason. Yet the fact that local boys were reckless enough to experiment

with such dangerous actions added to a consciousness of risk of harm in the public space of the neighbourhood.

Accompanying the violence, parents also told of harassment and threats from certain youth in the neighbourhood. Some parents were frightened by such behaviour, especially when conscious about the widespread proneness to violence in the neighbourhood. Eman, for instance, told how a friend of hers became afraid when harassed by some youth when she first moved to Blomsterengen:

Eman: 'Also, the new young girl here, a young mother and a student, had trouble with the boys. So, I whistled to the boys to come over, and told them "Now, she is from another town, she's new here. She is going to school. She's afraid that you want to harm her, because you said this, this and this." Then one of them said "Well, but she said fuck your father to me! I lost my father 3 years ago!" And I said, "Yeah, but she didn't know that, she doesn't know you. You called her a whore. And you shouldn't say that you're gonna stomp her on the head and spit on her. Now she is afraid of going out, and she shouldn't be. She's got to go to school.'"

Eman herself was not scared, but her friend who was new in the neighbourhood and did not know the boys, certainly was. Apparently, the friend had also provoked the youth, which had escalated the harassment she experienced to a threatening behaviour from the boys. The story reveals that threats of violence were experienced by residents, which forced an assessment of whether to take such threats seriously. In this case, Eman did not fear the threat of violence, but the friend did. Eman, however, told of a different situation where she was more insecure about the risk of violence:

Eman: 'Especially the boys, near the soccer field. I used to come home by bus in the evening, and when you walk by that place you feel like... you don't dare to go there. You don't know, will there be someone? And sometimes the boys are, like, "What's up", and they act impudent to you. That's why I always say we should put up some lights there!'

Eman's anxiety about the area near the soccer field shows how even episodic incidents of violence and the possibility to encounter a violence-prone individual in Blomsterengen creates a consciousness of the possibility of violence taking place in the neighbourhood. In the context of this heightened consciousness, threats and a few misplaced remarks can become frightening; Can it turn to violence? Consequently, although violence was rare in the neighbourhood, this consciousness of the possibility of violence gave it a permanent presence in the minds of the parents. Eman formulated this in her own way:

Eman: 'No, I'm not generally afraid when I walk around here. But I know a lot who are! And I try and talk sense into them, but they say "I've experienced this, this and this," and it's true they've experienced it, and you can't just take it away from them.'

Violence, harassment, threats and youth recklessness from local deviants disturbed the parents in their everyday lives. These acts created a consciousness of the risk of harm to self and others (children, family, friends, etc.) which was part of living in Blomsterengen. Yet it should be remembered that most of the time, the potential for violence did not keep the parents away from occupying the public space, and the children were allowed to go around and play. Violence was an exception to the normal peaceful public life in Blomsterengen.

Mysterious money, shoplifting and drug dealing

Where violence figured as a potentially dangerous form of crime, the presence of what can be termed 'mysterious money' represented more obvious form of illegal practice. Eman described the mysteriousness of suddenly acquired money or other items:

Eman: 'If you think about it, then you can see it – money every day, new clothes and shoes... You're the mother, it's you who buys this sort of stuff for him. Then all of a sudden he has it all. Where does that stuff come from?!'

Eman described this mysterious money as an annoyance with other parents who apparently did not notice, care, or act on their children showing up with expensive clothes and other material items. It is the last question that refer to the notion of mysterious money, because where does such clothes come from? Where did the youth get the money from to buy them, and what acts lay behind the acquisitions of the clothes? Deeper insights into this question would have to be gained from studies of the youth themselves (see for instance Sjøgaard et al., 2019). However, some interlocutors had their own way of answering the question. Haneen had grown up with youth who had acquired mysterious money and goods, and could give some insights on the thinking behind youth acquiring mysterious goods:

Haneen: 'Especially the youth, they are very much into their clothes, and that's why they steal. When you ask them, they say, "Why should I pay so much money for it, when I can just steal it and have it for free?!" And "If I can steal even more of it, and sell it and make money, why should I pay for it?!" And they don't even consider the people who lose money on it, they don't care, you know. Some will stop when they get married, but there are also some who can't stop. Who are like addicted to being a thief, you know, with fingers that just take stuff.'

In Haneen's experience, shoplifting was thus a way for youth to acquire mysterious items. Shoplifting was a known phenomenon in Blomsterengen. According to several interlocutors, there had once been a supermarket in the neighbourhood that had to close due to shoplifting. Laila in fact, had offered, together with some other mothers, to act as a guard in front of the supermarket in order to deter youth from shoplifting in front of local parents. But the market closed before their offer was accepted. There were also other ways for youth to acquire money and goods. Sanaa for instance noted:

Sanaa: 'Let's say a boy has a new phone. You know, if the parent has not paid for it, and he's under 18 and doesn't have a job, well, then he must have sold some drugs in order to pay for it, or he's been doing some other form of crime.'

That youth in Blomsterengen used and sold drugs was widely noted by the interlocutors. Those with a criminal past themselves readily admitted that drugs had been a central element in their lifestyle and income. Those who had merely been on the margins of deviancy described that they believed especially marijuana to be commonly used by the local youth. Adnaan was an example of this:

Adnaan: 'There's been a lot of hash around, in all the generations. Mine, those before us, and those after us. Hash is an everyday sort of thing.'

Mads: 'It's not a criminal thing?'

Adnaan: 'I don't see it as something criminal. Well, if you're a pusher, sure. But most of us, you know, we just used it.'

Mads: 'Okay, so it was just sort of common?'

Adnaan: 'Very common! You could go to the soccer field, and we would all sit there and smoke joints. You learned it from the older generation. I learned it from the older boys, and if I hadn't met them, I would probably never have smoked a joint in my life. Or cigarettes for that matter. ... But our generation did not have, how to say it, like a hardcore drug abuse. Or, well, I don't know how to categorize it... but in my perspective, hash is normal. Then there are those who use pills, cocaine and such. That's more hardcore, and it was actually in the older generation that people did that.'

Here Adnaan links drugs to the general concern for youth who become involved in delinquent activities. They learn other forms of deviancy and carry out criminal acts. Noah supported this when he described his pathway into a life in crime. It had started with bike theft, turned to vandalism, then shoplifting candy in supermarkets. Then he started to hang out with older boys, going to parties. Here he learned to smoke joints:

Noah: 'And then slowly, step by step, you get on that bad path. Then you try selling some, then you smoke some, then another party, bam bam bam. Oh shit, 60.000 Dkk! Then you're hooked.'

Noah here describes that a life in crime was generally about a life with excessive money and expensive habits. He told of a time in his life when his daily expenses for clothes were 6000-8000 Dkk. He also noted that with such habits, it was hard to turn legitimate and get used to a normal salary. Taken together, Noah's and Adnaan's stories provide insights into the deeper concerns expressed by Eman, Haneen and Sanaa when they speak of mysterious money, shoplifting and drug dealing. The criminal lifestyle of theft and drug dealing was not what those mothers wished for their children. Nor did Adnaan or Noah by the way. Thus, the issue of mysterious money and the ways of acquiring it was both a moral issue of breaking the law in the interlocutor's perspective, but also an issue of trying to break free of a life of crime for local youth. It was thus also a parental concern.

Gang crime and dangerous outsiders

The most serious form of crime described by the interlocutors was gang-related crime. This category overlapped with the previously described forms of crime and deviance – violence, drugs, money, hanging out, reckless behaviour etc. However, when parents spoke about it, the acts were described as a bit more extreme. Where violence could be classified as rough child's play, bordering on deviancy, gang violence could be a drive-by shooting. Drugs were not just about using or abusing cannabis, but about territory control and gang wars. Gang life was not just a deviant way of spending spare time, but meant embracing a criminal lifestyle. Where certain deviant or borderline criminal acts could be more or less tolerated and normalized by the parents in Blomsterengen, gang-related crime induced a broad sense of anxiety. This became evident during the summer. It was in this period that a conflict was smouldering, which Shadi, Kader and Yahia tried to manage when they started their initiative to protect the neighbourhood (see the previous section community meeting). The gang conflict had a profound effect on the atmosphere in Blomsterengen. It was hard to put a finger on what it was, but the mood was more subdued. Residents discussed the possibility of a new gang conflict erupting, revealing an awareness and anxiety about the potential violence. There was an episode where I also managed to sense this anxiety directly. One day I arrived to learn that the police had raided the community house the evening before, finding several tools placed strategically around the house. According to Shadi,

the police believed that the tools were meant to be used as weapons in case the house was attacked by outsiders. This episode made the anxiety register in me for real, for the first time. Was I safe in this house? Did I risk being caught in a drive-by shooting there? Should I continue visiting Blomsterengen during a time when even locals started fearing the eruption of a violent conflict? I was about to become a father for the first time. Could I take the risk of being harmed, maybe even shot, thus potentially leaving my unborn child a life without a father? These were perhaps over-dramatic questions, but none the less they were considerations I had. And they serve to illustrate how frightening it was to be in the neighbourhood at the time – and where I, as an outsider, had a choice of simply staying away for some time. The residents, however, had to live with this fear. They could not just choose to leave or stay away for a period of time. They had to live with the awareness and anxiety of potential extreme violence in their neighbourhood. Gang crime, however, was according to the interlocutors a periodic phenomenon, mainly something that took place in the summer, which some referred to as ‘the gang season’. Sanaa described it during an interview after I had asked whether it was unsafe to live in Blomsterengen:

Sanaa: ‘In some summer periods, we had one summer where a gang from another town came here and tried to establish a club or something. That was a wild time. Back then, it was evident that this is a ghetto, and then it happened again some time later, with another gang trying to establish itself here. But that was like, a month out of the whole year when it felt like a ghetto. But besides that, I don’t think it’s so bad here.’

Laila noted the same episodic nature during a conversation about everyday life in Blomsterengen:

Laila: ‘Its periodic, when the sun is out, but I don’t think it’s that bad this year, not like last time [when a gang conflict took place in Blomsterengen].’

Mads: ‘No, because last time it was...’

Laila: ‘It was GANGS! We could not have the kids playing outside. We had to be vigilant all the time as parents.’

Having the kids running free in the neighbourhood between the apartment blocks was a big part of the social life in Blomsterengen. When Laila stressed the fact that they had to be vigilant when the kids were outside, it was because this was a symbol of how intrusive the gang conflict was for the everyday social life in the neighbourhood. Later in the conversation, Laila described a specific episode that exemplified why it was unsafe for the local kids to walk around the neighbourhood when gangs were active:

Laila: 'Last time there were gangs here, there were an episode with one of my sons. My kids are never out on the streets [hanging out], and they have not for years. Well one day, my son decided to go to the supermarket, and the conflict had just started. And well, he is tall, and he had a Canada Goose jacket on [which was common among youth in ghettoized neighbourhoods, including gang related youth]. He had a gun pointed at his head because they thought he was one of 'the boys'. He had to hide in one of the staircases and call us. He was all pale when he got home.'

The episode shows how random gang violence was experienced by the residents and how even innocent youth could become involved because the gangs in conflict did not necessarily know who was in the gang and who was not. Laila's son was lucky. He was only threatened. Further into my conversation with Laila, we were joined by Salma, and the two started discussing the nature of gang violence and why law-abiding residents should be concerned about it:

Salma: 'It was not us residents they were after.'

Laila: 'No, no not at all!'

Salma: 'And that's important to remember, it's not us they want to attack, not us they want to hurt, though of course we are hurt if bullets fly around the neighbourhood. But it is not us personally or personally against Blomsterengen.'

Laila: 'No, it was a war between two territories...'

Salma: 'Yes, it was. And then as a resident, you are held hostage, you can say.'

In this conversation, Laila and Salma describe how they felt dragged into a conflict in which they had no stake in, simply because it took place in their neighbourhood. Thus, even those with no ties to the gang milieu feared for their safety when gangs were active in the neighbourhood. Rizwana described how such a fear had taken hold of her daughter making her restrict her children from going out:

Rizwana: 'Last time I felt unsafe, and my children were not allowed to go outside like they normally are. There was one time when my girl encountered some masked men in the stairway, and ever since she has been afraid of boys in groups. And she only had to walk from the apartment to a car waiting outside. She was not even out of the building yet. And I think the police managed it well, but I don't really know.'

Mothers and girls were generally not seen as involved in gang crime or the gang milieu. That they felt threatened thus shows how even the resident groups furthest away from that milieu felt that they were at risk of being victimized. Fathers, men and boys, however, could more easily be confronted by gang members. They were therefore at more direct risk of being targeted by gang crime, as was the case with the gun being pointed at Laila's son. Adnaan also gave an example of how he felt one time during the former gang conflict in Blomsterengen, when he encountered a group of outsiders:

Adnaan: 'Those fuckheads from another neighbourhood, they didn't know me. They didn't know that I had lived here my whole life, grown up here. When I walked by them, they would look at me, like they figuring out whether to stab me or beat me or something.'

Adnaan here describes how he felt that outsider gang members had to assess whether he was a gang member or not, and thus an enemy to them. Stories like this assessing gaze, and of feeling that one is held hostage, show how gang crime was conceptualized

as a form of challenge to who had a right to the neighbourhood – law-abiding residents or organized criminals. This fear of gangs contrasts with the conceptualizations of deviancy and crime described earlier, where the troublemakers involved in such problematic behaviour were perceived as belonging to the community. Gangs, on the other hand, were described as operating in a world separate from the community of law-abiding residents. Gang conflicts were thus experienced by the interlocutors as conjunctions of social worlds, where they intersect and influence one another – bullets fly in both the gang worlds and on the playgrounds of Blomsterengen where children are playing. Since gang members may hang out in the same public spaces as ordinary residents, the boundary between the normal world and the gang world is social rather than spatial. This makes for a general confusion about who belongs to which world.

While there were gang members who lived in Blomsterengen, the distinction between community members and gang members was more obvious when it concerned gang members from other territories. This was a central aspect of Adnaan’s experience of being assessed by outsider gang members who had entered Blomsterengen. Haneen also described how gang crime was more extreme when outsiders were involved, as an example of why she and others often proclaimed that they never felt unsafe in the neighbourhood, except when there were gang conflicts:

Haneen: ‘It was also very extreme that time, but it was also people from outside. It was not the boys from Blomsterengen. ... Weird types, not from here. They would run around, wearing masks, or with a weapon in their hand and such, walk past the playground... or run for that matter, if police came or anything.’

Sanaa also made a clear distinction between locals and outsiders when assessing the issue of crime:

Sanaa: ‘This is the least unsafe place to live. It is! Because, if we look back at all that has happened here, it has never been done by locals. There have always been some conflicts between this neighbourhood and others. And of course, when they start shooting, there are residents in the streets, but it’s not like we

have residents who are robbed or anything here. No, no I don't feel that. All the crime that happens here is committed by groups from other places, and then they sort it out somewhere in Blomsterengen. It's not like, if I walk down the street that I'm afraid of someone stealing my purse or raping me. Not at all. And I have not heard about it happening.'

Tariq also stressed that it was the presence of outsiders that made him anxious:

Tariq: 'It was the first time I ever felt unsafe here, the last time a gang came here. Of course, you get afraid when 50 gang members from another town show up. Of course. But I don't get afraid when they are from here. But that's just me, and I can't get afraid like that, there's a difference if it's me or some older resident.'

Evident from these quotes is that it was especially outsiders who made the parents in Bloomfield feel unsafe. However, this did not mean that locals were not involved in violent gang-related crimes as well. A local youth who often came to discuss my project with me, Hussain, provided me with some valuable insights about the brewing conflict that Shadi was trying to contain, which made it evident that local gang members were also responsible for conflicts erupting in Blomsterengen:

Hussain came over to me one evening, and asked how my research was coming along. He asked if I'd heard what had happened the evening before. A bit, I answered, something about someone having been shot. We moved inside, where we could sit alone, and he told me what had happened. He knew a lot, since it was about his cousin. He told that at the parking lot, close to the community house, 30 young men from another neighbourhood had shown up in cars and started partying. They had smoked joints, and they had knives with them. Five local young men had been close to the parking lot, Hussain's cousin one of them, and he had gone over to the 30 outsiders and asked who they were and what they were doing here. Suddenly he was hit in the back of his head with a bottle, fell down, and the outsiders started kicking and stamping

on him. One of the other locals apparently brought some sort of long iron bar, which he used to clear a path for Hussain's cousin and helped him to escape. Supposedly, the outsiders stayed after this and continued their partying. Later yesterday evening, there were shots fired in another neighbourhood in the city, and it was some young men from Blomsterengen who were now wanted for the shooting. Today they were still wanted, since, to Hussain's knowledge, they had not been caught. Hussein sighed explaining that he feared that this year was going to be like the previous conflict, and added, 'My cousin and his friends cannot ignore this, they have to hit back. They are probably going to be around 25 people, and go there – and then this neighbourhood is in conflict with their neighbourhood.' He looked down at the floor, slowly shaking his head.

Clearly, locals from Blomsterengen were just as prone to violence as the outsiders and some locals were certainly annoyed that actions by Blomsterengen boys had brought the outsiders into the neighbourhood. Tariq for, instance, noted:

Tariq: 'It's the same boys who stir up trouble in the city and hustle people, and then tell them, "Whoa, just come to our neighbourhood if you want to do something about it." And then they come here, putting the ordinary young boys at risk of being hurt, boys who have nothing to do with it.'

Tariq's remarks refer back to the picture of conjoining social worlds. In Tariq's mind, such behaviour exemplified that even local gang members did not show any concern for how their actions influenced the wider community. In his view, their actions brought conflicts to the neighbourhood. So even though the local gang members were not especially feared by law-abiding residents, they still were to be blamed for outsiders coming to the neighbourhood spreading fear of random victimization. Adnaan told a story that illustrates how this fear of random victimization also figured in his mind:

Adnaan: 'There was the time with the gangs and all that you know. Someone was shot in front of my parents' house, and they had to go out there and help

the person who was shot, you know, cover him with a blanket, he is freezing, yelling with pain. It must have been a traumatic experience for my parents. But with time they sort of got over it... but, someone was shot in front of their house! It could have been me... if I had walked by and then got shot. [...] Then you feel that you are part of it, even though you're not, but you become part of it, you know. Because it happens in your neighbourhood. In your building block. It can happen right next to you.'

Fatih had fears similar to those described by Adnaan. Fatih told a story about a time when he had a lot of local boys and young men staying at his apartment, which turned out to be a risky:

Fatih: 'One day I was out walking with a friend, to get some peace and quite. While we were walking, we suddenly hear "Pew, pew, pew" – so we start going back home to my place. Then when we cross the bridge, a scooter drives towards us with two people on, and one of them points a gun at us and yells "Get out of the way, move!", which we do. Then they drive past us and disappear. When we get back to my apartment, we can see bullet holes in the windows of my apartment. We just get everyone out and turn off the lights.'

So even though few parents were afraid of the local gang members, many were annoyed by the way they put everyone else at risk because of the trouble they brought to the neighbourhood. In the interlocutors' descriptions of the issues of gang crime, we thus see how they posed a dual problematization: local gang members were a problem because they brought trouble to Blomsterengen, and outsiders were a problem because of the threat they posed to the safety of locals. It was also these two considerations, unthinking locals and uncontrollable outsiders, that motivated the initiative presented by Shadi and the others at the community meeting. They wanted to confront outsiders who entered the neighbourhood, while at the same time demanding that local youth who lured the outsiders to Blomsterengen either move out or put that life behind them.

Considerations of involving the police in the management of crime and deviance

We have seen how crime and deviance was problematized by the interlocutors. But what did they do to manage these problems? And how were the problems conceptualized in legal term, meaning, as relevant for the police to become involved in? We turn to these questions here. The problematizations of crime and deviance that parents had differed in regards to the perceived explanation of why youth got engaged in crime and troublemaking. We have also seen how different forms of crime were problematized differently, with some forms being viewed as more serious than others by some of the parents. Not surprisingly, the approaches to managing these problems also varied between the parents, as did the way the police were conceptualized in regards to such problem management.

In some situations, the main concern for the interlocutors was to make the youth stop what they were doing. Haamid gave an example of such a situation during an interview:

Haamid: ‘Last Ramadan, there was one evening when I was at the club with the other men from my home country, we were praying, and I was in my formal clothes, you know the religious clothes from the Middle East. There were these scooters driving by the place, making an awful noise. We talked about whether someone could do something about it, and we were all annoyed. Then I decided I had had enough and went out. They’re driving back and forth, and I run over to one of them and say “Stop this, I’m tired of it! Should I call the police?!”. And he just says, “Go ahead, call the police!”. He’s like 15 years old. Then I say, “Oh, okay, well then your father will be here soon.”. And he responds with “No, you should call the police.”. But I don’t care about the police any more, and I tell him “I know your street, and I’ll go and tell your father”, and then he goes, “No, no, I’m sorry, don’t tell my father!” – you understand?’

In this story, Haamid related a very pragmatic conceptualization of the police as ineffective in deterring youth from their annoying behaviour. His main concern was

clearly to get the young people to cease the annoying behaviour. However, he also explained how he would address the youth whenever he met them, reminding them to behave, threatening to tell their parents. According to Haamid, he could thus make the youth stop what they were doing while also making them refrain from similar behaviour in the future. And although he stressed that he supported the police in general (he had even tried to join the police when he initially came to Denmark), he also noted that he thought they ought to work more with the families of the troublemakers. In his view, it was the parents and families who could best control their children, not the police, nor any other public institution. Haamid therefore considered the police ineffective, and thus irrelevant, compared to the other more informal options he had for managing deviancy. He would thus refrain from involving the police if he could. Similar pragmatic concerns applied in different situations. Laila, for instance, chose not to call the police when her son had had a gun pointed at his head. She believed that it would make no difference:

Mads: 'What did you do about it?'

Laila: 'Nothing. He came home and could relax. There was nothing to do, we didn't know who they were. They were masked. Besides, the police were already all over the place.'

Laila considered that the police were already doing what they could, by being all over the neighbourhood. And since she could not provide them any detailed description of who had pointed the gun at her son, she did not believe that the police could do anything to catch the culprit. Out of pragmatic concerns, she thus chose not to call the police. The situation is different from Haamid's story, in that it is not a case of choosing the most suitable strategy to manage a form of crime or deviance when it happened. For Laila, it was a case of deciding not to report a crime that had taken place. However, the two examples both show how pragmatic considerations enter into decisions of whether or not to involve the police. Haneen also described pragmatic concerns about whether the police could help if she called them. She recalled her experiences of the police not showing up when called upon. She expressed this one time when we discussed an article in a newspaper where a man had been roughed up by the police

because he was suspected for shoplifting, but it turned out he was innocent. Haneen noted during the conversation:

Haneen: 'No, I honestly think I wouldn't call them, because it has to be very serious before they respond anyway. They might show up for shoplifting like in the article, but that is apparently worse than burglaries and people almost getting killed. If I call right now and tell them that there is someone outside my home trying to break in, they wouldn't come.'

Mads: 'Really, have you experienced this, that they do not show up?'

Haneen: 'I have not experienced it myself, but I have witnessed it and heard it from others. Also, if you are robbed on the street and you go and report it, they just tell you that they do not have resources to do anything. You file a report, and you are told that if they find your stuff, they'll contact you, that's it.'

Mads: 'You say that you have witnessed it?'

Haneen: 'Yes, one time when I was younger. I was playing with my sisters at the playground. There was a group of men with clubs and such, yelling at a man who was in his apartment. He called the police, but they were told that they could not do anything because he was not hurt or anything. So he yelled: "What, should they kill me before you fucking decide to show up?!" I'll never forget that, it sticks in my head.'

During this conversation, Haneen expressed a fundamental distrust of the police's willingness to respond to calls, a distrust founded upon own experiences and those of others. Not everyone developed the same level of distrust as Haneen expressed, of course. However, the examples of pragmatic concerns show that parents take police effectiveness into consideration when evaluating whether or not to call the police. Haamid and Laila evaluated the effectiveness based on the impact the police would have on the situation; hence, Haneen did not think the police would actually do anything if called upon. The pragmatic considerations were thus found related to a

general hesitancy to involve the police in the management of crime and deviancy, thus illustrating the 'legal cynicism' noted by Carr et al. (2007). In such cases, parents simply did not expect that the police will be able to do anything about crime and deviance.

Jamal was also hesitant about calling the police, but not for pragmatic reasons. During an interview when asked whether or not he would call the police, he explained:

Jamal: 'I could make them [local troublemakers] stop without calling the police. And I prefer to do that, then you've stopped the wrongdoing and you show the youth that, "Listen, I could have called the police, and you would have been arrested. But now I've made you stop, so just walk away, but remember that I'll tell your parents about it." [. . .] If I had stopped them by calling the police, then he would have been arrested. Arrested, sentenced, locked up, and then I would sit and think, "Shit, man, that was my fault." Sure, he could just not have done it, but I could actually have stopped him in a different way. When he gets out, he'll be even worse than before, and do worse things. So, I don't help him by throwing him into prison. And the parents, they just become annoyed and disappointed in you and lose trust in you. Because you practically had their child taken from them.'

When Jamal said that he preferred to avoid the police, it was rooted in a concern for what he considered to be the best for the youth, as well as concerns about what was best for his own social situation in the neighbourhood. And in his view, calling the police jeopardized both concerns. Prison time would only hurt the troublemakers more, and the social repercussions of being seen as responsible for the troublemaking youth going to prison would harm his social status in the eyes of other community members. Jamal gave several reasons for being mindful of the social status. As a public employee working in Blomsterengen, he needed the trust of local families. Another reason was that he only had the ability to confront deviants precisely because of his high social status and respect:

Jamal: 'They know me – and all is perfect right now. No problems, and they listen to me. When I tell them "Stop it!" then they stop, even when I'm not at

work or if they are some of the older boys. They listen, and that's a good thing. It's because I'm one of the older generations in Blomsterengen now, and they know what I've been through, so they have this street respect for me. And that just makes it possible for me to do things differently. As if I'm a sort of role model for them, one who broke out of the mould, you know. So, they just see me differently than they would someone else.'

Jamal described how he believed that this street respect was what set him apart from other residents, making it possible for him to 'do things differently', including making the youth listen to him. However, Jamal had another reason to be mindful of his reputation, since he believed that the same social status was what protected him from being victimized:

Mads: 'Would there be any risks for you in calling the police?'

Jamal: 'There would be risks for others, yes, but not for me. I'm, like, untouchable in this neighbourhood, but that's because of my own background and family. For others, there would be a risk, and many have been through a lot because they've called the police. They had their cars burned, home burglarized and all kinds of things, so much that they end up moving out.'

Thus, even though Jamal felt secure based on his social status in the neighbourhood, he was mindful of the risk of retaliation if he lost this protection. Jamal thus represents a case where local sensibilities (Hancock, 2001) are a factor to be taken into consideration when deciding whether to involve the police. The social ties between the law-abiding resident and the troublemakers make it both possible and safe to address the troublemakers directly, thus offering an alternative to calling the police. Thus, concern for the youth as well as for his own sense of security through social relations gave Jamal the option to avoid police intervention when possible. Hassan also exemplify a parent who took local sensibilities into consideration when reflecting on involving the police in the management of crime and deviance or not. He was especially aware of how police involvement mattered in regards to addressing the root courses of the problematic behaviour by local troublemakers. Based on his notion that

the police were part of the problem, not the solution, Hassan tried to avoid police involvement, instead taking matters into his own hands. He was concerned about the youth, especially about what he thought was best for *them* in the long run in regards to living a life out of crime. And in his experience, the police did not work towards helping the youth:

Hassan: 'Look, one of the important things is to have trust, and there is no trust. I feel that the police are happy only when they catch somebody and put him in jail. This is their goal!'

Hassan later explained how he thought the goal of the police influenced people's relation to the police:

Hassan: 'People here, they don't believe that the police come to help. They believe that the police come to gather information and facts about them, so they can use it against them later on. And this is why people hate them. And the police also hate and cheat them. Especially the young people, they don't want to be seen by the police. They are afraid that later on, they can be registered.'

For Hassan, the important thing was getting youth out of crime and on a path towards education and employment. And this was also how he decided whether to work with the police in managing crime and deviance or to avoid them. Based on his experiences of how the police operated in Blomsterengen, Hassan had come to the conclusion that the police were mainly concerned with punishing people, regardless what consequences this had for the youth. We return to Hassan's belief in the police's objectives and strategies later on, but here we can but note how the alignment of values is important to Hassan. Can he trust that the police will treat the youth as he wishes them to be treated? In his experience, no, he cannot. Rather, he voiced a concern about any contact that the youth had with the police, since he believed that the police were working to gather information on the youth so that they could build up

a case against them for later prosecution. Hassan described that a different approach to addressing youth deviance and crime was to work informally with the families:

Hassan: 'So I think, if you can help him in another way, it's better. If you call the father, sit with them, try to give help.'

Thus, both Jamal and Hassan perceived the police as best avoided in the management of crime and deviance, based on their experiences of negative outcomes from involving them to deal with the troublemakers. Not all residents had these negative expectations of police involvement however. Sanaa, for example, had similar concerns about what was best for the youth, but she held a different conception of the police than Jamal and Hassan and were inclined to call the police because of the very same concerns Hassan and Jamal had for the youth:

Sanaa: 'I call it in, so I help both the one who is hurt and the one doing harm . . . We have a lot of youth in the neighbourhood; I'm honest with them, I tell them that I'll call the- police. They say, "Are you serious?!" And I'm like, "Yes, of course I call, [. . .] also for your own sake, so you do not end up in prison for many years." I would rather call now and have it stopped before it gets much worse.

In her own way, Sanaa saw it as an act of concern for the youth to call the police. She noted that it was better to call the police when it was less serious, instead of waiting until they did something that could get them thrown into prison for a long time. This was also part of Sanaa's understanding of the deviant youth's life conditions. She was very focused on parent responsibilities, and she believed that troubling youth were those whose parents had failed them. In cases where parents were seen as incapable of caring for their children, it was better to have the police and social services step in to help the youth.

Sanaa was also driven by a strong conviction that it was her duty to call the police when something happened:

Sanaa: 'Of course, I'm not some snitch, who like reports even the smallest thing. Of course not, but if someone is being beaten, or something like that, or a shooting occurs, of course I'll call for help. That's who I am, and I do it for both their sakes. [...] The shooting last time, with the gang conflict, I called it in, and I even showed up as a witness [in court] in front of the youth, both the local ones and the outsiders, because you know, the local ones were also part of it. Someone could have been hurt, and it doesn't matter what neighbourhood you're from, a human is a human, and nobody should be shot, so it's my duty to call right away. And I succeeded, because the police came very quickly, and nobody was hurt because they were so fast.'

It is not clear exactly where Sanaa draws the line between what criminal actions she would call in and what she would not. However, what distinguishes her conceptualization of the police from the others described above was her general belief that it was 'her duty' to involve the police. Sanaa thus balanced her view of the police between concerns for the youth, as well her civic duty as a moral citizen (Bach & Schniedermann, 2022).

There were also parents who did not invoke notions of concern for the those engaged in crime and deviancy, but echoed Sanaa's conviction of duty and 'the proper thing to do' when deciding to involve the police in the management of crime and deviance. Eman represented this view. As she explained, she also called the police in front of the youth:

Eman: 'If it is you who stands and look at it, then do something! Also with that knife stabbing one time, I told the police, "It's him, him and him – here you go." And the other boys were all like "Whoa, what are you doing?". But I did it, in front of them, and made it clear that it was me who called the police, and said; "So stop it, stop with your bullshit. Why are you killing each other?" And they went something like "But he owes me money"... . But I'm ice cold. I don't care, they can do whatever they want, beat me or something, I don't have a car they can smash up.'

Eman, however, also revealed that there was a line between what she would report, and what she would not. As described earlier in regards to threats of violence, Eman could also resolve some issues on the spot. In the situation where a newcomer, the young girl, felt unsafe because some youth had threatened her, it was important to Eman that the woman felt safe again. Here, she would manage the conflict directly. She did not justify her own involvement based on notions of care for the deviant, as did Jamal and Hassan. Rather, she voiced a care for the newcomer. This somewhat resembled a pragmatic view similar to Haamid's idea of how best to manage deviancy, which in this situation was to take the confrontation in the moment. Yet Eman also explained that, under different circumstances, she would not interfere directly:

Eman: 'Sometimes the police simply have to handle it. Like knife stabbings, I just can't get involved in that!'

In this quote, she indicates that some situations are simply too dangerous for her to manage by herself, why these situations, according to Eman, became a police responsibility. That the police had to manage dangerous situations was a strong conviction for Eman, and she voiced little concern for the troublemakers in such situations. She made this quite clear when I asked her what she thought about double sentencing for gang members, including Salma's son, who faced a long sentence for a gang-related shooting. Eman simply stated:

Eman: 'It's fine, period. There's nothing to complain about. He's grown up and should learn to make decisions for himself. The punishment is his. Live with it. Ice cold.'

Here Eman showed how she believed that crime and deviance to be a choice, and that youth who engage in such behaviour had to live with the consequences of their choices. Throughout the fieldwork, Eman expressed this belief several times, emphasizing that it was not her responsibility to shield deviants from the criminal justice system. They had chosen a way in life. Both Noah, Adnaan and Tariq held similar beliefs, even though they themselves had both been on a criminal path earlier

in life. Though he was not inclined toward calling the police, Noah believed that being arrested by the police was part of the game if you chose a criminal lifestyle. He expressed this belief by stating that if you were dumb enough to get caught, you were not fit for the lifestyle. Consequently, he also proclaimed that however you were treated by the police, it was fair enough – it was part of the choices made. This is elaborated later in the section on police brutality. Other interlocutors agreed with Noah on these points, Adnaan, for instance, concluded an interview stating:

Adnaan: ‘And when I look back and consider why were we stopped? Why were we controlled in head and ass? Well, it was probably self-imposed, right. Back then, I might not have been so clever as I am today [laughing], though still, I ought to have thought about it. I mean, if you choose to be criminal, then you’ve got to be smart enough to be one step ahead of the police. If you’re not, then it’s not the right lifestyle for you. Then you’ve got to face the consequences. The hammer will fall one day if you chose that life.’

Tariq also agreed that it was part of the game to be arrested, even if it was his family:

Tariq: ‘They arrested my brother a couple of times in front of me, but it was not so dramatic, so I’ve always sort of respected the police. But then, I’ve also been part of some shit, but it’s fair enough. It’s fair that if you do shit, then you get arrested. I don’t bear a grudge for that.’

Tariq was also inclined to call the police, but unlike Sanaa and Eman, he was hesitant to be seen doing so:

Mads: ‘So, if you saw something criminal going on, would you call the police? Even on locals?’

Tariq: ‘I would, if I believed it to be right. If I can see them fighting or something, of course I should call. I probably wouldn’t tell them, I’d go inside and close the door. But I would do it for the sake of the community and the neighbourhood.’

The notion of calling the police if it was 'right' links up with Tariq's understanding that those engaged in crime had little concern for how their actions influenced the innocent bystanders or the community in general. And when the youth was believed to lack such concern, he, like Eman, believed that it was not his duty to protect the youth from the police and criminal justice system. Where Eman, and also Sanaa, saw it as a duty to call the police, Noah and Tariq saw it more as a matter of fairness and justice. Here Eman and Tariq illustrate that community members articulate limits to their toleration of crime and deviance from local boys. Hancock also noted limits to toleration when she described that 'serious incidents' would be called in, and Walklate and Evans noted that when deemed fair in the community, 'grassing' was allowed. Tariq exemplifies Walklate and Evans' finding, in that he noted that he would call the police when it was 'right', whereas Eman held to a more general codex that it was always 'right' to call the police. Nevertheless, Eman's pragmatism indicated that, following Hancock, she still maintained a distinction between serious incidents and mere incivilities to be addressed on the spot.

'Serious incidents' were often related to a fear of being harmed, which influenced how the police's role in managing crime and deviance was conceptualized. We have already seen how Eman noted that knife stabbings were something the police had to manage, because she would not risk being hurt. Such concerns over physical harm would cause parents like Jamal and Hassan to call the police as well. Hassan briefly noted during an interview:

Hassan: 'Cooperation... yes, of course when I see something out of my control, I will call the police.'

Hassan did not elaborate on what such 'control' entailed, but we have seen how Jamal could manage crime and deviance through his social status in the neighbourhood and Haamid could manage deviancy through social control measures. Hassan was likely to draw on similar resources in order to be 'in control'. Jamal also noted that there were situations where he would call the police regardless of his high social status and

concern for the youth, but here he stressed that it was a matter of managing crimes committed by outsiders:

Jamal: 'Well, if there are some local boys who hang out every day, and something happens between them, they fight or something, no one will call. But if there is an attack by someone from the outside, then someone might call. Like last time, when thirty-fourty people showed up, people called. But if it's something internal, then people generally handle it themselves.'

This distinction between locals and outsiders was important in light of Jamal's focus on social status. When confronting outsiders, Jamal's social status was rendered useless. As discussed previously, outsiders were deemed dangerous precisely because they did not know who among the locals was part of the gang milieu and who were not. With the outsiders' lack of social knowledge, they also lacked the respect for locals like Jamal, who normally felt at ease knowing that the troublemakers knew him. Adnaan, who in many respects mirrored Jamal both in background and in his strategies for how to manage crime and deviance, expressed this fear of not being known by outsiders. He described how it felt to be assessed by outsiders trying to decide whether to stab him or not, illustrating that the lack of social knowledge forced them to evaluate all potential members of rival gangs thus putting local young men at risk. Following, the social status that normally made parents like Jamal and Adnaan feel protected was rendered useless against people who did not know them. However, it was also deemed dangerous to face outsiders because locals from Blomsterengen did not know the outsiders, or did not know what *they* were willing to do. Laila, for instance, described how difficult it was to face outsiders rather than locals:

Laila: 'As a parent, you feel like it's a little difficult to go over there and say, "You know what, dude, take that gun of yours and piss off!" If it had been one of our own, then I would not have had a problem with it. I was a bit more sceptical: What is it they want? What are they up to? And what is it they are dragging our boys into?'

Laila was generally not afraid of stepping in and managing crime and deviance directly. But neither was she concerned about any loss of social status if she called the police. However, she would occasionally refrain from doing so, since she recognized Jamal and Hassan's concerns for the youth. But Laila revealed in this quote that the uncertainty about what outsiders could and would do made it risky to confront them like she would with a local. When facing such danger, she would thus be more inclined to call the police. Still, Laila had courage. She told a story of a time when, together with a couple of other mothers from the neighbourhood, they confronted a group of outsiders. Laila and the others were annoyed that the outsiders were hanging out in the neighbourhood, and they suspected that they were about to stir up trouble. So, the mothers simply started to hang out around the outsiders, keeping an eye on them. They did not confront them or address them directly, but they kept a constant eye on them. According to Laila, this surveillance frustrated the outsiders to a degree where they eventually left. This example illustrated that some measures could be taken by residents without calling the police, even against dangerous outsiders.

And there were also some who took matters into their own hands, even in dangerous cases. The initiative set in motion by Shadi and his friends was an example of a collective way of taking personal responsibility for managing dangerous crime. Fatih however also related stories of having taken matters into his own hands, which was possible for him because of his past life in crime and the skills and reputation he had built up during that time. For instance, he explained how he managed a situation where his wife and her sister were threatened:

Fatih: 'You know that I've put all that behind me. But you shouldn't fuck with my family, I completely black out. There was one time, and it also shows that I still have this reputation, where my wife's sister was being evicted from her apartment, she was told to move out. And then the owner [who was a woman] comes by, and has this big and strong man with her, calling the sister a whore and such shit. My wife is there, too, to help the sister, and somehow it ends up with my wife getting smacked in the head, and she is bleeding when I arrive, because they call for me to come and help them. And I just run there, as fast as I fucking can, you know. And I went C-R-A-Z-Y! That strong dude,

who was with the owner, I beat him up! And the owner ended up running away, in her car. Then later, she called me, because she knew I was looking for her. She tells me that I can just drop it, because she's protected, you know. I ask by whom, and it's not someone that I knew, but I go there anyway. She is also there when I arrive. And when the guy protecting her sees me, he just turns towards her, and starts scolding her, what the fuck she is thinking. You know, because he was afraid of me, he knew who I was. She became all embarrassed and humble. He just got mad because he didn't want to fight me.'

This reaction seemed less rational and more emotional. Fatih himself confessed that he would 'black out' if his family were in trouble. The story shows how Fatih's own proneness to violence, probably acquired during his time in the criminal milieu, and his reputation, also from that period in his life, provided an effective alternative to calling on the police. But Fatih's strategy was not an alternative that everyone had. It required a certain past, that might have a gendered quality to it, since it was based on having been part of a violent and criminal milieu dominated by men. But it was also a fragile alternative. As Jamal also noted, protection and alternative ways of managing crime and deviance that were based on reputation and social status could be lost and had therefore to be maintained. This might explain why Tariq, for instance, would make sure he was not observed calling the police, while Sanaa, Eman and Laila were open about calling the police and witnessing in court in front of the offenders. It seemed that the maintenance of social status was a larger concern for fathers, than for the mothers. This, however, ought to be researched more closely in order to be understood properly – perhaps in regards to the accumulation of 'street capital' (Shammas & Sandberg, 2016).

Summary

In this section, we have seen how parents in Blomsterengen conceptualized different forms of crime and deviance, and how they viewed the police when confronted with problematic situations. The parents distinguished between deviance, violence and threats, a mysterious economy, and gang-related crime. Although knowledge about such forms of behaviour was generally shared by the parents, their responses to the

respective problems differed greatly. The responses to the different forms of problematic behaviour also differed for the individual parents: they did not necessarily hold a single view of the police in managing crime and deviance. Rather, the parents made sense of the police's role depending on the situation at hand, and based on experiences of how the police managed the situations. Depending on the situation, and on their personal backgrounds, the parents also had different alternatives at hand to manage the situations in which they could decide to call on the police or not. This generalized summary of the analysis shows that perceptions of the police were a complicated matter for the parents. It also illustrates that a generalized conclusion regarding ethnic minority parents' attitudes toward police is impossible to extract from the many interviews and conversations. Although some considerations could be highlighted as dominating the different views on the police, it was the parents' pragmatic concerns about how to best handle crime and deviance that would determine whether parents would take matters into their own hands or call the police. These concerns were based on experiences of the police being slow at responding to a call, or of the police's (in)ability to manage crime with little intelligence to guide them, or of the fact that those engaged in deviance and crime had little respect for, or fear of, the police, such that other ways of addressing crime and deviance were necessary in order deal with the problem at hand. Concern for the welfare of the youth engaged in criminal and deviant behaviour likewise motivated a reluctance towards calling the police. This reluctance was based primarily on experiences where the police's presence only made matters worse, especially in view of the punitive consequences to being caught. We look more closely at this argument in the section on police practices and punitive consequences, but we can note here that when distrust in the police's inclination towards doing what is best for the community is voiced, there will be more scepticism towards working with the police. Contrary to these pragmatic and empathetic concerns, some parents expressed consistent motivations to involve the police in the management of crime and deviance, with little concern for the punitive consequences it had for the troublemakers. Behind these motivations were notions of citizen duty or beliefs that when you lived a life in crime you also had to live with the consequences. However, one of the strongest factors that made parents involve the police in the management of crime and deviance was the severity of the problematic behaviour. When the activity turned dangerous, it became a matter for the police. The

inclination to call the police was found to increase with the severity of the crime even among those parents who showed an initial distrust in or reluctance towards the police. Severity of the crime was thus the primary factor that motivated parents to consider the police option, especially when it concerned gang- related crime.

Social dynamics in the community

In a somewhat curious way, some parents expressed views of the police based on perceptions of their neighbours and fellow community members. We have already seen this at play in the previous section, where parents' inclinations towards involving the police in the management of crime and deviance were based on how parents related to troublemaking youth. In this section we explore this dynamic in more depth, and explore how relations between parents' groups influenced perceptions of the police. As mentioned, crime and deviance would influence how some parents viewed local youth. But other themes also influenced these internal relations. Territorial stigmatization of Blomsterengen and its residents was another theme that came up during interviews and conversations, since both the formal ghetto stigma of the anti-gang and anti-ghetto policies, as well as more informal stigma of other citizens in the surrounding society, was a nuisance in their everyday lives. This was especially the case when the stigma led to degrading and distressing consequences, like when neighbourhoods on the ghetto list were threatened with demolitions and evictions of residents if the neighbourhood did not succeed in getting itself off the list in time. In such instances, some parents would distance themselves from those groups of community members they blamed for the stigma, while embracing any policing initiative aimed at those community members whom they blamed for the stigma imposed on the community. Stigma management is a theme in its own right, when it comes to understanding the everyday life for residents in Blomsterengen. Here, I, however, focus on those aspects of this theme that were relevant to citizens' perceptions of the police.

I became truly aware of how social relations influenced perceptions of the police during a conversation with Laila one day in the latter part of my fieldwork. The government's third (2018) ghetto strategy had recently been announced, and introduced the threat of demolishing building blocks in neighbourhoods that did not make it off the ghettolist and thus threatening to disperse residents in Blomsterengen

to other neighbourhoods in the city. Laila had often indicated that she cared greatly about the youth in the neighbourhood. She was not shy in confronting deviants when they made trouble, and although she was appreciative of the police presence, she could also see life from the perspective of the youth. During the community meeting called by Shadi, Laila had stressed that the youth also deserved some sympathy, that they were all struggling with discrimination, stigmatization and often a childhood in poverty. In light of this sympathy, it was somewhat surprising when she one day fiercely stated the following:

Laila: 'It's our neighbourhood. Nobody should ruin it. They [the troublemakers] should get out of here. [. . .] They ruin it for our children. It doesn't make any sense that we should move out, and they can stay here. Then it's better that they should leave, and we can stay. Sure, I know that it's a ghetto area, and it might not be the best place to live when you have children. But it's our neighbourhood, and they shouldn't be allowed to ruin it.'

What had happened to her sympathy? The prospect of demolitions and possible relocation had been announced. And Laila blamed the local troublemakers for the possibility of that happening. At this time, there was a lot of talk about how the demolitions would be carried out in practice. The main topic of discussion was that if whole blocks were torn down, and the families living there relocated to other neighbourhoods, then innocent and well-integrated families would be evicted as well. For many of the residents, this prospect of being evicted from the neighbourhood even though they had done nothing wrong was infuriating, including to Laila. As Laila stated in the quote, it ought to be the troublemakers who should leave the neighbourhood, not her. Through the ghetto policy, deviancy now resulted in Laila having her desired life disrupted. This prospect was too much for her to accept. Her sudden distancing from the local youth engaged in criminal and deviant behaviour was thus a reaction towards the political interventions in the everyday life of the neighbourhood, spurred on by the stigma of being seen as a ghetto. Yet rather than directing her anger at the politicians behind the ghetto policy, she turned on the deviants and she became more inclined to call the police rather than showing concern for them. And she was not

alone in changing her attitude as a result of the anti-ghetto policies, Sanaa provided an example of blaming local youth for the stigma:

Sanaa: 'I strive to make my neighbourhood better. I think that there should be room for us and not the criminals. So, if we can get them out, then we better get them out. Blomsterengen is one of the nicest neighbourhoods. I cannot imagine living anywhere else than out here. That's why I want to work to get them out.'

We return to Sanaa's perspective later, as well as other examples. Before that, however, I want to briefly discuss a theory of stigma management put forth by Wacquant, that can help us understand how residents like Laila and Sanaa alter their perception of other community members, and consequently alters their relation to the police as well. Wacquant has noted that one of the primary effects of a territorial stigma is:

'to stimulate practices of internal social differentiation and distancing that work to decrease interpersonal trust and undercut local solidarity. To regain a measure of dignity and reaffirm the legitimacy of their own status in the eyes of society, the residents in France's working-class banlieues like those of the black American ghetto typically overstress their moral worth as individuals or family members [...]. And they join their voices to the dominant chorus of denunciation of deviant and delinquent categories.' (Wacquant, 2008, p. 183)

Especially the note on 'local solidarity' together with the need for 'denunciation of deviants' stand out in light of Laila's sudden loss of concern for the local deviant youth. Wacquant describes how social differentiation and distancing, with the loss of solidarity and adoption of denunciating perspectives are the result of residents employing different stigma management strategies (Wacquant, 2010b; Wacquant, Slater & Pereira, 2014, p. 1276). Some of these strategies entail a submission to the stigma that leads residents to distance themselves from those they blame for the stigma (mutual distancing). They thus adopt the same degrading view as that of the

stigmatizers, condemning those from whom they distance themselves (lateral denigration). They might also try to ignore and tone down the social reality of the community and neighbourhood (dissimulation), or to retreat into the private sphere of the family and withdraw socially from the community, or they might simply leave the neighbourhood altogether. Other strategies are described as resistance to the stigma, like studied indifference towards it, outright and sometimes organized defence of the neighbourhood, or laying stress on the positive sides of a community, its resources and way of life that characterize the residents in the neighbourhood (stigma inversion) (Wacquant, Slater & Pereira, 2014, p. 1276). Which strategies residents employ depend 'on position and trajectory in social and physical space. Stigma management strategies will therefore vary significantly with class, age and lifecycle stage, housing tenure, seniority in the neighbourhood, and ethnicity' (Wacquant, Slater & Pereira, 2014, p. 1276). Central to these strategies is that they revolve around processes of symbolic (dis)identification (Wacquant, 2010b, pp. 217-218) with other community members and neighbours, and even to the neighbourhood. Hence, the study of how different residents represent each other and themselves (often in contrasting ways) verbally is central to understanding how territorial stigmatization influences social relations in a community. It is also through such studies that representations of self and others enter the legal consciousness of residents and ultimately affect the residents' relation to and perceptions of the police. It should also be noted that Wacquant finds that an individual can employ several strategies simultaneously, or change strategies. We saw this with Laila, who initially during the fieldwork reacted to the stigma with 'studied indifference', focusing on the strong sense of community between the families and feeling sympathy for the deviant youth. Later on, however, she articulates a strategy of 'mutual distancing' and 'lateral denigration', condemning the troublemaking youth because their actions will lead to possible demolitions. This section is not meant to describe the full spectre of stigma management strategies employed by residents in Blomsterengen. Instead it focusses on those instances where stigma management affected the interlocutors' relation to and perception of the police.

That neighbourhoods like Blomsterengen in Denmark suffer from territorial stigmatization in regards to being on the ghetto list has already been demonstrated in

Danish research (Jensen & Christensen, 2012; Jensen, Prieur, Skjott-Larsen, 2020). In this section, I will refer to this political representation of the neighbourhoods on the ghetto list as 'formal stigmatization'. Previous studies have also shown how stigma management strategies are employed in such neighbourhoods (Christensen & Jensen, 2012, chap. 4, 5; Jensen & Christensen, 2012), although these studies question whether residents in Danish 'ghettoized' neighbourhoods internalize, and thereby identify with, the stigma and degrading view imposed upon them (Jensen & Christensen, 2012; Jensen, Prieur & Skjott-Larsen, 2020). The studies nevertheless find that residents vigorously employ stigma management strategies. The studies, however, have paid limited attention to how these strategies influence the resident's relation to public institutions, including the police (although see Wacquant, 2008, p. 174). Wacquant however notes that besides influencing the social relations between residents, territorial stigmatization also influences the relation between residents and such institutions (Wacquant, 2008, p.174). In this section, I describe how stigma management influenced relations between parents and between parents and deviants, and ultimately, their views of the police. It was not only the territorial stigma of being on the ghetto list that made the interlocutors react, of course. Along with the formal stigmatization of being on the list and the object of policy, there was also an what I term an everyday, 'informal stigmatization' taking place. Informal stigmatization was a feeling expressed by interlocutors that outsiders looked down upon them simply because they lived in a ghetto neighbourhood. The formal and informal stigmatization processes merged in different ways, thus sometimes reinforcing each other in making the residents in Blomsterengen feeling looked down upon. Hence, this section first examines how the social relations between parents and those they perceived as deviants influenced the parents' view of the police. I then address how inter-parent relations influenced different views of the police. Finally, I discuss how resistance to the formal political stigmatization also affected parents' views of the police.

Social relations between parents and youth engaged in crime and deviance

Youth engaged in crime and deviance in Blomsterengen enjoyed a widespread care, concern and solidarity from the parents in the neighbourhood. This care was not unconditional, however. When crime became 'serious' or downright dangerous, or when committed by outsiders with whom the parent had little solidarity, the concern

for the deviants could be revoked. There were also other factors that could compel the parents to revoke their care and concern for the local youth. Laila's reaction to the threat of demolitions shows how the formal stigmatization of Blomsterengen as a ghetto, and the political consequences that came with the stigma, led her to alter her sympathy for the deviant youth. When she became infuriated by the threat of demolitions, she distanced herself from those engaged in such behaviour, distinguishing between those law-abiding residents who deserved to stay in Blomsterengen and those who 'ought to leave', a distinction also expressed by Sanaa. This symbolic distinction reveals a lateral denigration of those to be blamed for the formal stigmatization of the neighbourhood. What is noteworthy in the examples of both Laila and Sanaa is that they combine the mutual distancing with the urge to defend the community against the consequences of being on the ghetto list. If those responsible for crime and deviance in the neighbourhood left the community, Blomsterengen might be removed from the list and the stigma lifted. Laila and Saana thus acceded to the stigma by pointing out who are responsible for it. At the same time, they also resisted the stigma by pointing out that not all residents were to blame, themselves included.

Such processes of distancing and denigration, were not only linked to the formal stigmatization of the neighbourhood related to the ghetto list. Informal stigma was also spurring on such social dynamics. Adnaan and Jamal told a story of how informal stigmatization was a nuisance to the everyday life of residents, and they blamed those engaged in crime and deviance:

Adnaan: 'On the ghetto list, off the ghetto list, on again... it's not something you feel as a resident, parent or young. Well, maybe the youth do. But it's not something that the parents feel in their everyday lives. Just because we are on the list, it's not like we're cut off from social benefits or anything like that.'

Mads: 'Not yet... [both laugh]'

Adnaan: 'Not yet, yes. We're facing a whole new development... but it doesn't influence your daily routines or anything like that. You go to work, your children go to school, so it's not something you think about, that, now we are on a list. ... But I think it's irritating that they start to tear down buildings.'

Thus, the ghetto list and the ghetto policies were not something he noticed that much in his everyday life. Nevertheless, Adnaan also related of a period of time when his social life in the surrounding city had been heavily impacted by the stigma of coming from Blomsterengen. Before the anti-ghetto policies, a group of young boys from the neighbourhood put Blomsterengen on the tabloid front pages with their deviancy, which put the entire neighbourhood in a bad light. Adnaan recounted that whenever he and his friends went to the city, girls did not want to have anything to do with them when they heard where they lived. The stigma of coming from Blomsterengen lasted for several years according to Adnaan. Youth from Blomsterengen were all linked to that particular criminal behaviour. Adnaan stressed that they had gotten rid of the stigma and the story with the changing of generations, and today no one talked about it anymore or reacted to hearing he was from Blomsterengen. Jamal also recalled how the neighbourhood had suffered from a stigma in the past, but noted that a new stigma was developing:

Jamal: 'It was worse in the past, but I think we are getting there again. Because of the gangs, and the shootings. It's slowly becoming like it once was. There was a whole decade when we were almost rid of it, when we went to the city and such. But I can't feel the negative development now, because of the foreign kids who run around and get into shootings and all that.'

He got onto the topic following my question about whether he felt discriminated against during his everyday life, and he noted how he still experienced that people looked at him with distrust if, for instance, walked closely by their handbags:

Jamal: 'Just yesterday, when a woman looked at me when I walked by her bag, I was so irritated. I just looked at her, then at her bag. Looked at her again, and just shook my head and laughed... because, really?! I was annoyed and felt like, okay, is that where we are, still? Have we not moved on or what? But on the other side, I can also see it from her side, she's probably had an experience with some of the troublemakers, who have done something or the other, so she doesn't have a lot of confidence in foreigners. And with

everything she hears in the media and news and such, then she has developed a sort of perspective... I don't know what to call it.'

Mads: 'Prejudice?'

Jamal: 'Prejudice, yeah.'

Here Jamal links youth deviancy to his understanding that outsiders develop prejudiced perceptions of foreigners. It still annoys him, however, when he feels stigmatized himself. Why would he be interested in her purse? It's only in her mind that he is, at least that's how he interpreted her looking at him.

These stories are noteworthy in that they reveal how stigmatization is experienced from a resident perspective. The formal political stigmatization of Denmark's anti-ghetto policy is somewhat downplayed – Adnaan even got into a story of how he believed that the anti-ghetto policies were merely an attempt by politicians to get votes and had little to do with the situation in neighbourhoods like Blomsterengen. Instead, both Adnaan and Jamal show how deviance and crime had everyday consequences for them because of how deviance became related to foreign ethnicity and to residency in Blomsterengen. Although both Jamal and Adnaan seemed to be little concerned about this, aside from being annoyed, some parents were distressed because of it. As with Laila, this distress caused them to distance themselves from the deviant boys. The most prominent example of this is the initiative to protect the neighbourhood presented by Shadi, Kader and Yahia at the community meeting. Their call to action became an example of how crime management became a stigma management strategy as well.

Crime management as stigma management

Shadi and I would often discuss his initiative to protect the neighbourhood. During these discussions, Shadi stressed that it was meant to deal with crime in the neighbourhood as well as to protect the neighbourhood from potentially drastic consequences of state anti-ghetto policies and to make the police turn down their control with neighbourhood residents. The primary objective, however, was to prevent the eruption of a new gang conflict. Those participating in the initiative, including

several parents who were interlocutors in this study, therefore agreed to distance themselves from the local youth involved in the gang milieu, telling them that they were not welcome in the neighbourhood as long as they were part of the criminal milieu. If necessary, the initiative would try to have the troublemaking individuals and their families evicted from Blomsterengen by going to the housing association and informing the association of what the troublemakers had done in the past and was engaged in, in the present. Informing the housing association was a drastic thing to do in Blomsterengen, and broke with the toleration of crime and deviance based on a concern that you only reported to the authorities if you believed it to be in the best interests of the youth, or if their actions had severe consequences for the community and its members. A conceptual change was thus taking place, with crime and deviance increasingly being viewed as a legal rather than social matter. This drastic change revealed how the initiative was based on a process of lateral denigration; the community was now divided into troublemakers and 'the rest of us'. Apparently, Shadi and the other members of the network had knowledge of previous criminal and deviant acts committed by the troublesome individuals. These acts had been tolerated or deemed legitimized forms of crime (even in the view of other community members) in the past. Things had changed. The whole initiative revolved around a social distancing process between law-abiding residents and local criminals, a process where any previous sympathy for the criminals was revoked. When Shadi linked the gang crime with the intent to also protect the neighbourhood from the ghetto policies, the lateral denigration stands out stronger, in that one group of community members takes the moral high ground and denounces other community groups who are deemed less moral because of their behaviour. Though the initiative members were prepared to go to the housing association with knowledge that could get the troublemakers evicted, they were still hesitant towards calling the police. They preferred to activate the SMS-chain instead and take matters into their own hands. When asked about why they would not just call the police, Shadi responded:

Shadi: 'They [the police] are too slow. The police, the municipality. They have had years to stop this. But they cannot, they don't know what to do. The police, they can't do anything before a shot is fired – we can't go around waiting for that. Also, it takes what, three months from arrest until you go to

prison, time where they are still dangerous! The ladies from the municipality just go home after work, or go to a café and talk about the good job they're doing. They don't do shit! And while they go to a café, we live here, where the trouble still exists after 4pm. So now we have to do it ourselves!

It was thus not because they did not *want* to call the police. Their reluctance to call the police was rather a manifestation of their legal cynicism and pragmatic concerns regarding the police's ability to protect the residents from gang crime. However, there were residents who would call the police about the more serious criminal youth; they had lost any sympathy for them already. Tariq gave an example of this when he talked of calling the police when he deemed it 'right' (see the previous chapter). Here he referred to incidents where local youth would make trouble elsewhere in the city and seek protection in their neighbourhood, thereby dragging trouble into Blomsterengen and exposing uninvolved community members to a risk of harm. In so doing, they lost Tariq's concern for their well-being and any solidarity he had with their social predicament in life. Although the example focusses on how the deviants posed a dangerous threat to the law-abiding residents, the distance that Tariq expressed had a symbolic dimension of perceiving the deviants as morally unworthy of care and concern. In this way, the example shows how lateral denigration and social distancing could be employed with regard to threat of physical harm, and without direct symbolic reference to any sort of territorial stigma. Thus, the same social dynamics Wacquant has described in regards to stigma management are also employed in regards to other concerns in the community.

Another example of how criminal behaviour was viewed by parents, and how it related to perceptions of the police, was Zaid's view of gang members:

One day, around noon, Zaid and I were the only ones around the community house. We were sitting outside, enjoying the sun and the quietness. We talked about the risk of a new gang conflict, and I asked him about his thoughts on the way the police managed the conflict the last time. Zaid stated that it was good the police came to the neighbourhood, he was tired of troublemakers. He thought it was great with zones bans and visitational zones, so the police

could prevent the few troublemakers from ruining everything for everyone else in the neighbourhood.'

Zone bans were used to prohibit troublemakers from hanging out in defined public areas, while visitational zones would allow the police to stop anyone within a designated area with little other cause than a hunch about possession of weapons. Both these tools were somewhat controversial in their proactive nature and by challenging the basic right of movement. But Zaid would rather see the police use such tools than accept gang crime, illustrating how processes of lateral denigration and social distancing underpinned parents' acceptance of even controversial control measures. We have similarly seen how Eman held what can be interpreted as symbolic disregard for criminals, which led her to accept controversial control measures such as the double-length sentencing of gang-related crimes, even when it was her friend Salma, whose son faced a long prison sentence based on this law.

From these examples, we can see how social distancing and lateral denigration between parents and youth engaged in crime and deviance were widespread in Blomsterengen. Although these processes are not always related directly to the management of either a formal or informal stigmatization of the neighbourhood and its residents, they illustrate the kind of social dynamics that resulted from the presence of crime and deviance in Blomsterengen. The distancing processes were thus also employed in order to protect and defend the neighbourhood from crime, which in turn is one of the main issues leading to both formal and informal stigmatization of the neighbourhood. After all, crime rates are one of the criteria for being placed on the ghetto list. While these symbolic distancing and denigration processes motivated residents to work with the police in order to manage crime and deviance, police cooperation was still limited by pragmatic concerns and legal cynicism about police competence.

Respectability thorough responsibility

During the fieldwork, it became clear that not all parents viewed each other in a positive light in Blomsterengen. Some parents looked down upon other families, distanced themselves from their children and cared little for what happened to them

when they were in the hands of the police or social services. This finding is similar to what Jensen and Christensen found in Aalborg East (Jensen & Christensen, 2012, p.75,87), another neighbourhood perceived as a ghetto in Denmark, where some residents identified themselves as 'respectable' in contrast to other parent groups. As the case with Jensen and Christensen's study, respectability in Blomsterengen was mainly understood in terms of being seen as a 'responsible parent' in contrast to being irresponsible and a 'ghetto family'. Here we observe how the stigma of the neighbourhood was passed on by some parents to other parents and to families whom they believed to be responsible for the ghetto stigma. Tariq, for instance, expressed such a distinction between 'responsible' and 'ghetto' parents when he reflected on why some local youth got into crime and deviance while others did not:

Tariq: 'It's not all kids who become ghetto kids just because they live in ghettos. It has to do with the parents.'

Such a perspective illustrates how lateral denigration was operating between parent groups in Blomsterengen. The resulting distancing processes between parents had consequences for how parents related to the police in two ways. First, for some parents, it meant that they maintained solidarity with the deviant youth because they saw them as victims of poor parenting. This meant that calling the police could be seen as an act of concern when the police was believed to help the youth, while others would refrain from calling the police out of a similar concern for the youth, though based on a belief that police attention would make matters worse for the youth. Second, trusting the police and believing their agenda to be aligned with the parents' own values and desires on behalf of the community became a marker of respectability, such that a general acceptance of the police was voiced regardless of how the police were expected to behave or what consequences it might have for troublemakers if they were turned in to the authorities. Some parents expressed both tendencies at the same time, why they were experienced as reinforcing one another. Sanaa was an example. We have already seen in the previous chapter how Sanaa saw calling the police it as an act of concern for the young. In her view, the youths' deviancy was the result of them being failed by their parents, which is why going to the authorities was a

better solution in Sanaa's eyes than trying to work with the family to keep the youth out of trouble. Sanaa had also taken it upon herself to be an example of responsible parenting, extending her responsibilities to other families in Blomsterengen by forming a mother-child group. She explained the group and its purpose during an interview:

Sanaa: 'It is a parent's responsibility how you raise your children from the start, that you know who they are with, what boys they're hanging out with, and what they can get into. ... After we started the mother-child group, we have been able to agree on some things. Like, at seven o'clock, they have to be home. We had some families, it was not that there were no boundaries, but their kids could be out to like nine or something. Then after we got together, got close and did stuff together, it sort of spread, you know, so when someone says seven, the others will think, "Well, if that's the rules for my kids' friends, then that's what we'll do too." [...] We can also make each other aware of some things, you know which for some are normal, but where others parents might think, "that can go wrong and end badly if I don't put a stop to it." Yeah, I think that's the purpose of it. We get together, hang out and have a good time, get to know one another. And then we define some norms and values for the kids. Common norms and values.'

Through the mother's group, Sanaa thus hoped to spread shared norms and values that supported what she believed to be responsible parenting practices. In this way, she worked to strengthen the community's resilience against the 'ghetto' elements, like youth deviancy. In her own way, Sanaa was resisting the stigma by defending and strengthening the positive aspects of life in Blomsterengen. But she did so by pointing out another group of families that had become responsible:

Sanaa: 'And then there are some parents, I also know this, who really try [to keep their children out of trouble], but who don't succeed, and then there are those parents where I think, "They could have done better." [...] There are some who know nothing about what goes on out here. There are quite many parents who are housebound. Who just sit in front of the TV, and that's all

they think about, and what they should be cooking that day. They do not know what's going on around here.'

These parents who did not go out, who did not engage with their children and the children's network, who did not put boundaries up for their children, they were the irresponsible parents in Sanaa's mind. Sanaa was not alone in making such distinctions. Laila felt the same way. She problematized the irresponsible parent's inactivity towards protecting their kids during the time of the gang conflict:

Laila: We were often out to get the children away from the public areas, also because there were police with police dogs all over, and half the children's parents were just sitting at home while the children were witnessing all that. And that's not okay! So we had to go out and get the children away, so they didn't have to see what was going on. Then I thought, as a parent, where are you? You know the situation we are in!

Another example was Eman, who during a talk about what she thought about youngsters running around unsupervised in the evening, said:

Eman: 'You can talk with their mother, but that doesn't help, she prioritizes times for herself, not her children. If you tell her "they are your kids, they are teenagers, which is the age where you really have to take care of them." Then she'll just say something like; "It's okay, they are with their cousin." Cousin! That's gonna end bad, right. Then when you see the cousin with the kid, he is like "Do push-ups, do this, do that.". It's good that my son is not spending time with that cousin... driving scooters and such. I'm against that. It's stupid. Most mothers out here do not control their children.'

Eman thus expressed how parental responsibility was linked with the ability and efforts to be mindful of their children's activities. She elaborated on this later during the talk:

Eman: 'How can you not know about whether you son goes around stealing bikes and shoplifts and such. Try and take care of him or her.'

Mads: 'What does it mean to "take care of"?'

Eman: 'It means to be part of their circle, the group of friends. Be engaged in their arrangements and invite their friends home for dinner, where they can hang out and play PlayStation. And then also to talk with their families.'

Mads: 'So you also talk with the families?'

Eman: 'Exactly. So, you know which types they are. I make arrangements with my children, with friends from school, and from the club, so I know who they're with.'

Mads: 'Okay, so you're not afraid that your children end up in some trouble?'

Eman: 'No. Because I take care of them, and I know what they are doing. It is first now that I am beginning to let them out alone. Before, I would go with them and pick them up again.'

Eman perceived herself as a responsible parent through her strong involvement in the social life of her children. This involvement was both important to Eman, based on her values as a mother. But it was also a practical consideration for many self-proclaimed responsible parents who sought to keep their own children from getting involved in trouble or petty crime. In order to do so, these parents would develop notions of 'good' and 'bad' children in the community, and based on this distinction, they would try to manage whom their own children were allowed to associate with. Jamal provided a good example of how these notions of parental responsibility when he described how the youth club struggled with declining numbers of youth frequenting the club:

Jamal: 'There are some parents, well... there are still many children who live in Blomsterengen, that do not come to the club. It is mainly those who are taken aside because the parents say "I won't send my children to that club." Not because of the reputation or rumours or anything, but because they think that

it's only the "bad children" who come there, you know, the criminal and deviants.'

Mads: 'Those who need help in some way?'

Jamal: Yes, those who aren't so good [well-behaved]. Then the parents say "My children are good, they're doing well in school and behave properly, and there is no trouble with them. So why should I send them to the club where they get together with those other kids?". And they fear their children will catch that negative behaviour.'

Here Jamal describes how some parents made a clear distinction between 'good' and 'bad' kids in the community. Based on this distinction, the parents tried to manage whom their own children associated with by restricting their children from visiting the club. Even though it was a concern for Jamal in regards to the youth club, he stressed that the staff were professionals who sought to have the 'good kids' influence those with less support from home rather than the other way around. However, he expressed a similar distinction between good milieus and bad ones when it came to his own children. As a parent, he also favoured milieus with youth from responsible families. He revealed this in a remark about where they were to go to school:

Jamal: 'My children are not going to... You know, in the club we cooperate with all the schools. It sounds weird coming from me, but my children are not going to the local school. They are not going there.'

Mads: 'Because it is a place where...?'

Jamal: 'Where there are many... Where I know that the risk of taking the wrong path is great.'

Mads: 'So, there's this risk of going there.'

Jamal: 'Yes, there is. And I'm not gonna take that risk. Then it's better to find a good city school or something.'

Jamal was not alone in undertaking the risk management of his children's social relations. Haamid also went to great lengths in order to keep his children shielded from crime and deviance. He generally did not let his children 'running loose' around Blomsterengen – either they were to be home, doing their homework, or they were to be engaged in some activity elsewhere. And he would drive them there if need be. Tariq was also a father who was mindful of his children's social relations. During an interview, he exclaimed:

Tariq: 'My kids are not going to be ghetto kids!'

To Tariq, not all kids living in ghettos like Blomsterengen were 'ghetto kids'. A 'ghetto kid', he described, was one of those with a 'bad mouth', with no respect for anyone else, and who was engaged in crime and deviancy. He also noted that 'ghetto kids' were distinguishable because their parents lacked material and social resources. They were children who needed support from the outside, which he illustrated with an example of 'those children who have to be taken everywhere with a taxi paid by the social services.'

And just as much as he did not want his own children to become 'ghetto kids', neither did he want to be a parent who had to rely on support to take care of his family. This was a strong value to Tariq. His understanding of 'ghetto kids' illustrates how the lateral denigration from those like Tariq was directed at both irresponsible parents as well as their children, both of whom were associated with the risk of crime and deviance. Moreover, it was the influence these 'irresponsible' and 'bad' community members had over other children in the community that was feared by the self-proclaimed 'responsible parents'.

This management of children's affiliation was thus an effort to protect one's own children from ending up in trouble and deviancy. This effort entailed a classification of some youth as a bad influence over one's own children, and of keeping one's own children at a distance from these 'ghetto kids'. Studies of deviant and criminal subcultures have often noted how the youth seek like-minded youth, with whom they share experiences of discrimination and exclusion. These experiences are often based on stories from treatment at school, of being stopped by the police, from encounters

with public institutions and from frustrations in finding a job (see for instance Soei, 2018, for a Danish example). However, this distancing by parents might also reveal a neglected element regarding the exclusion experienced by these youth in their early life by other community members. If deviancy becomes a marker of bad influence, and so-called 'good parents' keep their 'good children' away from the bad ones, the youth engaged in deviancy might find themselves socially isolated in their community, only further pushing them into the troublemaking groups and the potential toward a criminal lifestyle. In this sense, the parental imposed social distancing measures can be seen as acts where concern for and solidarity with youth perceived as deviant are put aside based on a need to protect one's own children from deviancy, while possible instigating a social isolation of those perceived as 'bad children'. And as we saw earlier, concern for and solidarity with troublemakers was a key factor in whether parents were inclined to call the police to manage crime and deviance. In the everyday interactions, these distancing and denigrating process had internal consequences for social relations among community members.

We have seen how distancing processes from youth engaged in deviance and crime, and from those who were blamed for the stigma imposed on the neighbourhood, made parents more inclined to call the police to manage crime and deviance. Nevertheless, here were some parents for whom the notion of being responsible also entailed a more cooperative view of the police in general.

Respectability and police perceptions

While processes of lateral denigration caused some parents to develop conceptualizations of other parents as irresponsible, the same processes entailed a strong self-conceptualization as a responsible parent. We have seen this pattern across most of the quotes provided in the above sections on social relations within Blomsterengen. Especially in regards to Eman and Sanaa, who by pointing out irresponsible parenting practices by others could highlight their own parenting practices and describe them as responsible. Part of both Eman's and Sanaa's self-image was a positive view of the police and a ready inclination to cooperate with them and to involve them in the management of crime and deviance. Whereas some parents in Blomsterengen felt an annoyance with the strong police presence in the

neighbourhood, especially Hassan, these 'responsible' parents were supportive of a police presence. Sanaa is an example:

Mads: 'Can you understand why there are more police in this area than in the rest of the city?'

Sanaa: 'Mmm.'

Mads: 'Is there a need for it?'

Sanaa: 'Yes. Most definitely. I think if you live in a neighbourhood with more criminals, then there's also need for more police.'

The strong police presence thus made sense to Sanaa, in that she acknowledged that there was more crime and deviance in the neighbourhood. We also saw earlier that Sanaa believed that it was better to work with the police in the management of crime and deviance than to work with the troublemaker's families, since she saw them as irresponsible parents who either could not or would not control their children. But this support for the police was more than a pragmatic concern for Sanaa. It also reflected her self-identification as a responsible parent. This self-identification became evident during a talk about what she thought about the police visiting the youth club in Blomsterengen for a dinner activity, an initiative which had led to some social turmoil in the community. Some parents, especially, Hassan, had resisted it actively. Sanaa however noted:

Sanaa: 'There were these letters of complaint all over, and first of all, I was pretty sure it was not written by a parent with kids in the club. And that's not OK, to post a letter like that and sign it as 'Parents', because it was not us who had issues with the municipality and the police. Beyond that, what's wrong with the police visiting the club for a dinner arrangement? As long as you have your affairs in order, then why should you fear a visit from the police in the club? [...] I'm the chairperson of the parent council in the youth club. So, what I did was to call the club and demand a rush-meeting of the council.'

In the conversation about the dinner initiative Sanaa never questioned the need for the police to go there, nor did she reflect on their purpose. She just supported it out of principal, at the same time also drawing a distinction between those who had something to fear from police attention and those who did not. She had her affairs in order, and as she noted:

Sanaa: 'And if someone doesn't want to participate, then they can just not go to the club that evening.'

Where criminological studies of community policing raise concerns over notions of justice and discrimination by the public authorities (e.g. Loader, 2000; 2006), Sanaa here renders such considerations irrelevant based on a personalized responsibility of not needing to fear controlling policing practices if you make sure you have nothing to hide. And Laila expressed a similar view about the strong police presence in the neighbourhood:

Laila: 'We often interact with them. There is not one time when they have come by when they have not come over to chat. And had talked with the children, shown them their guns and such, allowed them into their cars and such. I think it was last year, during Ramadan, we had a bonfire going and a lot of families were there, mothers, father and children. And the police came by and talked with the men, how it was going and such. Those who do not like the police, they are the ones who lose something. It's those who know they have done something wrong. And it's not us who have anything to fear.'

Thus, both Sanaa and Laila expressed that the responsible parent had trust in the police, whereas distrust characterized those irresponsible parents who had something to fear. Now it should be pointed out that those parents whom I met during fieldwork who could fall in the category of 'irresponsible parents', according to Sanaa and others, expressed no antipathy towards those who looked down upon them. Although they seldom seemed to associate with one another during events and activities, there did not seem to be any sort of *mutual* distancing or denigration against those promoting

the 'responsible parent' image. For these parents, the stigmatization of the neighbourhood thus had more direct influence on their conception of the police than on their relation to and perception of their fellow community members. In the following section, we turn to some of these parents' views about the police, examining how police practices and the punitive consequences of police 'attention' influenced how parents perceived the police.

Summary

In this section, we have seen how the internal social dynamics within the ethnic minority community in Blomsterengen influenced some parents' view of the police. In this sense that the parents' perceptions of the police not solely related to the police institution as such. Rather, it was found that internal social concerns from the community members everyday lives that also influenced how the police was perceived. Thus, when crime became a concern for members of the community, either because of the severity of the crime or when crime and deviance inspired formal as well as informal stigmatization of the neighbourhood and its residents, some parents would distance themselves socially based on a symbolic denigration of the youth engaged in crime and deviance as unbelonging to the community, or at least as unworthy of belonging. These processes altered the parent's inclinations towards relying on the police for managing crime and deviance in the neighbourhood. Similar processes were found where some parents distanced themselves from other parents, based on symbolic distinctions between 'responsible' and 'irresponsible' parents, resulting in less concern for how those parents cast as irresponsible were treated by the authorities. At the same time, those parents who perceived themselves as responsible made police cooperation a marker of responsibility, why they expressed an unconditioned support for the policing of Blomsterengen. The social dynamics within the community we thus found to influence how some parents developed positive dispositions towards the police, regardless of how the neighbourhood was policed. There were however also some who invoked similar distancing processes, but out of pragmatic concerns maintained cynical conceptions of the polices' abilities to protect the community.

Policing, punishment and notions of justice

Parents in Blomsterengen told many stories of how the police operated in the neighbourhood, and of how they treated residents living there. These stories also influenced how they viewed the police, although the parents seldom based their perceptions of the police solely on how the police behaved. In the previous sections, we saw how issues of crime and deviance, as well as internal social dynamics in the community affected their views about the police. Nevertheless, experiences and stories of police encounters still had their influence. So did stories of the criminal justice system and of the social services, and sometimes these stories of other institutions influenced how the parents viewed the police as well. The police were perceived as a gatekeeper to the wider criminal justice system, such that perceptions of the police were themselves influenced by parents' views of the criminal justice apparatus generally, including the prison system. The police were also experienced as part of a coordinated effort to control and support the community, so that perceptions of the institutions with which the police cooperated also influenced how some parents viewed the police. This included the local youth club, schools, and social services in general. In this section, therefore, I cover how experiences of encounters with both the police, as well as all these other institutions figured in the legal consciousness of the interlocutors.

This variety of experiences was not least based on the fact that the policing of the neighbourhood took many forms. As common citizens, the residents in Blomsterengen had a traditional relation to the police, where they would be controlled and serviced in the same way as any other citizens in Denmark by beat officers who would both patrol and react to calls. However, Blomsterengen was also subject to community policing, where police officers would focus on building relations to residents while having a strong and visible presence in the neighbourhood. Hence, police would pay visits to local institutions like the youth club. In addition to this, they were also subject to more heavy-handed police patrols and initiatives, aimed at stressing gangs. As if this complexity was not enough in itself, Blomsterengen was also home to a variety of residents, the vast majority living conventional lives with their families, while others were deeply embedded in the criminal milieu, or on a path towards it while merely dabbling at deviancy. Still other residents had unresolved social and psychological

issues and thus posed problems to the wider community in their respective ways. This also meant that the community at large experienced a variety of police attention based on the police's various tasks when they showed up in the neighbourhood, which gave the residents a variety of experiences of police encounters to make sense of. There was especially one episode where I observed this complexity of policing approaches from a resident perspective:

It was afternoon, and I was hanging out at the community house, waiting for a potential interlocutor who never showed up. Shadi and Yahia were there as well. All of a sudden, two police officers came by the house, one of them wanting to talk to Shadi. Yahia and I went outside. I sat on a bench, while Yahia started talking with the other police officer. All of a sudden, a young man came out of one of a building blocks in what can best be described as his 'home clothes'. He seemed agitated, and walked briskly towards us while yelling at the police officer with whom Yahia was talking and waving his arms. He yelled something along the lines of: 'What the fuck do you have to say, huh, look at what your colleagues have done to me! They beat me up – look!' As he got closer, it was clear that he had been handled roughly. He had taken several blows to the head, had a swollen eye, and his arms were blue and yellow all over with bruises. When he reached the officer, he did not cease the yelling, but continued in a loud voice: 'Fuck man, I was sitting at home with my wife – and six officers come storming in at midnight, with guns and shit! She got so scared that she peed in her pants. One of the officers asked if he should get her one of our child's diapers, man, what is that?!' At this point, the officer gets him to calm down. He has been relaxed the whole time, saying and repeating: 'I hear you', 'I'm not contradicting you', 'What you describe, it's intense'. The angry young man then continued in a more calmed down manner, saying that he tried to get the officers to focus on him rather than his wife. He described how he was dragged into the bedroom, was handcuffed (he showed marks on his wrists), and got a knee on his head, while they beat him and asked about the whereabouts of some man they were looking for. So, he was not even the guy the police were after. He also informs the officer that the wife of one of his friends had had a similar experience, just when her

husband was not home. It seems to be a sore spot for him, with the wives getting caught up in it.

Later on, after the officers had left the community house again, I was sitting at the bench with Yahia and another young man whom I had never met before. They talked about the episode, and both agreed that the officer with whom the agitated man had talked was a good police officer. The new man explained that the first time he was arrested, it was the officer who had been the duty officer at the jail. The officer treated him like he felt sorry about having to lock him up. But the law was law. Yahia and the newcomer agreed that not all officers showed such sympathy.

The officers came to the community house because they just had established a mobile police station, a measure with which they had good experience with from previous gang conflicts. I later learned that this was a reaction to the episode Hussain had told me about, described earlier, where a large group of outsiders had shown up, beating one of the local boys when he confronted them, and the local boy had later shot someone in another neighbourhood in the city as revenge. The police were now looking for the local boy, which explained their 'visit' to the agitated young man. The episode thus shows the heavy-handed policing of gang conflicts, which intersects with the softer, community policing approach of officers visiting the neighbourhood and just talking with the locals about their relation to the police (exemplified by Shadi's initiative to prevent the conflict from escalating, and through the calm interaction between the agitated man and the calm officer). We also hear of the police trying to make the neighbourhood safe for the residents with the help of the mobile police station. We then also hear of different experiences of how the young men are treated by the police – one who showed sympathy, and one who had a brutal experience. This illustrates how residents in Blomsterengen had a wide variety of police encounters, some benevolent, others apparently brutal. In the following, these different experiences are categorized according to stories of brutal policing practices and of experiences of discriminatory policing practices. Besides the conversation between Yahia and the other local young man above, experiences of positive police encounters were rare in the interviews and conversations, although some stories were noted, as

when Laila described how officers would come by the bonfire and talk to the men or show off their equipment to the curious children. These positive stories have been incorporated into the other sections as examples of exceptions to the more generally experienced negative experiences that residents had with police behaviour. It should also be noted that the policing practices described in this section are both described and interpreted by the interlocutors. Hence, these narratives do not reflect how the police actually behaved, nor do they tell of the police perspective on the situations.

Theoretically, this section also draws on the 'perceptions of procedural justice' approach that was discussed in chapter 2, in addition to the general legal consciousness approach adopted in the analysis. Both theories accentuate how perceptions of the police are based on interpretations and assessments of how the police go about their work. Legal consciousness studies often try to relate these interpretations to people's everyday lives, and how everyday lives influence people's interpretive frameworks. A procedural justice approach, however, is more concerned with how the interpretations influence people's evaluations of police legitimacy, and how this in turn affects people's willingness to cooperate with the police and comply with the law in general (Tyler & Fagan, 2008; Tyler, 2001; Tyler, 2011). In the following section, the notion of 'police legitimacy' is investigated as an analytical lens for elucidating how the parents conceptualized and assessed the way the police operated in their community. As already noted, few interlocutors based their assessments of the police solely on their personal experience of how police behaved, why the discussion of cooperation and compliance is omitted here. Such a discussion would have to include all three analytical themes addressed in this dissertation, not least since all the interlocutors were found to develop notions of legitimacy and trust based on situational evaluations of the police rather than any sort of general attitude about the police that would apply in all situations. This is also where this study differs from traditional procedural justice studies, and maintains a foothold in the legal consciousness tradition.

Stories of brutal policing practices

Some interlocutors had had experienced what can be termed brutal policing practices. Such experiences quickly developed into narratives that took on a life of their own in the community, with some interlocutors telling their own personal story, while others

referred to experiences of someone they knew or knew about. One of those who had personal experience of being brutally treated by the police was Noah. He also told how the police would treat those they arrested in what he perceived as a humiliating way. These stories came forth when I asked him about the general treatment he had faced during encounters with the police and with the criminal justice system. He first told of the humiliating treatment following an arrest:

Mads: 'But can you explain a bit, how do they treat you when you got arrested, for instance?'

Noah: 'Sure. You always start saying that "I haven't done anything." Always, even if you have done something. Then they say "Shut your mouth, shut up", and you are thrown into the car. Then you know that now you can't do anything. Then, next, you're thrown into some hole, where you just kick at the door for, I do not know, seven hours. Until you get tired, then you lie down and rest. Then, if you have to take a shit or pee or something, there is this little button. Wait, have you never been arrested?'

Mads: 'No.'

Noah: 'Never? Well... you go into a hole, with this gold button, no larger than a screw. You push it if you want to talk to someone – but it's not like it calls them like on a phone. You push it and then just wait for someone to answer. Then they are like: "What is it?", and you might say that you have to go to the toilet, and they say, "It's occupied right now, you have to wait." Then you wait like a couple of hours. Then they get back to you: "You had to go to the toilet? We'll get to you now," But then you wait again like three quarters of an hour. Just imagine here, that you've been arrested, but done nothing!'

Mads: 'But can that happen, like really?'

Noah: 'Sure. You can drive a car and then suddenly, you're pulled over and they charge you for whatever they come up with, disturbing the public order, or that your arrested "in association with" whatever, they use that one all the time. So yeah, that's it, other than that, it's fine enough.'

Noah had been arrested a couple of times in his life. He later went on to describe a concrete example of more brutal treatment by the police that went beyond being made to wait to go to the toilet:

Noah: 'If you're charged for burglary and get caught, like by the dog patrol... they will fuck you up. They are tough, man. Imagine, two of them colleagues, who know one another all the way through. And one of them, SMASH [Noah smacks his hands together, making the loud clap], he just smacks you.'

Mads: 'But will they do that?'

Noah: 'Sure they will! There's no one around to see it. Smashed into the door frame, too.'

Mads: 'Has that happened to you?!'

Noah: 'I was once beaten thoroughly in the hole by an officer. Even though I was in the hole already. With elbows. Just laying there with handcuffs on, and they used their knee. I couldn't say or see anything.'

Mads: 'Did you do anything to provoke them?'

Noah: 'I guess so. You say a lot of things in these situations, like "I'll fuck your wife" and such.'

Noah did not respond well to being interviewed. He became quiet and weirdly generalizing in his descriptions. The episodes are therefore not as detailed as other stories noted during the fieldwork. Nonetheless, these stories give some insight into what parents and community members risked facing when arrested. In its own way, the personal experience of harsh treatment during arrests also substantiates some of the secondary experiences of police brutality while in the custody of the police, which we turn to shortly. Oddly enough, Noah did not express any sense of injustice regarding his treatment 'in the hole'. Later in the interview, he indicated that such treatment was 'part of the game' and only to be expected when living a life in crime.

Not all interlocutors shared Noah's acceptance of harsh treatment, however. Jamal noted that there was a lot of hostility towards the police in Blomsterengen. This was one of the reasons that he supported the dinner initiative with the police visiting the youth club mentioned earlier and described in more detail in appendix 2. Jamal saw it as an opportunity for the police to influence how the local youth perceived the police by giving them other experiences of police encounters than the brutal ones they had heard about:

Jamal: 'It's also to break down the negativity there is around the police, the bad talk about the police in this neighbourhood, by showing the children that the police are actually ordinary human beings like us. That they just do their work, and also that they can actually be really nice officers who you can talk to about all kinds of things.'

However, he also conceded that the negativity was the result of brutal police practices that residents had experienced. He knew of episodes similar to what Noah had described:

Jamal: 'It's not to say that the police shouldn't arrest people, but it happens that a brother gets arrested and treated like hell. Is beat up on the way to the station or in the jail, even at the station. You're treated like a little dog, well, not even a dog actually.'

Based on primary and secondary experiences of harsh police treatment, Jamal did not think that additional police would necessarily solve anything. On the contrary, he was concerned that it rather enforced the negative image that the police had among the youth in Blomsterengen. His support of the community policing initiative, of the police visiting the youth club, lay in his belief that such a policing strategy could provide different experiences than those obtained by residents with the traditional policing approach. Although Jamal believed that there only were few bad episodes, he noted that these experiences were retold as stories among the residents, taking on a life of their own, and often became exaggerated as they went from one resident to another

(this is also found in studies of ethnic minority youth perceptions of the police (see Haller et al., 2020). Jamal provided a range of examples of such stories during the interview:

Jamal: 'It's also because, as I said before, the youth have seen and experienced some things. Some of their [older]brothers for instance, they've been arrested. We had one young man, he was arrested for a shooting back during the last conflict. But he was innocent. He was released, but had already been locked up for a year, right, and he had just become a father. And then he is thrown in prison, even though he was innocent. For a year! His brother, sisters, his family, how do you think they feel about the police after that? Just one example out of many, that will make people hate.'

[...]

Jamal: 'Then there was the episode when a parent had gotten released. He had made a formal complaint. Got a lawyer. Bruises all over and such, after having been arrested. Yellow and blue up and down his arms. He was really treated like shit, and he was a parent at my age. Lives with his wife and children, and all he wanted that day was to go to the gym. He just had to walk past the police, and for some reason he just got the full treatment. In front of a lot of people.'

Mads: 'So it was also sort of humiliating?'

Jamal: 'Yes, exactly. And those who saw it, they know who he is, that he never even got a fine or anything by the police. Good man, wife and kids, who come to the club. Not a criminal. That just creates hatred among the others, his own kids for that matter. To see their father go through such a thing, and they know who he really is.'

Mads: 'But it's not that all arrests are like that?'

Jamal: 'No, no, no. No, no. That's not what I'm saying. But it's the one episode here and there that makes the hatred. I've even tried it myself. But I know better. The police, they don't know who I am, even though I'm a public

employee. I even told him, like: “In fact I’m your colleague. I work for the municipality,” but he didn’t care, he was cold as ice. You still experience that sort of thing, but it’s rare. It’s the small episodes that are noted and have an influence.’

Mads: ‘Why are they so influential?’

Jamal: ‘Well, for example, there was a former leader in one of the pedagogical projects here, he was arrested in front of the kids, pepper spray in his eyes even. And he was a leader of a municipal initiative. And the police didn’t even care. It was a misunderstanding, and he got an apology later. But, you know... by then it’s too late. The children already witnessed it. And when they see it, they think, “Well, if someone like him gets that treatment, what will they do to me then?” He had worked here for like ten years and done a lot of good in the neighbourhood. When someone like him gets that treatment by the police, it influences everyone else. Especially the family. And people begin to talk like, “Fuck that,” you know, and then it starts, “Fuck the police” and so on.’

Where Noah’s experiences were based on his criminal past, which legitimized the police treatment in his one perspective, the examples provided by Jamal showed that innocent residents, according to Jamal, also risked brutal, even humiliating, treatment by the police. In addition, they also detailed instances of unjust incarceration in relation to the harsh treatment of the police. In contrast to Noah, this made a difference with regard to the assessment of the police’s legitimacy, and according to Jamal, led many residents to develop a negative perception of the police. However, it is noteworthy that Jamal remarks that ‘he knows better’, referring to the negative talk people develop about the police following the episodes. While Jamal does not develop the same negativity, though neither does he approve of the police’s behaviour. What seemed to be different in Jamal’s perspective was that he did not take it personally – after all, they did not know who he was. He was more concerned about the children witnessing the treatment of innocent residents, just as he cared about what was best for the youth when he avoided calling the police on local youth. Nevertheless, Jamal

also knew that there were different police officers, and he especially saw a potential in the community police who, according to him, did a good job of policing the neighbourhood and of repairing relations with the residents. And this work of restoring good relations was important to him. Like Yahia in the introduction to this section, Jamal thus made a distinction between good and bad officers based on kindness:

Jamal: 'There are some officers who are kind. Friendly, and that's something. And then there is the task force, or what they're called, the Gang Department. They are, phew, they're something else. Tough on the boys, not caring one bit, talking aggressively and condescending, and treating them, very, very harshly.'

By making this distinction, rather than generalizing his experiences to the police as such, Jamal avoided developing a negative view of the police as such, because he could focus on the good ones. Not everyone made the same nuanced judgement, however. Tariq, for instance, explained that he saw the local police, with their community policing approach, as nothing but play-acting:

Mads: 'I've heard that there are local police patrolling, and that people greet them and such.'

Tariq: 'Yeah, but that's just for show.'

Mads: 'Oh.'

Tariq: 'There are some who think that it's just for show. That during the day they send the good cops, who are smiling and treat people kindly. Then at night, they send the angry ones, and if there is even the smallest thing, then...! Do you think it's a coincidence that they are involved in the ghetto policies and all that? The individual police officer, he doesn't care about the youth, not in his private life. It's only when he is working, on duty, that he smiles at them. Then, when they grow up, it becomes something else!'

Tariq, therefore, did not believe that the kindness was genuine. He worried that the local police were part of a politically instigated control regime. However, as we saw earlier in the section of managing crime and deviance, he still believed that the troublemaking youth had it coming if they caused problems for the neighbourhood, which is why he did not necessarily develop a negative view on the police although he did not believe in the kindness they put forth either.

Haneen also remarked on the police brutality, and it played a large role in how she perceived the police. During an interview, I asked her what she thought about the way the police worked in the neighbourhood, and her first thought was that they were too harsh in their approach to the local troublemakers:

Mads: 'What are your thoughts about the way the police work around here?'

Haneen: 'In fact, I don't see the police much. That was only during the last gang conflict. Back then, they were visible, but besides that, they are not so visible. And there is no need for them to be, fortunately. So I don't really know how they go about their work. But when they're actually here, I think they could be way better at managing things or to not be so violent. They can be quite brutal, those officers, when they grab someone and put them on the ground. You don't want that.'

Visibility was thus the first thing that came to Haneen's mind when she was asked about the police, and she noted that Blomsterengen was not a place in need of greater police attention. Brutality was the second thing that came to her mind, however. She remarked that when the police are around, brutality is what you 'see'. Her final words in the quote seemed to indicate that this sort of treatment from the police is not something you want your neighbours exposed to. Haneen's assessment of the police was based on experiences of what she perceived as a heavy-handed physical management of residents, and a generally aggressive and commanding way of addressing the residents:

Haneen: 'They come and are rude, just grabbing the boys, putting them on the ground, handcuffing them, while telling them to shut up, you know, such

things. And that's not how they should do it, because, one, the boys already hate the police, just because they are the police. That's how it is. And two, when the police behave like that, being smart asses, they will just get more hate and end up with the opposite of what they want.'

Mads: 'But, do you think that they do it without any reason?

Haneen: Yes! I have seen that! One time, one of the boys said 'fuck who?' or something, because an officer said something to him...

Mads: 'To the police?!'

Haneen: 'Yes, yes, but it's just like the way the boys talk, for Christ sake. It's just an expression, that means "What", like "What did you say?" It's not like he said, "Fuck you" to the police. But the officers just grabbed him, and the boy sort of started laughing, saying "What did I say", you know, "I didn't say anything." And the officers were just like, "Now, you just be quiet," and bla bla bla. And the [other] boys filmed it, so I saw it after. Then the police put him on the ground, and would handcuff him and wow, such stuff. I mean, if you're going to be a police officer around here, you've got to learn the ghetto slang, and know what it means. Instead of just going wild like that. [...] And I sort of found it funny when I saw it, I couldn't help but laugh, you know, because the whole thing was so stupid, you know?'

This minor incident of a misunderstanding over ghetto slang was a striking example for Haneen over how random, and in her mind unnecessary and unprovoked, the forceful and aggressive treatment by the police was. She also noted that she expected the police to be familiar with the local slang, indicating that she saw the police as a service to the residents, not an authority to come in and determine the order of thing in Blomsterengen. This also speaks to her assessment that there was no need for a visible police force in the neighbourhood. Her view of the police should be understood in light of this expectation of the police service, where aggressive and forceful practices reflect an authoritative police practice. However, I tried to ask her to be more specific,

because although the episode certainly revealed a forceful approach to a perceived insult, it was difficult to envision how forceful it in fact had been. Haneen elaborated:

Haneen: 'Well they walked over to the boy and grabbed him like this.'

Mads: 'Like, around the neck?'

Haneen: 'Yes, and they pushed him up against the building, and the boy was like "Hello, I haven't done anything". And they responded, "Don't say anything, stop talking," Then they turned him around and put him on the ground, put cuffs on him. That's a lot! And if you're going to be local police around here, then go out and get to know the boys, at least learn their slang, so you know what they mean. It's not too much, and it's such things, small things, you know, that make it ridiculous with the police. They use all their force, and become more extreme than necessary.'

In the end she described her perception of the police as 'ridiculous', and she previously also described how she 'couldn't stop laughing' at the way the police treated the boy. Haneen had thus developed distanced relation to the police, based on experiences of them being out of sync with the community. Following the interview, she would come back with newspaper articles to show me, detailing stories of brutal police behaviour, reiterating that this is how the police treat people. It was not as if she had anything in general against the police. She just did not like the way they worked. Hence, she shared Jamal's positive view that the police should visit the youth club in order to improve relations with the youth. She, however, also noted that she believed that it would take a long time for the police to turn the negativity around, because she believed that hatred of the police ran deep. This assessment of policing practices rather than the institution as such made it possible for Haneen to support some policing approaches to the neighbourhood while disapproving others. Haneen expected a police force that served the community rather than exerting authority over it. This expectation of service, can also be interpreted as Haneen's reaction to the formal territorial stigma of Blomsterengen, where the police have been politically directed to act as an authority in the neighbourhood, precisely the opposite of

Haneen's expectation of a police force as an organ that serves the community. This contrast, and her frustration, became clearer in the interview, when she noted that it was not necessarily the officers who were a problem, but the rules that they had to enforce:

Haneen: 'Sometimes I think that it's the police's rules that are ridiculous. Not the officers. For instance, if the boys are hanging out in groups, then the police have to separate them, and if the boys will not disperse, then they have to make a big problem out of it, and make a scene. Seriously, don't they have anything better to do? Such examples. And then they also ought to understand that people out here look out for one another, they try to protect each other. So, if something happens to someone, there might be ten people who show up to help [a custom where people from ghettoized neighbourhoods gather when trouble occur]. And the police shouldn't flip out over this.'

Mads: 'Flip out?'

Haneen: 'Yes, because they get all like, "Don't interfere, if you say one more word, you'll get arrested, too," and bla bla bla. You know, you can't even express an opinion or inform them about anything, or give your perspective, in the hope that he might understand what he's doing wrong. They don't want to hear any of that, and they interrupt you all the time, and ask you to shut up unless you also want to be arrested. They just say, "That's how the rules are." Ridiculous.'

Haneen again notes how the police seem uncomprehending about the local culture, and seem to problematize what is normal behaviour in the community. In this way, she blamed the police for causing a lot of the tense encounters with residents. Their heavy-handed, authoritarian approach become a tragic joke to her. And she believed that the tense encounters were caused because the police entered Blomsterengen with specific rules for legitimate conduct which they enforced: not hanging out in groups, do not interfere in police business, do not talk bad to the police, etc. These

rules could be seen as general principles for the police, but in Haneen's experience they were enforced in an insensitive way for how people lived their lives in Blomsterengen. Consequently, the police were experienced to view the way of life in the community as basically illegitimate, which frustrated community members, and thus instigated a mutual delegitimizing process. Haneen's distanced relation to the police was part of her general perception of the police as not needed in Blomsterengen. As stated, it was not like she hated the police. It was just that they created more trouble than they solved in her mind, and when she was asked whether she was inclined to call the police for help, she stated:

Haneen: 'No, I honestly don't think I would call. Also, because it would take a lot for the police to actually do anything.'

She then gave some examples of situations where the police had been called, but had not shown up. She explained that they would argue that the situation called about was not severe enough, or state they did not have the resource to deal with such matters or to come right now. Haneen had developed a cynical perception of the police based on such experiences, which together with the perception that the police caused more trouble, made it likely that she would rely on alternative means of managing problematic situations. She thus assessed the police in terms of experiences of policing practices and her view of police effectiveness.

Haneen was not alone in invoking these two factors for a cynical assessment of the police. Rizwana also voiced scepticism of how the police approached the neighbourhood, and she was frustrated with their failure to address what she thought they ought to be doing:

Rizwana: 'And then I think that it's important that they come in here in a respectful manner, as not so arrogant, not snobbish, just showing their uniform. Otherwise it becomes harassment. They should be kind and show themselves as persons. Actually, I was just on holiday, and we met a couple, we had a good time and talked and such. Then we learn that the man is a police officer, and he was nice and everything. That side, they have to show

that. But I also know that sometimes their job demands that they take on the uniform, that's obvious.'

It is interesting to note how Rizwana was practically shocked to learn that a police officer could be a nice person in private. Later in the interview, Rizwana followed up stating that she believed that the police generally showed up behaving authoritatively, arrogant and 'in uniform'. Such experiences might be the reason why her sudden encounter with a nice person behind the uniform was surprising. Rizwana hoped that the police would act differently when they came to the neighbourhood, so people would develop a different view upon them. She explained this during the interview:

Rizwana: 'It is important that the police show the youth that they are here for their sake, that they help them solve their problems. The police should do their job, you know, stop and investigate crime, they should keep crime away from the younger generation, so they don't learn from it. The youth have to learn that the police are doing their job. But that's not always what the youth learn today, the way the police treat them and stigmatize them.'

Rizwana here echoed Haneen's critique of the police being out of touch with the community, instead being experienced as pursuing their own agenda of controlling the neighbourhood rather than supporting the residents. Such views on the police were enforced by residents' experiences of being rejected by the police when they tried to help them in policing their community. We have already seen an example of this with Jamal's story of the time when he was roughed up by a police officer when he himself tried to help manage some troublesome youth. Fatih had a similar experience:

Fatih and I was drinking coffee, and I asked him about what he had meant earlier when he had noted that the police had been rough with him when he tried to help them. He responded, saying, "Do you want to know why I hate the police?""", and I did. He told how he had once passed by an entrance to one of the building blocks with police tape all over. Some officers were working there, and some local youth were harassing them. He wanted to help the

police by getting the youngsters to back off, and he had apparently walked under the tape in order to reach them. This led one of the officers to rush towards him, grabbing Fatih around the neck, and yelling at him ‘What the fuck are you doing?’ All the while, the other officer stood there doing nothing. Fatih said that he had remained calm himself, trying to tell the officer that he just wanted to help. He also noted that he easily could have gotten out of the neck-hold and given the officer a headbutt, but chose not to. The officer should have said that ‘You do not want shit,’ and after having struggled like this for some time, and with more verbal insults from the officer, Fatih had had enough, and said, ‘Now you shut up, if you make this personal, so will I – say one more stupid thing, and I’ll beat you up!’ Later on, they went their separate ways. But Fatih noted that such overreactions by the police, who refused to listen, was a reason not to try and help them.

Fatih had experienced several such episodes, which ultimately led him to distance himself from the police. For instance, earlier in the section on the management of crime and deviance, we heard how Fatih one time had experienced that someone had shot at his apartment while he was out for a walk. This happened at a time when he was involved in a project with the police in order to help local youth get out of crime. That was why he had a lot of local youth staying in his apartment. During a conversation one afternoon, he told how he felt betrayed by the police following the shooting:

Fatih: Later on [after he had gotten everyone out and turned off the lights] the police show up to examine the place. So, I go over there to join them, and they just get all aggressive, grab me around the neck and throw me against the wall. I just try to repeat “I’m the victim, I’m the victim,” Then they tell me that they know something else, that I run a gang club, and that I control all the local youth, and that’s why the shooting took place. It then turned out that it was my colleague from the project who had gone behind my back and told them that – the woman I worked with, to help the youth! I tell you, Mads,

that's why you should NEVER trust anyone! They did not arrest me however, they had no evidence.'

According to Fatih, he thought that he and the police were on the same side in regard to his engagement to the project of helping youth out of crime and because he had been the victim of a shooting. When he was met with what he describes as an aggressive attitude, he was surprised. And when he somehow learned that the police had been told that he was part of the criminal milieu by someone he considered a colleague, he experienced an even greater betrayal. The experience that even as a victim of a shooting and of being engaged in a well-meaning project, and still being looked at with suspicion rather as a citizen in need of protection, was proof for Fatih that trust in the police was wasted. Fatih told that he later located the shooters that same evening and took matters into his own hands:

Fatih: 'Afterwards, I started calling around, you know, to find whoever did it. And the same evening, I got a call from someone I didn't know. But it was them. I got there, and before anyone had a chance to say anything, my hand was flying through the air. Man, earlier that day my daughter had been in the apartment! They could have hit her! I was not even in the red zone, I was way up in the black at that point!'

He thus ended up finding the shooter, and gave him a beating. As an afterthought, I have wondered whether he would have used his ability to find the shooters to help the police in their investigation. This episode became one in a range of Fatih's negative encounters with the police, where he tried to do the right thing: being involved in a project to help youth get out of crime, only to be suspected of being a criminal himself. Such episodes made Fatih distance himself from the police. We have seen that he did not rely on them for managing dangerous situations, but we also saw that during the community meeting described in the introductory section to this analysis how Fatih also argued that it was the police who were responsible for handling crime and deviance, not the residents. That was 'why we paid our taxes' as he noted. His

distancing from the police, therefore, was not necessarily an expression of an unequivocal hatred of the police in general. He simply stopped seeing it as his personal obligation to help or cooperate with them – they just had to do their job on their own. Fatih's perspective had evolved out of personal experience, in his many attempts to help them, only to be brutally rebuffed and being suspected of being a criminal himself.

In this subsection, I have described how a broad range of interlocutors reported a general negativity towards the police among themselves and other residents in Blomsterengen. This negativity was described as based on experiences and shared stories of brutal, forceful and rude police practices. These findings are not surprising in light of research on how ethnic minority youth experience police encounters (Haller et al., 2019). Important here is that these negative encounters with the police are not just limited to the youth who may or may not be troublemakers. They are also experienced by parents and adults, and they ultimately affected how the law-abiding adults in Blomsterengen viewed the police. Moreover, the interlocutors also assessed the police practices based on other factors. The following subsection shows how interlocutors referred to discriminatory policing practices in their assessment of the police.

Stories of discriminatory policing

Some interlocutors made it clear that the police approached them in special ways because of their ethnicity and residency in Blomsterengen. Tariq, Rizwana and Hassan, for example, noted what they viewed as discriminatory policing practices, but they reacted quite differently to such treatment. Tariq told a story of a recent experience where he had been to a counter-demonstration to a neo-Nazi demonstration another place in the city. He had been furious that the Nazis were voicing their opinions and he had been caught up in the moment, such that he suddenly decided to grab one of their banners and ran with it. He was stopped by the police and arrested, and during the arrest he overheard the police officer communicating with someone back at the station. Tariq recounted the incident:

Tariq: 'I have not been arrested for a long time, I put that behind me when I became a father eight years ago. But the way the officer talked with the colleague in his microphone, he asked if I had been registered previously, then

the colleague says, “Yeah, but only for the standard things.” What does he mean by that?! I have not done anything for years, and then he says that. What the fuck does standard mean? Also, when we go around Blomsterengen, of course, the police do not know who I am, that I’m a father and such, but still, the police generalize everything. If you wear a cap, wear sunglasses, you get punished.’

Tariq clearly interpreted the communication between the police officers in terms of a discriminatory framework, which he then explained to be part of a broad range of experiences from being policed in Blomsterengen, where he believed that everyone was perceived as criminals by the police. He followed up with another recent episode, where the police had addressed him when he walked by the parking lot in Blomsterengen, demanding to know his name, where he was going, and such, because, they had explained, they were looking for someone with his description. He interpreted this behaviour as connected to his clothing, sunglasses and cap, and he noted that such extra police attention was common in Blomsterengen. He also said that even children had told him how the police would approach them like that based on their looks. I asked whether it was all the officers whom he believed to be discriminatory, but he denied this. He differentiated between newly trained officers and the older ones who ‘knew more’ and were less stereotypical in their approach to people. But he also stated that there were always those who were power hungry. There was one situation that was extremely distressing for Tariq in this regard:

Mads: ‘How does it make you feel to be approached like that?’

Tariq: ‘It’s awful if you actually have done something, then it’s really awful.’

Mads: ‘But what then if you haven’t done anything?’

Tariq: ‘I do not know, there are some who think that it offends them, that it is an infringement legally, but I do not take it like that.’

Mads: ‘Do you understand why the police do it?’

Tariq: ‘Yes, yes, sure.’

Mads: 'Do you think this is a good way for the police to approach people?'

Tariq: 'Well, not really. Of course, when the gangs were here, it was luxury policing. Very good police work. But now, these days. I don't really know. They're looking for some bandits, I guess, who are still on the run. Or else they would not be around. Danish police, they are, after all, one of the nicest polices forces in the world. They are. They do their job.'

In this quote, Tariq struggles to make up his mind about how he perceived the way the police treated people in the community, but ended up legitimizing the discriminatory police approach with reference to the police being 'nice' and professional. His personal experiences of discrimination did not seem to impede his trust in the police, and his approval of their way of handling gangs and criminals. Tariq, however, was not the only one who believed that the police stereotyped the residents in Blomsterengen. Rizwana and Hassan also described similar instances of ethnic profiling. Rizwana described of a specific incident where she had observed it:

Rizwana: 'And then I think, that they shouldn't stigmatize everyone living here. I can hear from some of the boys that this happens – that if they arrest someone, then they also take the one next to him, just because he's there. Even though they are told that he hasn't done anything wrong, and the other one has confessed. And actually, I've seen that myself! Where a car was stopped, and I saw that the driver was wearing a seat belt and all that, and when the driver asks the officer why he was stopped, the officer just said "Because I felt like stopping you." But you know, there were no signs that the driver had done anything. I thought, "Oh come on", and when the driver keeps asking, all of a sudden, the officer tell him that if he doesn't stop asking, he will be taken down to the station. And I was thinking, he can't just do that, but the officer keeps saying it, again and again, even though the driver hadn't done anything. And that sort of behaviour is just wrong, that's just a way of stigmatizing everyone. The police must react to crimes, they MUST. But they shouldn't stigmatize everyone.'

In this episode, Rizwana describe what she perceived as a random citizen being pulled over by the police, where the police officer did not offer any sensible reason for why they stopped him. In Rizwana's view, such an unwarranted treatment by the police speaks of a stigmatization where ethnicity and being in the wrong place are enough reason to check a citizen's identity. She explained how such treatment contrasts with her understanding of how the police should work, which means reacting to crime when it actually happens. And with no obvious crime taking place, and the police officer not even try and explain pulling over the car by reference to a crime, such police practice was simply illegitimate and discriminatory in Rizwana's perception.

Hassan also had experiences of what he believed to be discriminatory policing practices. In fact, he believed that the police generally discriminated residents in Blomsterengen:

Hassan: 'I think that there are good policemen, honestly. But I'm talking about the majority. The good ones are lost between them, because the politics of the police are like that, and they are looking with two eyes, one if you are Danish, blond hair, green eyes, another if you have black hair, and black eyes.'

Mads: 'Then they treat you differently?'

Hassan: 'Yes, honestly. I think, now, if we two had a fight, I know they will be a little on your side. You know why? Because they already have an idea that the one with the black hair, he is lying and stealing. They have this negative idea.'

For Hassan, discriminatory police practices were intrinsically wound up with the formal stigma placed on the neighbourhood, with the police being responsible for controlling and punishing deviants and suspected gang members in the neighbourhoods, rather than helping them. Because of this politically directed policing approach to the neighbourhood, Hassan believed that a lot of residents had developed a fundamental distrust in the police:

Hassan: 'No trust, do you know why? They show the people that they are the enemy. That they only to want to punish you. Even those who are born here, the boy who is twenty years old now, living in Blomsterengen since he was born, he opened his eyes in this street, the police, the municipality, they still look at him as someone not like them.'

Mads: 'He is still a foreigner somehow?'

Hassan: 'Yes, even if he is a Danish citizen and speaks perfect Danish, they still look at him as a foreigner.'

He here notes a strong sense of being treated differently based on his ethnicity. Earlier in this analysis, we saw how Hassan believed that experiences of being discriminated against was part of what caused youth to engage in crime and deviancy. Hassan based this interpretation on his experience that discriminatory police attention added to the youth's feeling of being unwanted in Denmark. This was combined with a general lack of interest in helping the youth on the part of the police, who instead concentrated on their own agenda of punishing and controlling them. Hassan frequently drew a direct connection between these policing practices and the anti-ghetto policies, with its formal territorial stigma imposed on the neighbourhood. Because he blamed the police for their role in marginalizing the local youth, he actively confronted the police when he could. For instance, he explained that he had once intervened when the police had addressed his son and some of the son's friends when they were filming a music video. He had tried to explain to the police that the boys were not doing anything wrong and that they should be left alone. His appeal only led the police to charge him with disturbing officers in duty, because they meant that he had yelled at them and made a scene – a charge they later had to drop, according to Hassan, because there was CCTV documentation of him not yelling. As an adult living in Blomsterengen, he felt a need to protect the local youth from unnecessary police attention, as was the case here. It was the same conviction that caused him oppose the dinner initiative that Sanaa supported, as mentioned earlier, and described in detail in Appendix 2. In that case, Hassan had taken the initiative to post complaint letters around the neighbourhood. He explained why he did so during an interview:

Hassan: 'The club is a place for the children. Pedagogues, professionals, with skills for children, work there. It has a big responsibility to work with the youth. But now they're working for the police. And the police are not pedagogues, so they don't know what to do. [...] So, we wrote a letter, a group of us. About the club. Because why should the police be there, we will call them if we need them. The club is not a place for police, it's a place for pedagogues. The system is that if there is a crime, then you call the police. If it is a social activity, then why are the police there?! Now it's always police.'

In its own way, Hassan's resistance to the dinner activity was a reaction to the plural policing approach that followed in the wake of the 2010 and later anti-ghetto policies. Hassan expected a distinction between professions, emphasizing how pedagogues have a responsibility towards and professional knowledge of how to work with young people. This professional task he contrasted with the police's responsibility to manage crime, a distinction which is lost when police begin to 'cooperate' with the other public institutions and they become embedded in the control agenda. Hassan briefly elaborated on this later in the interview:

Hassan: 'And today there is a big problem because people think the pedagogues and housing association work for the police. And don't get me wrong, I want the police to be strong and effective, but now it's peace time. We do not need military police, we need social workers and pedagogues, sports activities and jobs. But the police are running everything. They are everywhere.'

In both quotes, we saw how Hassan was not opposed to the police in general, but only to what he termed 'military' policing practices. The police were to be called upon when needed. The practices Hassan termed 'military' were in large part control-oriented, and he believed that the police came with an agenda to collect data which was to be used to prosecute local deviants. It was this belief that made him wary of the police going to the youth club, since he saw it as another way for the police to monitor the youth. Hassan expressed this concern during the interview:

Hassan: 'People here, they don't believe that the police come here to help, they believe that the police come to gather information and facts about them, so they can use it against them later on. And this is why people hate them.'

And the police also hate and cheat them. Especially the young people, they don't want to be seen by the police. They are afraid that later on they can be registered.'

This case of Hassan interpreting the dinner initiative as a tactic of control rather than relationship-building illustrates how the different purposes and policing approaches based on the anti-gang and anti-ghetto policies became blurred when seen from a community perspective. Hassan could not clearly distinguish between what is police control and what is police support. Studies of local police officers working in Danish ghettoized neighbourhoods, however, show that such officers try to create personal relations with community members in order to promote trust and to minimize the level of conflicts between residents (especially those in the criminal milieu) and the police (Kammersgaard et al., 2021). Hassan, however, did not see it that way. Neither did he believe that the local youth believed it – rather, Hassan was convinced that the heavy police presence in the neighbourhood, now also the club, was a form of control that made the local youth feel suspected and alienated from society. Therefore, he saw the police as one reason why local youth turned their back on society. He elaborated on this during an interview with another use of the 'two eyes' metaphor:

Hassan: He [youth engaged in crime and deviance in general] lives here, he feels this discrimination, all of this has an influence on him as a human being. So I think there is no trust, because the other side has the power, the municipality, the police, the authorities, they have the power in their hands. They can make a plan and make things happen. And if they do not do that in a good way, then they should expect the opposite result. When it is misused, it creates hate. It's normal, that when you hate me, you have to expect problems from me. That is human. If you hate me, do you think I will smile at you? No, I will steal from you, try to break into your car, I will make problems to get my anger and power out. This is the situation.'

Mads: 'Is that how it works?'

Hassan: 'Yes, this is how it is in the ghetto. But the people here, you know what they see? They see that the authorities have two eyes, but only see with

one of them. They see in only one way, which is that “They create problems, they are not honest, they are not working.” But if they opened the other eye, they would see why. To see themselves, that they are part of the reason.’

Hassan here explained that the police, in concert with other ‘authorities’, viewed all the residents in Blomsterengen with only ‘one eye’ - the one that only saw problem behaviour, and had closed the more sympathetic eye that would enable them to perceive the underlying issues of the problematic behaviour. In Hassan’s experience, this blindness to the social predicament of community members made the police work in ways that generated hate among the residents, because they felt hated by the police and other authorities. Especially the discriminatory aspects of the control of the neighbourhood led to the feeling of being hated by the authorities, according to Hassan. During the interview, he gave an example of this and directly linked it to the, at the time, newest revision of the anti-ghetto policy that was about to be announced, but which was already being discussed in the media:

Hassan: ‘When you see the young boy in the street, and he says that there’s nowhere for him to go, he’s right. But the police don’t do anything about that, they only see that they are hanging out in the ghetto. And now I hear that there will be a new law, saying that in the future you will not be allowed to be out after eight o’clock, and double sentencing for crimes. This just proves that they are still only looking with one eye.’

The general distrustful view of the police from Hassan is thus based on his experiences of the police working in a discriminatory manner, which in general means that he experienced the police as operating within a control framework rather than a support framework. Hassan reflected a lot upon how public institutions worked in Blomsterengen, and he identified linkages between everyday social welfare institutions and national political programs such as the anti-ghetto and anti-gang measures. Not all parents reflected so deeply upon such topics, but that did not mean that they did not notice some of the issues with which Hassan was concerned. Rizwana, for instance

noted during a conversation that she believed that the police worked differently in Blomsterengen than they would in other parts of the city, but unlike Hassan, she did not oppose the police's practice:

Mads: 'I have observed that the police patrol the neighbourhood and attend events and such.'

Rizwana: 'Yeah, and that's also a little weird, but it's okay if they just come by anyway. They're welcome, but it's weird, because, why? It's probably because it's a more criminal area, and actually, I don't like that. They wouldn't attend the same events if it was in a different area – again, they're welcome, but why?'

Rizwana were thus not against the police attending events or patrolling the neighbourhood, but she questioned the reasons behind this special attention, and she disapproved of the fact that it was a special approach to the policing of Blomsterengen, as a 'criminal area'. It was thus the discriminatory aspect of the approach which frustrated her, not the policing practices as such. During the interview, Rizwana, however, also noted that she did not approve of the police approach to attending the youth club as part of the dinner initiative because, as we saw in the quote above, Rizwana thought that the police's job was to manage crime when it took place. This conviction was also part of her disapproval of the dinner initiative, which she explained in this quote:

Rizwana: 'Some months ago, there was also a letter that now the police wanted to go to the youth club, to some dinners or something. And why should they do that?! Again, there's nothing criminal going on there. But it's probably because they want to observe who the young people are and such. But it's the police's task to protect, not to be cosy. So, what's their agenda? To show that they are always there – because they aren't! There are incidents where they were not here and they should have been, like when there were shootings last year.'

In her own way, and between the lines in comparison to Hassan, Rizwana here voiced a critique of the ghetto-specific community policing approach. Not unlike Hassan, Rizwana has a clear idea of what type of policing approach she wants, which is a traditional reactionary police practice, where they come to protect and address crime. From her perspective, 'cosy policing' was a waste of police resources. Especially because she had experienced the police not showing up when they ought to. Instead of actually showing up when needed, they attend events or visit the youth club. The last sentence in her quote thus revealed a hint of legal cynicism based on experiences of the police not being present when actually needed. Thus, both Hassan and Rizwana perceived the police to be embedded in a politically directed discriminatory practice, which not only frustrated community members who received unjustified police attention but also removed resources from what they believed to be proper police tasks.

Other interlocutors saw benefits in the 'cosy' police work, however. Jamal and Haneen, for instance, both believed that it was important that the police improve their reputation among the local youth. Thus, rather than perceiving the community policing approach as discriminatory, they saw it as an attempt to police the community according to community needs and to try and improve relations between the community and the police, relations that had been damaged by negative stories of the police that existed in the community. I myself witnessed one such attempt to restore good relations, when I was attending a party thrown for all those young residents who had just graduated school, from primary school, high school, university, or any other school. There was a barbeque, and Noah was attending the grill. During the party, two police officers came by on patrol and joined the party. At first it created a weird atmosphere. They came in uniform, gun in holster and everything. But they started chatting with different people who attended the party, and soon they were not noticed that much. I however kept my eyes at them. Suddenly, one of them went over and started chatting with Noah. I later asked Noah what they talked about. He said that the officer had approached him with an ironic comment, asking how a high-level gang member came to be in charge of the grill. Noah had told him that he had left that world. The officer hadn't known that, which Noah explained by referring to the fact that it was part of his release arrangement that no one was told about him leaving the

milieu – a safety matter. The officer had praised him for the choice of leaving the gang milieu, and Noah said he was surprisingly happy about that. He thought that it was fair enough that people asked him about his gang affiliation. He had been in continuous conflict with the police for eight years; that was how they knew him. Now, Noah felt good because of the recognition he received from the officers when they saw he had changed.

For Noah, there was something almost therapeutic in the experience of how the police changed their attitude towards him in the wake of his exit from the criminal milieu. It was not only him who had to change, but also his relation to the police. The community policing approach facilitated this change in relations by making sure that the police could meet Noah in a wholly different setting with the possibility of a friendly conversation between them.

The situation was different with Adnaan, however. He corroborated Hassan's observation of discriminatory policing with his own experiences. However, instead of linking these encounters with the police to his own deviant behaviour, he explained it as a feature of everyday life for anyone who was an ethnic minority in Denmark:

Adnaan: 'I think that when you've grown up with it, it just becomes part of how it is in general. That as long as you have black hair, you are looked at differently.'

Mads: 'Is it just a condition in life?'

Adnaan: 'Yes, because some fuckheads, they've fucked it up for you, in earlier generations. So, you just learn to live with it.'

In his own way, Adnaan legitimized the police's discriminatory gaze through a process of lateral denigration, as described in the earlier section on social dynamics in the community. He did not blame the police for viewing him differently from ordinary Danes. Nor did he blame politics, as we saw with Hassan. Instead, he blamed his own fellow 'fuckheads' from earlier generations. In doing so, Adnaan excused the police

and distanced himself from the responsibility and ability to do something about it. He just accepted that this was how things were.

In this subsection, we have seen how different interlocutors conceptualized various encounters with the police as discriminatory. Such perceptions were widely shared, but as we have seen in the examples above, not all parents in Blomsterengen problematized police discriminatory practices in the same way. The practices were legitimized or excused by some interlocutors. Thus, some saw them as annoying, but maintained that the police had their reasons for acting the way they did. And some interlocutors blamed deviant youth for discriminatory practices rather than the police. Other interlocutors did problematize police profiling and discriminatory activities. They opposed the excessive control efforts and attempts to contact local youth who were doing nothing wrong in the eyes of the parents. For these parents, the discriminatory experiences and police monitoring translated into a distrust in the police, into a belief that the police were not in the neighbourhood to help the community but only to control it. Such distrust had negative consequences for the police's efforts to repair community-police relations through community policing initiatives, because some parents interpreted these efforts as but further attempts to control and surveillance of the community rather than as a genuine effort to reach out.

Perceptions of prisons and of punishment

The police were not only assessed based on their own practices, but also on the consequences of being arrested by the police. Being 'noted' by the police could lead to punishment or to a 'report of concern' over a specific youth being sent to the social services. This linkage between the police and other institutions show that assessments of the criminal justice system and social services also became part of how the interlocutors perceived the police. In such cases, parents would often express positive, or at least tolerant, perceptions of the police, but would thereafter distance themselves from the implications of police attention, either with regards to punishment or to the interference of the social services, both symbolically, referring in extension to the agendas in the anti-gang (punishment) and anti-ghetto (social services) policies, respectively. In this subsection, I address how the interlocutors perceived prison sentences and punishment. This is followed by a description of how

parents experienced the cooperation between the police and the social services institutions.

Prison sentences were one theme that many parents viewed with scepticism. We saw it with Jamal in the section on managing crime and deviance, where he described how he often refrained from calling the police based on experiences that time spent in prison only made matters worse for young people, leading them to commit more serious offences when released. Hassan also described a similar notion of prisons as a place where young people become further embedded in a life of crime:

Hassan: 'The police are not so clever. When they throw someone in jail, they think, "Yeah we'll punish him and thereby save society." But I've lived here like 15 years, so the boys who were like six years old then, they are around 20 years old now, some having been to prison several times. When they came out, they are professional, with experience, and also in good health. Prison did not give them a lesson. The prisons in Denmark are a good university for them, they graduate professional.'

Mads: 'Professional criminal or...?'

Hassan: 'Yes, that's what I mean. So I don't know why the police are happy. They do their best to put them in prison and think it's a punishment. But he's already a criminal, prison is not so hard for him. Also, one of the boys told me, after having been to jail many times, he said, "Hassan, believe me, jail is the best place, I miss it, I have my own room, my closet, all my things arranged, everything." So, the police have to change their strategy, and the first thing to do is to clean their hearts.'

Here Hassan evaluate both the police and the prisons against his objective of helping youth escape a life of crime and deviance. Based on his experiences of seeing locals being released from prison, he finds that they not only they fail in this task, prison time only makes the youth more criminally engaged. Haamid was another interlocutor who also believed that prisons made matters worse:

Haamid: 'Prison, you know what, prisons don't work. Danish prisons are not like other prisons, they are much nicer, right. Prisoners have more options, earn good money. I know some who have been to prison, they were happy there.'

Both Hassan and Haamid noted how they believe that prisons were too good places to be in order to deter people from crime and deviance. This also made Haamid disapprove of longer sentences as a solution to crime and deviance. In addition, Haamid also stressed that formal punishment was a bad idea because a criminal record ruined a person's chances of getting a job and thereby preventing them from making a change in their life. In this regard, he echoed Hassan's main concern for helping the deviants rather than simply punishing them.

Some interlocutors felt differently about prison sentences, or punishment in general. Sanaa, for example, believed that going to prison for a minor offence was a better alternative than to allow deviance to go unpunished until the troublemaker received a longer sentence. Eman believed that punishment was a risk that those who engaged in crime had to live with. So far, we have thus seen how varying assessments of formal punishment were voiced by the interlocutors. In this section, where we have examined general views on prisons and punishment, we mainly see negative conceptions of prisons based on interlocutors' experiences of them not helping offenders leave the world of crime and deviance. This shows that for at least some parents, it was more important to help those engaged in crime and deviance escape from that lifestyle than it was to see them punished. These considerations, however, changed when talk fell on gang crime. And that is the topic of the following subsection.

Controlling and punishing gangs, and discussions of justice

One case that really divided the interlocutors in their perspective on punishment was that of double-length sentences. Double sentencing was initially introduced in Denmark as a means to manage gang crime, but the same principle was also later introduced in the third package of anti-ghetto legislation (2018). Here the police were allowed to declare 'double punishment zones' in the ghettoized neighbourhoods. We have already heard how Eman was 'ice cold' regarding this practice; in her view, the

gang members had to take their punishment as it was. Not everyone, however, shared this unconditioned support for harsh punishment. A conversation with Laila and Salma revealed some of the complexities that parents considered when thinking about stricter and controversial control measures like double-length sentencing:

Salma: 'Then they would get a chance to leave the area, and if they do not and they are caught again, then they would get what is called a zone ban, which means that they are not allowed at all to get near the area again, or they could get seven days immediate imprisonment [a form of 'speed sentencing' with no trial].'

Mads: 'Okay, without trial or sentencing?'

Laila: 'Without nothing.'

Salma: 'Nothing, just seven days.'

Laila: 'That was so good. It really helped a lot!'

Mads: "Could the police navigate who they should go after and who to leave alone?"

Laila: 'No, there were some innocents who were targeted.'

Salma: 'Yeah.'

Laila: 'They were imprisoned for some moths. That was awful. But then again, they were at the wrong place, where there were police.'

Mads: "Yeah, you can't deny that.'

Laila: 'No.'

Mads: 'But still, I think it's difficult to get my head around those methods. You use them to prevent something, but you've really got to be careful, because what will happen if you catch the wrong person too many times, who was actually innocent. Is it worth it?'

Laila: 'And they did that. During the last conflict. But I just think that as a person, you've got to know who you are hanging out with. And I know it's

tough, that if I walk by and greet my cousin, and the police see it, who knows when the police are there. And for Christ sake, you also have to be allowed to greet people whom you know, no matter what kind of person they are. We [the respectable mothers] also stood and talked with them, you know.'

Laila was weaving back and forth between accepting the control measures, making it a personal responsibility for a resident not to hang out with the wrong kind of people and thus attract police attention, versus feeling sorry for those innocently locked up, saying that people have to be allowed to greet each other without fearing that the police will be watching.

Rizwana expressed similar ambiguous reflections on the case of Salma's son. Rizwana noted this during a talk about how the police operated in the neighbourhood, where she was distressed by the fact that they often took 'the small fish', instead of those who were genuinely responsible for gang-related crime:

Rizwana: 'Today I feel that they just go for the small fish out here – youth who might have done something stupid one time. Like they go for the tail of the snake, but what about the head? Those who run the gang, why have they not arrested them? It's a shame when they go for the small fish. That situation with Salma's son, it's a catastrophe. A real shame. Why haven't they helped him before? He's an example of a fish... but then again, where were the parents? You have to ask that, too.'

Rizwana thus formulated an active distinction between small fish and hardcore criminals, expressing a concern for the harsh treatment for the minor offences and less involved youth. However, she also noted that there is a parental responsibility to consider. Although this parental responsibility did not legitimize the harsh treatment in her perspective, some responsibility for the treatment rests with the parents rather than the police.

Haneen was also indecisive in her assessment of the controversial control measures. Especially double-length sentences, both with regard to gang crime and to combat crime in ghettos more generally. Although Haneen had no objection to double-length sentencing in principle, she still struggled with accepting the practice based on her basic concern for the local youth engaged in deviance, especially if her own children would end up in trouble:

Mads: 'What do you think about the decision to make double punishment zones in these areas?'

Haneen: 'That's bullshit. Or, in a way, for gang members, then I'm not against it. But the fact that it is your neighbourhood that decides it, that's just fucked up. Because, if my son, you never know – may God prevent it – but if it happens, that your child accidentally ends up in some shit, by coincidence or accident, ends up shoplifting, or if some of their friends drag them into something, then they will be accomplices. Then if someone else would get one year in prison, why should my child get 2-3 years? For fuck sake, you know? And when you're young, teenager, you're easily dragged into something without thinking about it. Someone asked, "Hey, can you bring this to someone for me?" "sure." Then why should you get double the punishment of some other idiot who got you into doing it? And if someone does something, someone who has never done anything before, but happens to live in Blomsterengen, then he gets a higher punishment. What the fuck, I won't stand for that. But it's something else if my son joins a gang or something, and gets involved in some real shit. It depends on the situation. Then yes, he deserves his punishment. He has to take it like a man, because he tried to be a man by doing whatever he wanted.'

Mads: 'But still, is it fair that a sentence is doubled?'

Haneen: 'But it depends on what happened and who did it. In regards to Salma, I think it's just a little too much, over ten years is a long time. I feel sorry for him, and I understand Salma's frustration. Her son will get out in his early thirties, having been in there since he was 18. You understand? That's his

whole youth that disappears. The whole city can have changed in that much time.'

Haneen also, like Laila, struggled with considering all the aspects and dilemmas of the double-sentencing measures. It was OK for gang members, but not for residents in general. But it also depended on the situation, and she felt sorry for both Salma and for her son. She expressed a dilemma between the need for safety to prevent gang conflicts, but also concern for those affected. The same dilemma was present in Laila's considerations above. Both accepted the control measures, although they felt sorry for those innocently caught up in the arrest system and harshly treated. Safety, therefore, seemed to be the primary concern, taking precedence over solidarity and issues of justice and thus legitimized the controversial measures to control gang crime.

Salma, whose son was now in prison, was not opposed to her son being imprisoned, or being punished more generally for his actions. She described how she first heard about what he had done in the news, thinking "Who does that kind of thing!". Only later did she learn that it was her son. So, she actively distanced herself from her son's actions, but not from her son. During a conversation where we talked about how her son was holding up in pretrial, she reflected on the justice of his situation:

Salma: 'I think, for instance, if I went out and killed someone, and at the same time there was a gang member who also killed someone else, then both of us have taken a human life. Then why should he have a double punishment and I an ordinary? What's the difference? If you ask me, there's no difference – we have both taken a life.'

In another conversation, she formulated the same thoughts in a different way: "Why is a gang member's life worth more than mine?", meaning if she was killed by someone, they would get an ordinary sentence, but if a gang member kills another gang member, he gets punished harder. In this perspective, killing a gang member seems like a more serious offence than killing an 'ordinary citizen' if seriousness is reflected in the

amount of time in prison. For Salma, double punishment clearly raised some questions about justice.

Zaid was one of the interlocutors who supported the controversial control measures. Zaid voiced an acceptance of zone bans and other gang-oriented control measures, even though innocents risked being affected as well. As described previously, Zaid's unwavering support for the control measures was a result of lateral denigration of gang members. Zaid, however, did not express a strong inclination to present himself as responsible in the same way Sanaa and the others did. His lateral denigration was more in line with Tariq's notion that when crime and deviance had such serious consequences for the community members, the perpetrators no longer deserved community protection from law enforcement. This reflects the same dilemma as the one Haneen and Laila expressed, of safety versus justice. Zaid, however, was more readily prepared to have some innocent residents affected in order to manage the severely dangerous gang crime than Haneen and Laila. But Zaid's reflections add to the understanding of the dilemma voiced by Haneen and Laila, acceptance of controversial control measures also depended on internal social relations, and were thus influenced by processes like lateral denigration. This stands in contrast to the notions of justice that Salma considered, why we might interpret Haneen and Laila's considerations as a form of negotiated justice.

Adnaan was a father who had experienced being viewed with suspicion by the police during the most recent gang conflict. Yet he accepted the control measures while distancing himself from the gang members, who he viewed as mainly outsiders. With the lack of social relations between himself and outsiders, he had no status to rely on in order to feel protected. Adnaan indirectly described how it was a choice between dealing with dangerous deviants who did not know him versus having to tolerate occasionally harsh and unjust policing practices. He preferred that latter, and thus voiced an acceptance of the suspicion of innocent residents by the police. Here follows a longer extract from an interview, where he described how it is to live with gangs and why living in Blomsterengen also entails an acceptance of both the presence of crime as well as of the measures to control the criminals:

Adnaan: 'But Mads, we have seen, back when it was really going on, THEN you see the police. You know, back during the conflict, there was chaos in the neighbourhood. Back then, you felt that you had become part of the street life, even though you were not, you become involved. You feel it, because it happens in your neighbourhood. It can happen in your stairwell, or the one next to yours. Back then, there were a lot of residents who felt unsafe, myself included. Those fuckheads from another neighbourhood, they did not know me. It affected all of us, but luckily, that chapter is closed now.'

Mads: 'Yeah. What are your thoughts about the way the police handled the situation?'

Adnaan: 'I know that they did the best they could to manage it as well as they could. But you also felt that they were under a lot of top-down pressure, like "You have to manage this" [referring back to a discussion of politicians wanting to show they can manage gang and ghetto issues]. Then, poof!, they slam down on it, real hard. And they did.'

Mads: 'What do you think of such policies, where for instance, crimes committed in Blomsterengen result in double punishment?;

Adnaan: 'That's bullshit [both laugh], that's what I think – why should someone get double punishment just because they live in Blomsterengen and do some shit. That you should be punished harder than someone living in another neighbourhood?! That's not fair.'

Mads: 'Does it make you angry?'

Adnaan: 'Yeah it does, a little. Because, I've lived here, I'm happy to live here, but why double punishment for living here? It doesn't make sense, at least not in my view. So, I think, well, it's just a side effect of living here, and of there being a problem that you can not really solve. Then what do we do as politicians when we cannot solve it? What would you and I do? Well, we turn to tougher sentences, even though it's against the constitution, and against principles of human rights and all that. We just put that aside, because we need a solution here and now. You know, we have a broader public, a larger

part of society, who think that this is a problem, and they demand a solution from those in charge of the country. Then whose side should the politicians be on? The criminals or the rest of society? And automatically, you have a responsibility to take the side of the majority of the society, right, not the minority who create trouble and insecurity. So, somehow, sure I understand the politicians, they put some things aside for the best of the wider society. I can see the point.

Mads: 'Well, the logic seems clear.'

Adnaan: 'Yeah it is. But if you ask whether I think it's fair, then no, I don't.'

Mads: 'But is it something that annoys you, like does it influence how you live your life? Do you drive around less in your car, or for instance when there are visitational zones, at least on paper, they can stop and search whoever they want. Do you feel there's a risk of it being abused or...?'

Adnaan: 'You know, back to... hmm. If I came walking down the street, Mads, with some of the worst brothers from here, then the police cannot see the difference between them and me, that I have been a public employee for 13 years. They would perceive me as one of the others, right.'

Mads: 'Yeah.'

Adnaan: 'Then I risk, well, I would not blame them [the police]. You cannot expect them to read people just by looking at them, whether they have an education, are in employment, or on social support, or whether he has a criminal record. Not before, well, they have to stop you, look up your name and all that.'

Mads: 'Is that fair enough?'

Adnaan: 'Yeah I think it's fair. You know, if you chose to live in a ghetto like Blomsterengen, then there are side effects to living in a place like that. There's more crime. You feel it more. Then you cannot avoid there also being more police and more control.'

Mads: 'It makes good sense.'

Adnaan: ‘Yes, it does, somehow. You know, if you just think about it an extra time, they just do their work.’

They just do their work. The best they can, and within a political framework where the politicians have to answer to the majority of the Danish population. This rationale probably covers how most interlocutors felt about the so-called ‘extraordinary’ gang measures. In regards to the ‘stigma management strategies’ described by Wacquant, and introduced in the section on social dynamics, it is also a perspective where the territorial stigma is somewhat recognized – Adnaan admitted that he had chosen to live in a neighbourhood with mere crime, and knew that people in his social network had the police’s attention. And in accepting the ‘reality’ of the stigma in this way, he also accepted the control with the neighbourhood. But an inherent feeling of injustice with the politics and policing practices were noted. And it figured in the parents’ efforts to manage the stigma, that when the stigma was lifted, so would the unjust measures, since there would not be a need for them. That, for example, was part of the rationale behind the initiative to protect the area, set up by Shadi and his friends, which was also aimed at protecting the neighbourhood from political attention and control measures by getting rid of the problematic residents. It was thus a conditioned acceptance of the controversial control measures expressed by the interlocutors, an acceptance that depended on the danger that crime posed to the community, both directly in regards to people getting in harm’s way during gang conflicts, and indirectly, through the consequences for law-abiding citizens of anti-ghetto and anti-gang polices in Blomsterengen.

Perception of the social services

For parents in Blomsterengen, the lines between the police and social services were blurred, which was not so surprising in light of the plural policing approach and strong cooperation demanded of the police and social services in the anti-ghetto policies. This blurriness sparked some distrust both towards the police and towards the municipality, which manages various welfare services. Of special concern for the parents were the child welfare services, where children suspected of being abused or neglected could be taken from their parents and placed in care. Hassan described this

with a comparison to how the police operated in the authoritarian regimes in the Middle East:

Hassan: 'In the Middle East, the regime uses everything for its own benefit. They use the teacher for them, they use the doctor for them. And now this is the same in Blomsterengen, the police are doing this.'

Mads: 'So they are getting everyone to help the police or...?'

Hassan: 'Yes, and this is a big mistake. As a pedagogue, you have a special education, so that you know how to solve problems with the youth in your own way. But this has been changed so that today the pedagogues work for the police, and the boys, they know it. So now [they think], I don't trust you as a pedagogue, I don't want your help.'

Mads: 'Because of all the cooperation?'

Hassan: 'Yes. Let everybody work in their own way. Pedagogues are professional, and should deal with the boys, like doctors, they use medicine. When I go to the doctor, I expect him to help me, not to inform the police about me, like "This man is using this and that." If I go to a psychologist, I want him to help me, not to go to the police with knowledge about me. But I know that now, also the housing association, they work with the police, and when I talk to the young boys, 14, 15 years old, they tell me that the club, which belong to the municipality, that the club works for the police. Anything they [the boys] do, the club report to the police and the social services. We respect the police, the law, but to make the system like this, it's not good. It's like the system in the Middle East, with dictators. There, a father is afraid to talk, because his boy will go to the club which belongs to the regime, and when they hear the boy talk like his father, the father will be taken away. It's the same with the school and the club here, there is this cooperation. They are all under the power of the police, and the work of a policeman is different than the work of the social worker and of the pedagogue. The police look for criminals. And now they just want to relocate half the area, in order to solve the problems here. All this, this will not create trust. The boys, when they see

a pedagogue and they play with him, they know that he is not honest, and that they have to be careful, because they know who the pedagogue is working for.

Mads: 'How do the kids learn that? Is it because the parents tell them?'

Hassan: 'No, no, no, no, [they learn it] themselves, themselves. When he experiences that he was outside doing something wrong, and the pedagogue saw him, and the social services and the police then call him, then it means the pedagogues are working for the police.'

In Hassan's view, the close cooperation between the police and social services had become a reminder of what he fled from, from the Middle East. Of all the interlocutors and parents I met, no one was as mindful of his democratic citizen rights as Hassan, and in his view, this cooperation was the very opposite of having democratic rights. However, there was a central difference between what Hassan described as taking place in dictatorial regimes, and in Blomsterengen – in the Middle East, it was feared that the father would be taken by the 'system'. In Blomsterengen, the fear was that the children would be taken. Hassan believed that this fear influenced the trust and cooperation with the police and by extension the social services:

Hassan: 'Here, you're afraid as a father, to go to the police or to the municipality. They think in their way, how we punish the son, how we take him away from the father, send him to somewhere, and that I don't want, not even in a bad situation.'

Mads: 'No, so as a father, you don't ask for help?'

Hassan: 'You don't ask for help, you don't ask for help, because of the procedure that follows. They will look [at your case] in their own way.'

Mads: 'So if I told you that from the inside of the police and the social services, they will say that they are helping the children, when they say that, would that make sense to a parent here or to you?'

Hassan: 'I don't think so. Now if I am in a very, very difficult situation, if you need help, you call the police. But even when you know the boys, when they have problems with each other, when somebody is beat up, you won't call the police. You'll be thinking "I take my right [legal rights] with my hand, I don't trust the police, the police, they will put me on their list, and him on their list as well." And also the social services. To help the family and the children, they come inside your life, and they offer you something you don't want. They think it's good, but I think "I don't want this." Or they offer, "I'll take your son from you, to somewhere to live with another family." So I never try to call the social services to come and help me, because they will hurt me more.'

Mads: 'So, when politicians in Denmark say that "Parents in ghettos don't use the system, it's because of their culture", you say it's not because of their culture, it's because that it will hurt them more?'

Hassan: 'Yes exactly, I do not contact the social services, honestly, to help my son, if I have a problem, because I know they will do it in a way I don't like. They will interfere in your life, they will come, they will put a "contact person" on you, you have to go to meetings, they will watch you, and they plan how to take the child from you, and I don't want that.'

Following this conversation, Hassan went on to describe how he experienced the tactics of the police and social services as war tactics, where they first 'ruin' everything by 'bombing the family', and then after that, try to rebuild the family from scratch. Through the coordination between institutions, Hassan's experience was that the 'bombing' would take place when different actors in the public system raised concerns for the youth and their families, which gave them reason to intervene in the family life. Hassan was not alone in his scepticism of the social services. Rizwana, for instance, noted that she did not like the way public institutions tried to 'raise the children' in Blomsterengen:

Rizwana: 'It's like the police want to raise the children. But it's not the police nor the social services nor the school's responsibility to do so, it's a parent

responsibility. They shouldn't interfere. Of course, they can be concerned if they see something, and they find it necessary. But it's not their responsibility to raise the children, instead, they should approach the right ones, those with issues, not everyone here. But luckily, I have not had anything to do with the social services or anything. It must be hard to have them looking over your shoulder like that.'

Like Hassan's fear of the social services taking charge on the parent's family life, Rizwana voiced her distress about both the police and other institutions trying to influence the everyday life of residents in Blomsterengen. She, however, recognized that some families were indeed in need of support. Thus, interventions in family life had their place according to Rizwana, but not as a general approach to working with the community in the neighbourhood. She herself was glad she had not attracted the attention of the social services. Like Rizwana, Laila was firmly rooted in the network of self-aware responsible mothers in Blomsterengen. During a conversation with Salma, she, too, stressed that she never wanted the social services to intervene in her life:

Mads: 'Even though you're not at risk of having your children taken from you, do you still do something to avoid the social services?'

Laila: 'I do all that I can to avoid them.'

Salma: 'As I see it, nobody wants to cooperate with someone who wants to take your child from you, just because you live in a ghetto. Or in an unsafe neighbourhood.'

Laila: 'And nor if you know that the child is having a hard time, because where were the social services in the beginning? You follow? Where have they been when the child needed help? They always come too late.'

Mads: 'Laila, what do you do in order to avoid the social services?'

Laila: 'I can assure you that I'm not going to cooperate with the social services. I've had many offers of support from them, and no. They shouldn't even try and get near my home. I have raised my children, and they can't raise them

any better than I've done. They can't love them more, than I have and do. And I know how my children are – I don't hit them, or treat them bad in any way. We have a really good family life, and they are not coming near us. Go to those families who need you, don't come where you aren't needed. Because there are those who really need a hand. And they don't get it now.'

Mads: 'Does that also affect your children going to the club and such?'

Laila: 'My children don't want to go there, even though they are members. Because, by mistake, a child there was reported to the social services. And there have been several episodes where children were reported, where they didn't even try to work with the parents first. There are so many rumours. Well, maybe that's not why the children don't want to go there. I think it's because they find it boring.'

It is noteworthy that Laila, when asked why the children did not want to go to the club, immediately began talking about the children who were reported to the social services by staff at the club – even though she soon realized that this might not be the reason that the children did not want to go there. But clearly, children being reported to the social services were part of Laila's awareness of what happened at the club. And although Laila did not see herself as someone who was at risk of having her children taken from her, she had no desire to allow the social services into her life – there were others who actually needed help but did not get it. Here Laila made a distinction between those parents in need of help and those who did not. This resembles the distinction between responsible and irresponsible parents, described in the section on social dynamics in the community, where the ghetto stigma was passed on to those families deemed responsible for the stigma by the self-proclaimed responsible parents. And though she did not wish any sort of intervention in her own life, Laila legitimized family interventions in those families who she thought needed help.

During several conversations, Sanaa expressed a similar opinion, that involving the police and social services were necessary in order to compensate for the irresponsible parents' and families' inability to manage their children.

The conversation between Laila, Salma and I also showed that children were reported accidentally and that reports were filed before the parents were given a chance to change their parenting practices. In any case, such stories figured in the consciousness of these two mothers. The circulation of these kind of 'scare stories' sustained an awareness of a general risk of being 'noticed' by the welfare system, which would have dire consequences. As a parent whose own daughter had been reported, Fatih gave a personal perspective on how it felt. In his example, it was difficult, the pedagogues were concerned about an issue that Fatih could do nothing about:

Fatih: 'She spent too many hours in the day-care institution, they said, she was the first to be dropped off and the last to be picked up. And this was their concern. But what was I to do, it was my work schedule. It could not be any different! I worked from 7 to 16, and I had to drop her off before that and pick her up again after.'

Fatih was generally struggling with his work situation, and he had to take jobs with long hours and low payment. That this was a concern for the pedagogues was tough on him, and it became part of a general feeling that the system was working against him. Thus, attention from the social services was an annoyance and undesired. During another conversation, Fatih noted that if the pedagogues actually wanted to help the children, why did they go behind the parents' backs and submit reports? Here he also reminded me that the day-care institutions had the children in their care from 8am in the morning to 4pm in the afternoon. During this time, the institutions were responsible for the children. And then, after 4pm, the children came home, had to do homework or play a bit, have dinner, then be made ready for bed and finally put to bed. It was not as if the parents had them for that many hours, so the professionals also had to take their responsibility for the children's situation seriously and work together with the parents. Fatih was frustrated because he felt that the pedagogues and teacher blamed the parents rather than cooperating with them to make the situation better for the youth.

Not everyone feared the social services however. Eman, for instance, was consistently positive about the public institutions. She explained that on one occasion there had

been reported a concern for one of her children, and someone from the social services called and asked if she could visit. Eman had said that of course, she was welcome any time. She gave the same reasons as Laila did above, that she loved her children, took good care of them and had an organized home. Contrary to Laila, however, this concern made Eman feel that she had nothing to fear, and she had no reason to avoid or distrust the social services. Eman's views proved correct. The social worker visited and nothing happened afterwards, according to Eman.

Jamal, however, substantiated the concerns raised by Hassan, Laila and Salma during an interview, when we talked about the reputation of the club:

Mads: 'I have heard from others out here that there are some parents who are afraid of having their children taken from them. Is that something you are familiar with?'

Jamal: 'Yes, yes, yes, a lot. Actually, the mother living in the apartment above mine had two children taken from her. It did not have anything to do with the club as such, it was something at the school. But there has been a lot of talk about it. There is also a story of another child that was taken to a [residential] institution. But we have also made some reports from the club, which has led to some rumours. Those two episodes, they really led to talk and were really pumped up and spread in the neighbourhood. Signatures were gathered, and people were mad at the club, and the family of the children were talking about "Watch out for your children, when they go to the club. They work for the social services." There was a mother who organized a meeting with a lot of other mothers and such. It was because there was a report made on her son because he had holes in his pants. She complained that she was called to a meeting with the social services because of something like that. And also, a report because of some clothes. A minor thing, but not minor to the parents.'

Jamal thus conceded that reports were submitted by club personnel even for more banal reasons like holes in the child's pants. But he also noted that parents often misunderstood which institution made the report, the club or the school, here

underscoring the blurriness of how the institutions cooperate when viewed from a parent perspective. Earlier, we also saw how Hassan seemed to mix the club, the police and the social services into a single blurred category. The blurriness was a key element in the confusion, and following fear of attention by any public institution in Blomsterengen. And fear of the attention was based on a general concern that the social services might intervene in ways that would undermine the parents. Ultimately, it was feared that they might even remove the children from their families. And though not everyone feared the attention, many did. What is also clear here is that the fear was grounded in the few examples where such removals had actually occurred, just as the negativity towards the police was based on a few incidents that, perhaps exaggerated, lingered in the community consciousness. What influenced the consciousness with regard to the social services were the few instances where children had been taken from the families, and the subsequent observation that these youth did not necessarily stay out of crime and deviance anyway. Salma's son, who was in pretrial detention for a gang-related offence during my entire period of fieldwork, was an example. So was Noah, who had been institutionalized in his early teenage years – a measure that had not spared him from a life in crime. Such stories also supported perspectives like Laila's that the social services could not care for and love the children as she did and could.

Hassan saw the threat of having children removed as an example of a more general tendency of the social services and police: 'a tendency to perceive the parents as problems, rather than partners. According to Hassan, this had the effect that the school, club, municipality and police set the children up against the parents, and thus made it more difficult for the parents to control their children. According to Hassan, the children were taught from an early age to be independent, and to question their parents. Hassan also related this to a Danish way of life, where children were made independent at an early age. In Hassan's perspective, this was the wrong approach. In this regard, he preferred the system from the Middle East, where the authorities would support the parent in taking responsibility for their children. Haamid agreed on this point finding it wrong that the social services and police worked by taking responsibility for the children away from the parents and into the hands of the public system.

In this subsection, I have dwelled on how the social services have been experienced as an intervention into the families of ethnic minorities residing in Blomsterengen. Some of the examples did not deal directly with perceptions of the police, but they have been included in order to give a contextualized understanding of how intrusive the social services were experienced to be by many interlocutors. It is in this context that the blurred lines between the police and other social service institutions resulted in a sceptic view of the police from a parent perspective. This blurriness was related to experiences of the institutions communicating with one another about residents, so that the parents could fear that observations by the police could be acted upon by the social services, or the other way around. The close cooperation between the social services and the blurred lines between them thus resulted in a general fear of being noted by agents from any public institution, which included a fear of having encounters with the police. Johansen has provided a much deeper analysis of how this fear influenced the everyday life of ethnic minority families living in now ghettoized neighbourhoods and how it instigated a distrusting relation with the police and other public institutions (Johansen, 2013).

Summary

In this section, we have seen how the interlocutors conceptualized some policing practices as brutal, humiliating and discriminatory. Experiences of such treatment were widely believed to have resulted in a general negative view of the police in the community, and almost all interlocutors could join in with episodes where they had a negative view of the police. This did not mean that they invariably developed a general negative view of the police. Some parents would frown upon the more brutal and discriminatory practices, while nevertheless applauding other police practices that sought to improve police-community relations. These parents thus made situated evaluations of the police practices. Such situated evaluations also entailed an assessment where the policing practices were held up against the forms of crime and deviance that the police were attempting to handle. Thus, when minor youth deviancy was managed harshly, parents found it to be wrong. But when gangs were making life in the neighbourhood insecure, the parents tolerated and accepted harsher and even controversial policing practices. We also saw in this section how parents based their evaluations of the police as a derivative of how other social institutions treated

community members. In this regard, prisons and the social services were brought up by parents during conversations and interviews. When it came to prisons, parents mainly focused on the negative influence of a prison term on local troublemakers after they had served a prison sentence. They often came out of prison to become more involved in crime than they were before they went to prison. Such experiences made some parents avoid police cooperation, since they did not want these kinds of consequences for the local youth. When talk fell on gang crime, such considerations were however revoked. The primary concern became that of neighbourhood safety. The social services were generally viewed with some scepticism by the interlocutors. They were portrayed as an intrusive authority that would intervene in family affairs, and they were feared to eventually take the children from their families. Even some responsible parents expressed a reluctance towards working with the social services, though some feared nothing based on the notion that their family affairs were in order. The fear, however, made some parents wary of attracting the attention of the social services. This influenced some parents' view of the police, since the close cooperation between the police and social services made it likely that the police would report any concerns they had to the social services, and vice versa. Thus, from a parent's perspective, the lines between public institutions were blurred. The main finding in this section on how the parents viewed the police, based on experiences from and stories of police encounters, is that although such experiences motivated what Carr et al. described as 'negative dispositions' towards the police, these co-existed with 'pro-criminal justice solutions to crime' (Carr et al., 2007, p. 470). As Carr et al. documented in a similar study where this co-existence was found, the negative dispositions were linked to actual police practices, while the positive dispositions towards police and the criminal justice system were linked to ideals of how these systems ought to work. Even the parents most negatively disposed towards the police voiced such ideals while they also pointed out that they did not believe that the police actually worked in alignment with these ideals.

Chapter 5

Concluding perspectives and scientific contributions

Answering the research question

Based on a preliminary study of how political developments in Denmark since 2009 have set a frame for intensive police attention on ethnic minority communities in Denmark, the following research question was formulated for this Ph.D. project:

Following the development of anti-ghetto and anti-gang policies, and in light of the trouble with deviance and crime in their neighbourhoods, how do ethnic minority parents residing in ghettoized neighbourhoods where gangs operate perceive the police in Denmark?

The preliminary study of the political developments in regards to the policing of ethnic minority population groups in Denmark is presented in the introduction to the dissertation, as well as in Appendix 3: 'Exceptionalism for Most, Excess for Others – The Legal Foundation of a Bifurcated Criminal Justice System in Denmark'.

The research question is addressed in Appendix 1: 'Calling the Police from the 'Ghetto': 'Legal Consciousness amongst Ethnic Minority Parents, and Appendix 2: 'Dining with the Police: 'Resistance and Acceptance of Community Policing,' as well as in the analysis presented in this dissertation: Perceiving the Police from the 'ghetto'. In the following, I first summarize the findings from a preliminary study of the political context that motivated the research question. I then summarize how the three respective empirical analyses address the research question. Finally, I briefly discuss perspectives for the future of community life in Blomsterengen, based on experiences from international research findings on community life in similar ghettoized neighbourhoods. I conclude by discussing the research contribution of the collected dissertation and the three appendices.

Bifurcated policing of ethnic minorities in Denmark

In the preliminary study of the political developments with regard to the policing of the Danish ethnic minority population, it was found that through anti-ghetto and anti-gang policies meant to address issues of integration, the formation of parallel societies, and gang conflicts putting innocent citizens in harm's way, the ethnic minority communities became subject to untraditional policing practices in a Danish context. The anti-ghettoization policies primarily introduced a community policing

approach, which entailed a plural policing strategy of close cooperation between the police and other public institutions and civil society organizations, the purpose of which was to better manage crime and deviance and ensure trust in and cooperation with the public law enforcement and criminal justice system in neighbourhoods perceived as ghettos. In 2010, the anti-ghetto policies introduced the concept of a 'ghetto list', where a set of criteria were formulated to determine whether a specific neighbourhood would be characterized as a 'ghetto'. These criteria have changed over time. Having thus defined the problematic neighbourhoods, it was possible to formulate political directives for how to counter ghettoization processes. The community policing approach was one such political directive, described in the introduction to this overview and in the article in Appendix 2. Other studies have shown how the anti-ghettoization policies also led to ghetto-specific treatment in and by the social service system (Seeman, 2021). Subsequent ghetto strategies introduced political directives for harsher and more punitive approaches to counter ghettoization process. In 2018, it was decided to implement demolitions of apartment blocks in neighbourhoods that had not made it off the ghetto list by 2030, and to allow the police to declare 'double punishment zones' in ghettoized neighbourhoods when they deemed it useful to manage crime and deviance. These ghettoization strategies have generally received more research attention than the anti-gang policies that were also implemented alongside the anti-ghetto policies. In order to address this research gap, and to obtain a better understanding of how ethnic minorities were subject to special policing practices, Appendix 3 was written. Appendix 3 presents and analyses of how three consecutive anti-gang policy packages developed a 'bifurcated criminal justice system', where a select population group, gangs and suspected gang members, are treated radically different than the normal Danish citizen. This bifurcated system was mainly rooted in the introduction of a gang-specific subsection into the Danish penal code, which made it possible for a court to double the sentence for gang-related offences. Such a subsection, however, also required an intensified monitoring of gangs and gang activity. The police were put in charge of this monitoring work. As was also the case with the ghetto policies, once the problematic group was defined, further political directives mandated in order to manage this particular group. This enhanced surveillance led to harsher sentences for a range of crimes related to gang activities. But the conditions for serving a sentence were also changed for gang members, so that

most rehabilitative measures that otherwise characterized the Danish penal system were restricted. Parole, for instance, was to be denied for gang members. There were however implemented a way for gang members to obtain the traditional rights and privileges of other Danish prisoners if they entered a so-called EXIT program, dedicating themselves to leaving the gang milieu completely.

Taken together, a synergy effect can be seen between the anti-ghetto and anti-gang policies, where they reinforced each other in instigating a discursive status differentiation between ethnic minority populations, including gangs, and 'ordinary' Danish citizens and legitimize a differential treatment of ethnic minority populations by the police, the criminal justice system, and by other generally perceived benevolent welfare institutions and services. In light of the international literature on citizen-police relations, such status differentiation and differentiated treatment, especially with its strong focus on community policing, surveillance strategies, long and harsh prison sentences, all contribute to the risk of developing strained relations between ethnic minority communities and the police in Denmark. Whether such a strained relation had developed or not was decided to investigate through an ethnographic study of how ethnic minority populations perceived the police.

Perceptions of the police amongst ethnic minority parents

The main finding from the ethnographic study was that there was no shared perception of the police amongst the ethnic minority parents who participated in the study. Nor did individual parents have any unified or fixed view of the police. Rather, perceptions of the police differed based on situational, social and experiential circumstances. Thus, there was a wide range of perceptions of the police amongst the ethnic minority parents. These many perceptions have been presented in a comprehensive form in this dissertation in the analysis 'Perceiving the Police from the 'ghetto''. In Appendix 1, 'Calling the Police from the 'ghetto'', the different perspectives were analysed with regard to police cooperation in managing crime and deviance. In Appendix 2, 'Dining with the Police', the different perspectives were related to the acceptance and resistance to be community policing initiatives.

A major theme in this study was how the ethnic minority parents' perceptions of the police related to the crime and deviance they experienced in their community,

including gang crime. In 'Perceiving the Police from the 'ghetto'', we saw how the parents related to different forms of crime and deviance, each of which required its own form of management. Parents thus dealt with youth deviance, violence, threats, a mysterious economy which was built upon drug dealing and theft, and gang crime. Whether or not the parents were inclined towards involving the police in the management of crime and deviance, depended on the type of offence as well as on who was behind it. Four different factors were found to influence how the parents conceptualized the relevance of involving the police in the management of crime and deviance: (1) pragmatic concerns for how best to make the crime and deviance cease, (2) concerns for how best to keep the troublemakers out of future trouble, (3) concerns for what was principally right or wrong, and (4) concerns about the severity of the crime. In 'Calling the Police from the 'ghetto'', the different types of crimes were categorized with regards to ideas of (1) everyday deviance, (2) dangerous situations and (3) threats to the community. For each category, the parents expressed different perceptions of the police. Everyday deviance covered youth deviance, less severe forms of violence as well as threats, and what was referred to as 'mysterious money' in the 'Perceiving the Police', and was for many not seen to be a police matter. When managing these forms of deviance, parents expressed more pragmatic concern, and were concerned about keeping troublemakers out of future trouble. As a result, parents avoid involving the police in the management of this kind of deviance, since they had experiences of the police being ineffective in regards to making the youth cease their troublemaking, and because of experiences of the youth becoming further alienated from society following formal sanctions. However, as we moved up in severity on the forms of crime and deviance, towards 'dangerous situations' and 'threats to the wider community', parents expressed more willingness to involve the police in the management of crime. This was especially true when it came to managing gang crime. Once crime turned dangerous, the parents would distance themselves from the troublemakers and start prioritizing their own safety and the safety of community members over what was best for the deviant youth. This concern over safety in combination with pragmatic concerns about one's own abilities to manage the dangerous situations motivated residents toward more cooperation with the police. Cooperation was greatest in cases perceived as most dangerous: of more extreme violence, the use of weapons and the presence of outsiders, who generally

were perceived as unpredictable and therefore dangerous. For some parents, cooperation was also motivated by more abstract notions of justice and citizen duty. Thus, some held strong convictions of police cooperation as a principle, where some developed notions of justice based on contextual circumstances. The most prominent example of the latter was in regards to blaming youth engaged in crime and deviance for the stigmatization of the neighbourhood and its residents, and thus for the consequences this stigmatization had for life in Blomsterengen. This blame motivated police cooperation among some parents, who otherwise would have been more hesitant to call the police. In conclusion, it was not crime and deviance as such that caused the ethnic minority parents to call the police. Rather, experiences of police ineffectiveness in regards to managing lesser forms of crime and deviance, as well as experiences of negative consequences for the youth, caused some parents to develop negative dispositions towards calling the police. But the fact that more dangerous form of crime and deviance took place in the neighbourhood made most parents put such considerations aside and develop more positive dispositions of the police. This was especially the case when it came to gang crime.

A second major theme in this study has been how the ghetto and gang policies influenced the parents' perceptions of the police. Traces of this influence were found across the interviews and conversations, though rarely in the form of direct reference to the policies. Based on the preliminary study of the policies, however, it was possible to identify which forms of policing that the parents reflected upon that were based on the policies. Thus, experiences of community policing and of plural policing initiatives have been interpreted as representative of the ghetto policies, while control-oriented policing practices oriented towards the management of gang crime and punitive consequences following police arrests were interpreted as representative of gang polices. These forms of policing approaches had varying influence on how parents perceived the police and their propensity to cooperate with them. As described above, gang crime made parents positively disposed towards the police. This was also the case for the policing practices and punitive aspects of the gang policies. Although parents noted that some of the elements in the police efforts to manage crime and deviance were controversial and went against general notions of fairness, not least since innocent community members risked being targeted by the police, they still feared

gang crime to such an extent that they were willing to live with unfair police practices – as one interlocutor described it, it was a choice between accepting dangerous crime or unfair police treatment, and only one of those options was dangerous. Actually, an overall satisfaction with the way the police managed gang crime was traceable through the parents' view of the police. However, there were some parents who found the more general aspects of the policing approach troubling when it had consequences outside of gang conflicts. Thus, proactive policing, surveillance and monitoring of young people was feared because some parents saw this police presence as an effort to control and punish community members rather than an effort to support the community by keeping disadvantaged youth out of trouble. This distinction illustrates how parents' support for anti-gang policies depended on situational circumstances. If the policies were invoked in special cases or tense moments, they were supported, but if they were carried out simply as routine, they were found unfair.

In 'Dining with the Police', which discussed community policing, it was shown how some parents readily accepted the closer attention the community received from the police based on the community policing approach, while other parents actively resisted it. Acceptance was found to be based on two factors. First, community policing was seen as a potential means of repairing the existing negative view of the police in the community based on shared stories of perceived brutal, humiliating and discriminatory policing practices. Several of such stories were documented during the fieldwork. In light of this negative image of the police, the community policing was welcomed by some since it was believed that it could help improve relations with youth by providing positive experiences of police encounters that could compete with the negative stories. The second factor motivating acceptance was related to the management stigmatization of the neighbourhood and its residents. Some parents reacted to the stigmatization of the community by distancing themselves morally from those community members they blamed for the stigma, namely 'irresponsible parents' and 'ghetto kids'. In their efforts to stand out as responsible parents themselves, and thus not deserving of or to blame for the stigma, the 'responsible' parents tended to develop a general trust in and support of the police. Acceptance of community policing was thus found to be related to internal social dynamics within the community, which were elaborated upon in more detail in 'Perceiving the Police from the 'ghetto''.

Resistance however, was also related to the stigmatization of the neighbourhood, especially the formal stigmatization in the form of both anti-ghetto and anti-gang policies implemented in the community. As also noted in regards to the approval of the gang-oriented policing initiatives, some parents viewed them as troublesome when they were thought to be a general approach to policing the community. Parents who held this view interpreted the community policing initiatives as a subtle form of police control and surveillance rather than as a positively intended way of reaching out to the community. In this interpretive framework, community policing was seen as an aggressive form of manipulating local youth into feeling secure with police oversight, such that the police exploited their trust to monitor and later prosecute the trusting youth. Where the difference between anti-gang and anti-ghetto polices became blurred from the residents' perspective, there developed a general negative disposition towards the police.

It was noteworthy that although most interlocutors could describe either primary or secondary experiences of police brutality and discriminatory policing practices, these experiences had little influence over their views of the police. Rather, situational circumstances often overruled any general negative dispositions towards the police. And where negative views of the police did manifest in personal dispositions towards the police, this did not result in the development of complete distrust in the police, as their dispositions were situationally dependent. Residents persisted in having ideals of how the police ought to work, and it was these ideals which helped motivate a basic trust in the police even when there were negative experiences in actual encounters with the police. A general alienation from the police institution as such was thus not documented during the fieldwork.

In conclusion, the parents in the study seemed divided in their perceptions of the police. Not only did they hold different perceptions of the police, but these different perceptions were found to reflect internal social divisions between different community groups. This division was also reinforced by the anti-ghetto and anti-gang policies. The anti-gang policies spurred a division between law-abiding parents and the local youth who created trouble for the community, while the anti-ghetto policies spurred a division between self-proclaimed 'respectable' and 'irresponsible' families. On first sight, this division seems to have had a positive influence on the perceptions of

the police, since the internal divisions led to more support for the police. However, the question becomes one of how this division will influence community life in other aspects than in regards to positive views on the police.

Future perspectives for community-police relations in Blomsterengen

As concluded above, a social division between different community groups was noted during the fieldwork in Blomsterengen. Although this division seems to have had a positive influence on the perception of the police amongst the parents, previous research based on similar findings raise some concern as to what such divisions entail for the future of social life in communities like Blomsterengen and for the community-police relations generally.

The analysis of the internal social division in Blomsterengen was conducted with inspiration from Wacquant's studies of territorial stigmatization and the consequences of such stigmatization for community relations (Wacquant, 2008). Wacquant found that territorial stigmatization instigated processes of internal social division, which would result in the erosion of 'interpersonal trust and undercut local solidarity' and of a 'denunciation of deviant and delinquent categories' and 'scapegoats' who were to blame for the stigma and its consequences (Wacquant, 2008, p. 183). Such denunciation was also documented in Blomsterengen during my fieldwork. And the erosion of local solidarity was also documented with regard to the declining concern for local troublemakers as their criminal activities rose in severity and resulted in consequences for the wider community. Other studies have found that disrupted and disorganized communities where such processes had occurred might rely more on police protection, thus giving the appearance of being supportive of the police. Yet these same communities are also found to be more fearful in regards to crime and deviance. Thompson, Buscerius & Luguaya (2013), for instance, describe how efforts at neighbourhood revitalization in Toronto, not unlike those we see in Danish ghettoized neighbourhoods, had led to increased risk of violent victimization among residents in the targeted communities. They found the increased risk of violence to be the result of disrupted social relations between law-abiding residents and those engaged in crime and deviance. Prior to the neighbourhood renewal processes, residents had

experienced that established ties between residents and deviants meant that local residents were more or less immune from victimization by local criminals. Following the renewal processes, where some residents had been relocated and now lived among strangers, more internal victimization was taking place, thus making residents more anxious in their everyday lives. Similar findings are described by Walklate & Evans (1999), when they compared what they term 'frightened communities' and 'defended communities'. Frightened communities were characterized by social disorganization, distrust in other residents, and local residents' fear of acting against crime and deviance. Consequently, such communities relied heavily on public authorities to manage crime and deviance. In contrast, defended communities were socially organized and ordered, with little fear of victimization in the broader community. Ultimately, the residents only relied on the authorities when local initiatives failed or when reliance on local gangs to maintain morally acceptable behaviour failed. These studies thus illustrate how reliance on and cooperation with the police might be associated with greater everyday fear of criminal victimization, while feelings of safety in one's neighbourhood seem to be dependent on mutual recognition and understandings of each other's everyday concerns across community groups. Thus, for those living in high-crime neighbourhoods, safety seems intrinsically bound up with what Wacquant termed interpersonal trust and local solidarity, which he found to be eroded with the development of territorial stigmatization. Now if Wacquant's findings hold true, and local solidarity erodes with the internal division and denigration documented not only in this study, but also in other ghettoized neighbourhoods in Denmark (Jensen & Christensen, 2012), there seem to be a risk that the positive dispositions towards the police found in this study might come at the expense of safety and security for residents in their everyday life in neighbourhoods like Blomsterengen. An even more unclear question at this point, is how the withdrawal of local solidarity between law-abiding and criminal community groups will influence how those engaged in crime and deviance feel as belonging to both community and society. When the third anti-gang package was presented in 2017, a brutalization of the gang milieu had been observed by the police. Could such a brutalization be related to a social isolation, not only from society but also from a local community where one previously would have found sympathy and forgiveness? Food for thought, and for future research.

Scientific contributions

The main contribution of this Ph.D. project to the research field of relations between ethnic minority communities and the police has been the empirical investigation of how ethnic minority *parents*, in a *Danish* context, view the police. Previous studies of the Danish ethnic minority populations perceptions of the police have been concerned mainly with perspectives of minority youth or from members of the criminal subculture. This project, has therefore addressed an empirical knowledge gap by investigating the adult perspective. Working from a legal consciousness approach, the main difference between parents and the wider youth focus was shown to be related to everyday concerns and routines. Thus, youth studies focus more on police encounters in the city (Koefod & Simonsen, 2010) or at schools (Solhjell, 2019). The parents in this study, however, reflected more on issues of managing crime in their own neighbourhood, on how to keep their children out of trouble and especially how to keep them from being recruited into gangs. A clearer focus on family life than youth life might be a reason why humiliating and brutal policing practices did not seem to have the same impact on the perceptions of the police as has been found in youth studies, though even youth have been found to situate their perceptions of the police (Novich & Hunt, 2018; Haller et al., 2018). Previous studies within this topic have described aspects of the adult perspective. Johansen (2017), for instance, examined how Palestinian families residing in a neighbourhood that came to figure on the Danish ghetto list navigated the gaze of the state, including the police. However, this was a narrower study of families perceived as problematic by the state. Christensen and Jensen (2012) conducted a fieldwork much a like the present study, but focused only little on the perception of the police. Rather, the internal community dynamics were in focus there. Thus, one study was narrow yet focused on the police, while the other broad and focused little on the police. The current study falls in between these two studies, focusing on the broader adult part of the community, while retaining the focus on the police. The effort during the fieldwork to reach a wide range of parents ensured this broader contribution of insights into how different community members perceive the police. Although this breadth of scope was a strength in regards to uncovering the wide range of perceptions and understandings of residents, it came at the cost of deeper knowledge of the respective family practices and experiences. More direct

observations of parent-police encounters could have given more concrete indications of how the perceptions are formed and provide better data for revealing how legal consciousness developed in situ. Also, although this study has maintained a broad scope with regards to different parents, it has not exhausted the list of different families. Language barriers made it difficult to approach some families with poor Danish or English skills. Nevertheless, most parents who participated in the study were approachable in the public life in Blomsterengen. Since the more secluded families are not represented in this study, I refer to Johansen in regards to insights into the everyday life of more secluded families. There was also one possible interlocutor who resisted my efforts to build a research relation, a father whom had had his children removed by the social services. Had there been more time to prolong the fieldwork, more such perspectives might have been included in the analysis. Not to mention parents who were still maintaining a life in crime. Some of the interlocutors expressed some religious convictions, but this is also an area that could do with more research attention in the future. The research question here would deal with whether such families live by other values to a greater extent than the more secular families represented in this study, and whether religious authorities are invoked at the expense of public authorities. There thus remains a knowledge gap to be dealt with in the future in regards to researching more family types and to delve deeper into the many types of family life.

With regard to the international research field of community-police relations, the study shows little evidence that perceptions of procedural injustice dominate the view of the police and thus influence police trust, legitimacy, cooperation and compliance (Tyler & Fagan, 2008; Tyler, 2001; Tyler, 2011). There were however documented a range stories of unfair police practices among the interlocutors. Though such experiences were widely shared, they simply had little influence on the general view of the police. Other situational circumstances tended to influence whether the police were to be trusted or not, or whether specific police practices were viewed as fair or not. As also noted in Appendix 1, a widespread willingness to cooperate with the police was found amongst the interlocutors. Where this was not the case, negative dispositions towards the police were found to co-exist with pro-criminal justice ideals (Carr et al., 2007). Apparently, ethnic minority parents had not turned their back on

the police. Rather, they disapproved of those policing practices that they had experienced and of the political directives allowing the police to act more harshly. The study thus supports the critique and nuancing perspectives on the procedural justice perspective by which perceptions of fairness are affected by situated interpretations of the problems that the police are addressing (Tyler, 2003, p. 301), and by the social dilemmas in the community (Tyler & Fagan, 2008, p. 262). Hence, even though questionable policing practices were observed, the police institution was still believed to be the guardian of proper moral values in society (Bradford & Jackson, 2016). In this regard, the study speaks to an ongoing discussion within the legal consciousness tradition (Chua & Engel, 2019), where one school maintains that even though citizens may oppose 'law', law still maintain a hegemony in their consciousness. This is because they still conceptualize problems in legal terms and see them as infringements of their legal rights (Ewick & Silbey, 1998). In contrast to this school, another school within the legal consciousness tradition argues that law is losing its hegemony, and that people are becoming increasingly alienated from 'law' (Hertogh, 2018). In this study, we have seen how a group of marginalized parents expressed a desire to turn towards the 'law' in order to manage crime and deviance in their neighbourhood. Moreover, we saw that even those who voiced a critique of the police maintained notions of how the police *ought* to work, thus expressing a desire to trust the law enforcement institutions and to be governed as legal subjects. Even from their marginalized perspective, the 'law' thus seemed to retain a hegemonic hold over the community. This faith might, however, be challenged through a broader empirical investigation of more secluded community members in neighbourhoods like Blomsterengen.

The project has also contributed to the field of penology with the study of gang policies. Although the control and policing of ethnic minorities and migrants has received increased research attention in a Nordic context during the last decade (Barker & Smith, 2021; Gundhus, 2020; 2021; Mulinari & Keskinen, 2020; Nilsson & Delica, 2015; Shammas, 2016; Aas, 2014), Danish research has been slow to follow (Barker & Smith, 2021). Appendix 3, therefore, discusses how the development of gang conflicts in the late 2000s led to a bifurcation in the Danish penal system, where select population groups (gang members) are treated differently than what we would normally expect in a Danish context. For gangs, the traditional concerns with

rehabilitation are put aside in favour of concerns for safety for the majority population, resulting in longer sentences, revoking of prisoner rights and privileges, and limited options for rehabilitative treatment during prison time. The bifurcation, however, also entails that this treatment is reserved for select groups only. The traditional penal system is thus intact for those deemed worthy to serve under the conventionally lenient terms. With these findings, the article contributes empirical insights into how the Danish state deals penologically under pressure from an increasingly heterogeneous population group and from untraditional violent forms of crime, thus contributing to the ongoing discussion of 'Nordic Exceptionalism', and if this ever existed (Barker, 2013; Pratt & Eriksson, 2013). Similar findings have been conducted in other Nordic countries (Barker, 2018). This contribution, however, focused on the juridical elements of the bifurcation practice. Further studies could elucidate the discursive and political dynamics behind the penal development, including how ethnic minorities, as an imagined 'problem population', have become an object of differentiated treatment. This is especially relevant with regard to penal populism studies, in order to explore the political concerns behind the development of untraditional penal politics in Denmark (Pratt, 2007; Todd-Kvam, 2019).

Concluding perspectives

The dissertation has shown the importance of involving citizens' everyday life struggles when studying their perception of the police. Based on the preliminary study of Danish anti-gang and anti-ghetto policies, an underlying curiosity throughout the project has been to investigate whether a strained relationship had developed between the police and the ethnic minority community. The everyday life focus of the study has been essential in developing a nuanced understanding of this. The status differentiation and resulting bifurcation in the Danish anti-gang and anti-ghetto policies might have created a political climate where acute tensions between the community and the police can develop out of even routine everyday encounters between the police and ethnic minority communities. And previous studies of how ethnic minority youth in Denmark experience police encounters reveal that a conflicting relationship has developed (Ansel-Henry & Jespersen, 2003; Haller et al., 2018; 2020). This study has further revealed how parents carry stories of brutal, humiliating and discriminatory treatment at the hands of the police. If we were to stop the investigation here, it

would seem that a strained relationship had developed. However, the parents' reflections on the police, including their situated evaluations, yielded a different answer. Under the right circumstances, even the most questionable policing practices and untraditional punitive treatment in the criminal justice system were tolerated and even desired. From an outside perspective, a concern develops here: Are these parents normalizing and internalizing their own marginalization? The parents, however, did not express any support for a zero-tolerance approach to policing in their neighbourhood, why a general normalization of punitive marginalization cannot be documented. Most parents maintained a distinction between what behaviour they would tolerate or at least try to manage without police involvement, and behaviour they deemed out of their control and beyond their responsibility to manage. It was in the latter situations that they called the police and expected them to their jobs effectively. Most parents also welcomed community policing initiatives, but only when they felt that they could trust the police to have good intentions. Such distinctions and reservations reveal that a reflective distance was kept between the community and the police. Nevertheless, it was hard to maintain this distance for some parents in a discursive climate where such reflective actions are represented as immoral and 'un-Danish' behaviour. And it should also be noted that the parents did voice a shared criticism of the police, when they shared stories of police brutality and discrimination. Also, stories of the police not responding when called and of being incapable of ensuring fundamental safety for residents living in a relatively speaking high-crime neighbourhood is a citizen critique of a police not delivering on its most fundamental function in society for one of the most disadvantaged citizen groups. Following my fieldwork in Blomsterengen, it is my clear conviction that as long as ethnic minority communities feel that they have been left unprotected, they will be forced to develop and maintain alternative means of managing crime and deviance. This also entails prioritizing local social relations and solidarity with deviant youth over police cooperation, and may entail looking the other way even when their children break the law. We should therefore be cautious about equating local solutions to issues of crime and deviance as evidence of distrust in the police or of 'parallel societies' where non-Danish values guide the relations to public institutions. Based on this study, the local solutions might just as well be the result of legal cynicism, practical necessities for ensuring safety in the parents' everyday lives, and an expression of care for one's neighbours. As a conclusion in regards to the

discussion on 'over-policing and under-protection', raised by Mulinary (2022), this study indicates that ethnic minority communities in Denmark indeed are over policed, yet also are relatively well protected.

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Appendices

Appendix 1

Madsen, M. (2021). Calling the Police from the 'ghetto': Legal Consciousness amongst Ethnic Minority Parents, *Nordic Journal of Criminology*, 22:2, 185-202

DOI: [10.1080/2578983X.2021.1985246](https://doi.org/10.1080/2578983X.2021.1985246)

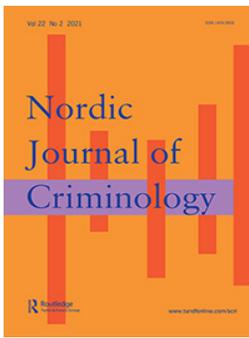
Appendix 2

Madsen, M. & Kammersgaard, T. (2022). Dining with the Police: Resistance and Acceptance of Community Policing, *Nordic Journal of Studies in Policing*, 9:1, 1–15

<https://doi.org/10.18261/njsp.9.1.6>

Appendix 3

Madsen, M. (in review). Exceptionalism for most, Excess for Other: The Legal Foundation of a Bifurcated Criminal Justice System in Denmark, submitted to *European Journal of Criminology*



Calling the police from the 'ghetto': legal consciousness amongst ethnic minority parents

Mads Madsen

To cite this article: Mads Madsen (2021) Calling the police from the 'ghetto': legal consciousness amongst ethnic minority parents, Nordic Journal of Criminology, 22:2, 185-202, DOI: [10.1080/2578983X.2021.1985246](https://doi.org/10.1080/2578983X.2021.1985246)

To link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.1080/2578983X.2021.1985246>



Published online: 16 Nov 2021.



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Calling the police from the ‘ghetto’: legal consciousness amongst ethnic minority parents

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ABSTRACT

Ethnic minority communities in Nordic countries are increasingly subject to stereotypical and proactive policing practices. These developments have inspired new research on police-community relations. This article presents findings on police cooperativeness amongst ethnic minority parents residing in a disadvantaged neighbourhood in Denmark, based on qualitative data from a ten-month field study. Taking a ‘critical legal consciousness’ approach, the analysis describes how the parents conceptualize the need to call the police based on their combined evaluation of ‘problematic situations’, expected outcome of involving the police and alternative actions they might take instead of calling the police. Although experiences of negative police encounters were found to be a key factor causing parents to be hesitant to call the police, certain situational factors were found to overrule such experiences and inspired cooperativeness. These are particularly those which parents described as dangerous or as threatening to the wider community. The article discusses whether ethnic minority parents’ willingness to call the police reflects a larger process of internal social distancing between law-abiding residents and a minority of undesirable deviants. The findings have implications for improving police-community relations and provide nuanced insights into the social life of a marginalized community.

ARTICLE HISTORY

Received 27 January 2021
Accepted 22 September 2021

KEYWORDS

Ethnic minority; police; cooperation; parents; ghetto

Introduction

Cooperation with police within ethnic minority communities has become a growing political concern in Nordic countries due to increased immigration into the region. In spite of this political awareness, very little Nordic research exists on the topic. Some recent studies have found that ethnic minority youths experience clearly unjustified and provocative police behaviour (Haller et al., 2018; Saarikkomäki et al., 2020), including discrimination (Wästerfors & Alm, 2020). As a result, they have developed narratives of humiliating and unnecessarily violent police practices (Haller et al., 2020) based on ‘experienced Otherness’ (Koefoed & Simonsen, 2010) and feelings of being perceived as a threat by the police (Solhjell et al., 2019). These studies generally link these minority youth experiences and narratives to proactive policing methods. Such experiences are not surprising in light of the vast literature documenting stereotypical policing

practices within Nordic police forces (Feinstein, 2015; Holmberg & Kyvsgaard, 2003; Mulinari & Keskinen, 2020; Petterson, 2013; Sollund, 2006, 2007; Uhnoo, 2015). The studies also mirror the research on negative experiences with being policed amongst marginalized communities in the US (Peck, 2015), UK (Bowling & Phillips, 2007; Yesufu, 2013) and continental Europe (Bucerius, 2014; Fassin, 2013; Miller et al., 2008; Moravcová, 2016).

Several of the emerging Nordic studies of ethnic minority populations' experiences with the police have invoked a procedural justice framework (Haller et al., 2018; Saarikkomäki et al., 2020; Solhjell et al., 2019). Procedural justice research has found overwhelming evidence that 'procedurally unjust' experiences of neighbourhood-specific, proactive, discriminatory, harassing and brutal police behaviour lead to uncooperative attitudes towards the police (e.g. Gau & Brunson, 2010, 2015; Tyler & Fagan, 2008; Tyler et al., 2015). Only a few Nordic studies, however, have addressed how perceptions of injustice influence minority groups' actual willingness to cooperate with the police in specific situations. Some procedural justice studies point out that certain contextualizing factors other than negative police experiences can also influence police cooperation (Carr et al., 2007; Novich & Hunt, 2018), a conclusion also noted in Nordic studies (Saarikkomäki et al., 2020; Solhjell et al., 2019; Wästerfors & Alm, 2020). This need to consider additional contextual factors echoes a critique of the procedural justice studies approach that has been developed within the Legal Consciousness Studies tradition. According to this critique, procedural justice studies, in their focus upon 'attitudes', tend to paint a homogenous profile of minority communities, overlooking variations in attitudes and different factors affecting cooperation (Silbey, 2005). This critique is supported by ethnographic studies of the management of crime in disadvantaged, high-crime neighbourhoods (e.g. Hancock, 2001; Walklate & Evans, 1999). In order to unfold such variances, Silbey calls for more studies that pay analytical attention to 'situated practices and repertoires of actions' in order to understand when, where, how and why people cooperate with the police (Silbey, 2005).

This article heeds this call by presenting findings from a ten-month field study amongst ethnic minority parents living in a disadvantaged neighbourhood in Denmark. The emerging Nordic literature on ethnic minority-police relations has focused mainly on youths, leaving a knowledge gap of adults' relations with the police. To address this, the present study focuses on parents' relation to the police. Grounded in critical legal consciousness studies, this article analyzes how different ethnic minority parents conceptualize the need to call on the police when facing crime and deviance in their neighbourhood across a range of situational circumstances.

Problematizing police-minority group relations in a Nordic context

The background for the present study derives from the recent political reactions to issues of rising crime and deviance within ethnic minority communities in the Nordic region and how these issues have affected relations between the communities and the police. These political responses have been described using terms such as 'punitive turn' (Shammas, 2016) and 'bordered penal populism' (Todd-Kvam, 2019) in Norway, 'penal nationalism' (Barker, 2018) in Sweden and a possible development of a 'penal state' (Nilsson & Delica, 2015) in Denmark. Central, although not unique, to the punitive developments described

in the Nordic countries has been an element of bifurcation (Ruggiero, 2013) in the penological changes, with an enhanced focus on ethnic minority population groups as objects of additional, intensive policing.

In Denmark, this bifurcated penal development has most notably materialized in the form of anti-ghettoization and anti-gang policies. However, little research attention has been given to the penological aspects of these policies. Instead, discourse analysis of anti-ghettoization policies (Freiesleben, 2015; Simonen, 2016), studies of territorial stigmatization (Christensen & Jensen, 2012; Larsen & Delica, 2019), and studies of urban regeneration (Johansen & Jensen, 2017) have all addressed how disadvantaged neighbourhoods have been conceived as 'ghettos' rather than as ethnic enclaves or, in fact, anti-ghettos (Wacquant, 2012) and the consequences for the residents' everyday lives. Little attention has been paid to the similar controversial anti-gang policies (Jacobsen, 2012; Nilsson & Delica, 2015). Here follows a presentation of the anti-ghettoization and anti-gang policies with a focus on the penological aspects. Since ethnic minority gang members often live in neighbourhoods formally classified as ghettos, many neighbourhood-specific ethnic minority communities have felt the impact of both policies.

Denmark's first anti-gang policy, from 2009, most notably introduced a gang-specific subsection into the Danish penal code, making it possible to double the punishment for gang-related offences. The police were granted the power and responsibility to determine the gang affiliation, which could then be used to invoke the subsection. It was also stressed that the police had to prevent gang conflicts from erupting, thus allowing for and expecting more proactive policing methods to be employed, including increased use of 'visitation zones' (stop-and-search), zone-bans, and pretrial detention (Folketingstidende, 2008-09, pp. 8113-8115). Subsequent policy developments have extended this approach to managing gangs in Denmark.

The anti-ghettoization strategies, as employed from 2010 and onwards, have been centred around identifying which neighbourhoods would be characterized as ghettos and updating a list of these socially disadvantaged communities annually. The qualifying criteria for being designated a 'ghetto' in 2018, when the study was conducted, were as follows (Transport, Bygnings- og Boligministeriet, 2018): neighbourhoods with 1000 residents or more, where the proportion of immigrants or descendants of immigrants from non-Western countries exceeds 50%. Additionally, the area must fulfil two or more of the following criteria:

- (1) Proportion of residents aged between 18 and 64 who are unemployed or not enrolled in secondary education exceeds 40%, as an average in the last two years
- (2) Proportion of residents over the age of 18 convicted under the penal code, law for weapons or law of narcotics is three times or more that of the Danish national average in the last two years
- (3) Proportion of residents aged 30-59 with only primary education exceeds 50% of the total number of residents in this age group
- (4) The average income of taxable residents aged 15-64, excluding those enrolled in education, is below 55% of the average income in the region.

In these strategies, the police were tasked with addressing youth crime and restoring trust in the criminal justice system through a 'problem-oriented' policing approach, including the following: a more visible presence, rapid and resolute response, multi-agency cooperation and proactive initiatives (Government, 2010; Ministeriet for By, Bolig og Landdistrikter, 2013). From 2018, the anti-ghettoization strategy developed a tough-on-crime approach by introducing the use of 'double punishment zones', making it possible to double the sentence for offences committed within a defined area, during a defined time period, mainly to be used when there is a risk of heightened gang violence or conflict (Government, 2018).

Altogether, ethnic minority communities in ghettoized neighbourhoods where gangs reside have experienced increased police presence, close cooperation between police, schools, housing associations and social services, high exposure to stop-and-search practices and a risk of high sentences for offenders.

Methods and data

Data for this study of parents' relations with police were gathered during ten months of fieldwork amongst ethnic minority parents (henceforth 'parents') in a neighbourhood that figures on the Danish 'ghetto list', and that has been the site of a violent gang conflict in the recent past. The neighbourhood is anonymized as Blomsterengen. The participants in the study have been anonymized, with only little identifiable background knowledge provided. The reason for choosing parents rather than random adults was that most of the initiatives within the gang and ghetto policies targeted either youths or families, indicating that parents as a group would have more experiences directly linked to the political development.

A combination of ethnographic observation and biographical interviews was used in order to ensure a data collection guided by the parents' perspective, rather than relying on unwarranted assumptions about the parents' lives (Hancock, 2001). The methods enabled an exploratory approach that could document nuances, variation, doubts and debates within the community, making it possible to analyse the formative dynamics of the relation between the parents and the police, as well as specific situational contexts of everyday life in a ghettoized neighbourhood subject to enhanced police attention.

Access was gained by way of a 'gatekeeper', a local, young adult of ethnic minority background, who was well respected amongst both local youths and adults. Data were gathered in the form of field notes and recordings from conversations, both informal and instrumental, and from observations of everyday activities in the neighbourhood. Biographical interviews were conducted with parents selected to represent a broad range of the diversity of parents in the neighbourhood: by age, gender, ethnic origin, religion, occupation, education, income, first/second generation immigrants/refugees, and criminal records. During the fieldwork, a municipal community centre was used as a base. The community centre was frequented by local residents of a broad variety – local youths would hang out, mothers would come by with their children during the day and it was also used for local activities and 'ethnic' club gatherings or by a mothers' group, who would cook dinner together once a week. Having the community centre as a base made it possible for me to follow residents over time, following up on conversations and observations. It also made it possible to select potential interview subjects based on the desired

diversity and to arrange the interviews. The temporal element of fieldwork made it possible to earn trust and build relations to some of the 'harder to reach' participants and to thus gain access to perspectives not readily shared during initial encounters. A total of nine fathers and twelve mothers became central figures, were followed more closely and eventually agreed to participate in interviews. Additionally, 12 young adults were also followed continuously, being friends and neighbours of the parents. The study complies with Danish guidelines for ethical research, with voluntary participation, informed consent, anonymization of participation and safe storage of data.

Language barriers restricted the study to those participants who spoke Danish or English. In a few instances, however, locals would translate conversation with people present in specific situations. Additionally, many parents living in the neighbourhood lived secluded lives, rarely leaving their homes, and were thus not represented in the study. Consequently, the participants in this study are mainly Danish-speaking and actively engaged with and participating in neighbourhood community activities. Besides these limitations, researcher subjectivity (a white, ethnic Danish, male, middle-class researcher, considered an outsider entering Blomsterengen with an agenda) meant that there were several social dynamics to be navigated in order to establish rapport with the residents. Inspired by Madison's notion of ethnography as performance (Madison, 2020), an approach of enacting the self-conscious outsider wanting to learn the insider perspective was used. This allowed for relationships where locals could act as 'guides' into their own everyday lives and worldviews, whilst the researcher could adopt an ignorant, yet curious, attitude.

All interviews and field notes were transcribed and then coded using NVivo. The coding process followed two tracks. First, there were predefined themes of interest that were used as broad thematic codes. Such themes included police, politics/polices and parent responsibility. This was followed by an inductive coding process in which I attempted to identify sub-themes under the three main themes, but also to identify other themes emerging from the data. Potential sub-themes were social services, crime and deviance and community life. Each of these codes also included their own sub-themes. This article draws on data primarily coded as mentioning the police, supplemented with codes revolving around crime and deviance.

Analytical framework

The following analysis draws upon the 'critical' strand of Legal Consciousness Studies as put forth by Merry (1990) and Ewick and Silbey (1998). Here, people's stories, recollections and reflections are seen as sources of information about how people 'interpret and invoke law's language, authority, and procedures to organize their lives and manage their relationships' (Ewick & Silbey, 1998, p. 20). This analytical approach highlights the way in which law's meaningfulness is constructed by people as it emerges in their everyday lives (Ewick & Silbey, 1998, p. 249; Merry, 1990, p. 37). These constructions are based on practical and experienced knowledge of how law works in practice, and how this knowledge corresponds to ideas of how law ought to work (Ewick & Silbey, 1998, p. 46; Merry, 1990, p. 5). Based on such experiences, people develop a 'consciousness' of how law can be expected to work and what kind of situations they can interpret as troubling in legal terms, making it possible for people to access the meaningfulness of turning to law in

different situations conceptualized as (legally) problematic (Ewick & Silbey, 1998, p. 41; Merry, 1990, p. 37). The situational specificity of the meaningfulness of law means that people do not possess a single interpretation of law. Rather, this analytical approach allows for an understanding of how people, in some situations, carry favourable interpretations of law, whilst they turn their backs on law under different circumstances (Ewick & Silbey, 1998, p. 50). The experience-based nature of people's legal consciousness demands a processual understanding of the meaning of certain laws for an individual, making it possible to study changes in interpretations of laws (Merry, 1990, p. 5). Empirical analysis of legal consciousness therefore aims at describing how people draw upon law in varying problematic situations and how they develop different consciousnesses of laws' practical relevance for different situations (Ewick & Silbey, 1998, p. 50). It follows that a critical Legal Consciousness Studies approach aims to describe how people conceptualize situations as problematic and law as either helpful or unwanted as a resource to manage problematic situations. In addition, Legal Consciousness Studies trace how these conceptualizations of 'problematic situations' and of law are developed through experiences of invoking law. These conceptualizations and experiences are studied through a focus on how people talk about law, and what legal actions they take.

Findings

In line with previous findings from research on social life in Danish 'ghetto' neighbourhoods (Christensen & Jensen, 2012), most parents were outspokenly content with life in Blomsterengen. Amongst many parents, there was a trusting relationship such that a few parents, often friends or cousins, could look after larger groups of children from several families. This trusting relationship between the parents made it possible for them to allow the children to play in the yards and playground between the apartment blocks, while the parents took care of the home or went to work, feeling content that the children were safe. This system was reinforced through social activities planned and held by the youth club and housing association. During the fieldwork, this trustful social order dominated the social life in Blomsterengen. It was rarely disturbed—deviance was rare or invisible—and while the police patrolled the area, they rarely addressed residents in a conflicting manner. The parents seemed to be in control of any minor social problems that arose. This illustrates an important point of distinction to be aware of in regard to related studies: although the term 'ghetto' is formally used to describe Blomsterengen, the neighbourhood is not comparable to, for instance, East Harlem with its 'culture of terror' (Bourgois, 1996). Violence and disorder in Blomsterengen are episodic rather than routine.

From the parents' recollections and explanations of deciding whether to call the police, three distinct conceptualizations of 'problematic situations' have been identified. Below, it will be exemplified how different parents conceptualized the relevance of calling the police regarding each of these three situations, highlighting how the parents drew on both their experiences and expectations of what would happen if they called the police. Where relevant, it will be shown how the conceptualizations of police also depended on other resources that were on hand. In this sense, the parents' reliance on police to resolve the problematic situation was part of an evaluative process of determining the proper action to take.

Everyday deviance

The type of problematic situation that most parents tended to invoke when discussing whether they would call the police centred on everyday occurrences of deviance and youth crime. Often, it was local deviants who stirred up trouble, and this included everything from minor youth crime, to vandalism, to outright violent behaviour. A general tendency amongst the parents was to be concerned about the behaviour of the deviants and how best to ensure that, in time, these youths would settle down and learn to behave themselves. Other parents simply conceptualized their behaviour as annoying and considered calling the police the best option for ensuring that the deviant refrained from the behaviour, both immediately and in the future.

Jamal, a father and local social worker in his forties, exemplified the concern for the youths' behaviour when he related his general inclination to refrain from calling the police:

Jamal: I could make them [local troublemakers] stop without calling the police. And I prefer to do that, then you've stopped the wrongdoing and you show the youth that, 'Listen, I could have called the police, and you would have been arrested. But now I've made you stop, so just walk away, but remember that I'll tell your parents about it.' [...] If I had stopped them by calling the police, then he would have been arrested. Arrested, sentenced, locked up, and then I would sit and think 'Shit, man, that was my fault.' Sure, he could just not have done it, but I could actually have stopped him in a different way. When he gets out, he'll be even worse than before, and do worse things. So, I don't help him by throwing him into prison. And the parents, they just become annoyed and disappointed in you and lose trust in you. Because you practically had their child taken from them.

In Jamal's experience, the consequence of going to prison is that a person ends up in a worse situation. This concern for the youths' future lives worked as a core argument for him trying not to involve the police. His conception of the negative consequences of going to prison was grounded in his experiences of growing up in Blomsterengen and seeing how young men who came back from prison struggled to make conforming lives afterwards. He had also experienced it from the 'inside' when, during his youth, he had briefly been involved with a deviant youth group. Hence, if a problematic situation could be managed in a more informal way, without bringing in outside authorities, he preferred that. Jamal's main resource enabling him to manage such situations without involving the police was his social status in the neighbourhood. His own history of deviance and his presence as a neighbour and social worker in the youths' lives made him respected by most of the deviant youths. Their respect enabled him to confront the troublemakers while also protecting him from retaliation.

Researcher: Would there be any risks for you in calling the police?

Jamal: There would be risks for others, yes, but not for me. I'm, like, untouchable in this neighbourhood, but that is because of my own background and family. For others, there would be a risk, and many have been through a lot because they've called the police. They had their cars burned, home burglarized and all kinds of things, so much that they end up moving out.

Losing local respect would thus force Jamal to deal with problematic situations by involving the police. The example of Jamal's refraining from calling the police shows how the intersection of police and social relations made it meaningful to avoid involving the police.

Whereas Jamal refrained from calling the police because of his concern for the youths, Sanaa, a mother in her thirties, used her concern to justify precisely the opposite. She would call the police as an act of concern for the youths:

Sanaa: I call it in, so I help both the one who is hurt and the one doing harm . . . We have a lot of youths in the neighbourhood; I'm honest with them, I tell them that I'll call the police. They say, 'Are you serious?!', and I'm like, 'Yes of course I call, [. . .] also for your own sake, so you don't end up in prison for many years'. I would rather call now and have it stopped before it gets much worse.

Sanaa believed that the timely involvement of the criminal justice system would help put the deviants on the right track. Calling the police would thus not only protect a potential victim here and now but would also help the deviants in the long run. Being part of a large family in Blomsterengen, Sanaa could afford to be selective when forging social ties and she was not afraid to jeopardize social relations by calling the police. In her experience, deviant youths had been failed by their parents, who had not lived up to their responsibilities, which is why in Sanaa's view, working with the youths' parents was not a viable option. She viewed the police and the other social agencies as allies in a pedagogical struggle to reform the youths whose parents were not caring properly for them.

Other parents were more pragmatic than concerned in their conceptualization of the police as an ally with regard to everyday deviance. Haamid, for instance, a father in his early fifties and a war veteran, related a story of a teenager who would drive recklessly around the neighbourhood on a noisy scooter. When explaining why he decided to confront the youth directly and threatened him with going to his family, he noted that a youth engaged in behaviour like that had no respect for the police. Threatening to, or actually calling, the police would, therefore, not deter the youth from future reckless driving; only by going to his family would he feel ashamed enough to cease his behaviour. In this way, Haamid relied on a conceptualization of the police as simply ineffective in managing everyday deviance.

Dangerous situations

Some parents noted that some situations were so distinctly different in nature from the 'everyday deviance' covered above that they would handle them differently. These were main situations conceptualized as dangerous and risky to intervene in, often involving the use of weapons and the presence of outsiders. In these risky situations, the parents redirected their concern away from the deviants and towards themselves and their families and neighbours.

Eman, a mother in her thirties who had spent her childhood in Blomsterengen, moved out and then later returned to be close to her family, was not shy of scolding deviant youths for minor troubles. In more serious criminal situations, however, she always called the police out of principle. She expressed this clearly in regard to dangerous situations:

Sometimes the police simply have to handle it. Like knife stabbings, I just can't get involved in that!

Eman held a strong belief that people had to live with the consequences of their choices, which is why she did not see it as her responsibility to protect the youths from the criminal justice system, especially when they overtly threatened the safety of others. It became clear how strongly she felt about this during a conversation about the son of one of her friends. The son was facing a double penalty sentencing for a gang-related shooting. Whilst the mother thought that some punishment was fair, she thought that the double sentence was unnecessarily unjust. Eman, whilst sympathetic to the distress of the mother, expressed little concern for the son:

It's fine, period. There is nothing to complain about. He is grown up and should learn to make decisions for himself. The punishment is his. Live with it. Ice cold.

Unlike Jamal and Sanaa in the previous section, Eman shows little concern for how the criminal justice system operates, even when aware of the controversial use of double-length sentences. It is her right and natural response to violent crime to rely on the police for protection.

An example of how outsiders were conceptualized as dangerous is illustrated by Laila, a mother in her forties who had grown up in Blomsterengen, and who would normally address crime and deviance herself. Laila described the problem of dealing with outsiders:

As a parent, you feel like it's a little difficult to go over there and say, 'You know what, dude, take that gun of yours and piss off!' If it had been one of our own, then I wouldn't have had a problem with it. I was a bit more sceptical: What is it they want? What are they up to? And what is it they are dragging our boys into?

The uncertainties Laila expresses are indicative of the different situation when confronting outsiders: not understanding them and not knowing what to expect from a confrontation. Thus, not knowing the troublemakers made it risky to rely on the same strategies to manage them as they could have used against local deviants. Adnaan, a father in his thirties who had grown up in Blomsterengen and who also normally confronted troublemakers directly, expressed the problem as *him being unknown by the outsiders*, contrary to Laila's concern of her not knowing the deviant. Adnaan recounted a time when Blomsterengen was 'invaded' by a gang from another neighbourhood:

Those fuckheads from another neighbourhood, they didn't know me. They didn't know I had lived here my whole life, grown up here. When I walked by them, they would look at me, like they assessed whether to stab me or beat me or something.

The threat Adnaan suddenly felt from the assessing gaze of the outsiders shows that when the recognition that comes from experiences of living together is lacking, it becomes dangerous to confront them and even to just walk past them. As a consequence of these uncertainties posed by outsiders, many parents explained that they actively supported the police in their struggle to control outside gang members. They would do this by steering clear of public areas in Blomsterengen (keeping their children at home, leaving their apartment only when absolutely necessary, etc.), or by directly helping the police by sharing knowledge with them, looking out for suspicious cars, noting licence plates, and calling them when something happened. At the same

time, the parents also accepted that the police would patrol the neighbourhood to conduct 'stop and search' operations on whomever they wanted, including innocent and uninvolved residents. Adnaan, for instance, stated:

If they don't search me, how are they to know I'm not involved?

Since neither the outsiders nor the police possessed the local knowledge to distinguish law-abiding residents from deviant or local from outsider, the parents conceptualized the expansive police activity as a necessary measure. It should be noted here that, following the gang conflict described by Adnaan, almost all parents who participated in the study expressed gratitude and confidence in the police's ability to manage gang conflicts, further underscoring the importance of experiences in the conceptualization of police as reliable 'partners' in ensuring security in their communities.

This confidence in the police, however, was not expressed in regard to all dangerous situations. Experiences of having been unprotected were found to promote a consciousness of a need to ensure one's own protection. Hence, some parents and other residents organized themselves in order to deter and even confront deviants. Taking action on their own, rather than calling the police in these situations, was not motivated by a concern for the deviants' welfare. Rather, their self-organization was based on a conceptualization of the police as outsiders and therefore, inherently limited in their capacity to ensure the needed protection from dangerous individuals residing in or roaming the neighbourhood.

An example of such local mobilization was presented by Shadi, a local young adult who helped mobilize fathers and other residents in a network that could be activated via a telephone chain when unwanted individuals were spotted in Blomsterengen. When activated, the members of the network would assemble and, through strength in numbers, make it clear to the outsiders that they were not welcome. Shadi exemplified the need to mobilize local forces in order to confront dangerous outsiders with a story about when he himself was assaulted with a knife while leaving his apartment. Fortunately, the attacker's knife was 'caught' by his backpack, and the assailant fled. It turned out that Shadi had been mistaken for his cousin, who was the intended target. When asked why the network did not just contact the police when unwanted outsiders were spotted, Shadi responded:

They [the police] are too slow. The police, the municipality. They have had years to stop this. But they can't, they don't know what to do. The police, they can't do anything before a shot is fired – we can't go around waiting for that. Also, it takes, what, three months from arrest until you go to prison, time where they are still dangerous! The ladies from the municipality just go home after work or go to a café and talk about the good job they're doing. They don't do shit! And while they go to a café, we live here, where the trouble still exists after 4pm. So now we have to do it ourselves!

Following that, Shadi posed the rhetorical question: 'How would calling the police protect him from the knife stabbing he had experienced?' Hence, the mobilization of local residents was motivated both by conceptualization of needing immediate and constant protection from dangerous individuals and by an experience-based conceptualization of the police having been unable to ensure such immediate and lasting protection. This conceptualization contrasted their locally based, immediate response with a view of the

police as an 'outside' force, not always present in the neighbourhood when they were needed. Shadi thereby expressed a temporal distinction felt by residents between *living* and *working* in Blomsterengen.

This consciousness of limits of police protection is not unlike Anderson's finding that 'the code of the street emerges where the influence of the police ends and personal responsibility for one's safety is felt to begin' (Anderson, 1999, p. 10). However, Shadi does not deny that, at an ideal level, it remains the police's responsibility to ensure safety and protection. Nor does the network go out of its way to avoid police involvement. They simply conclude that relying on police is not sufficient.

Threats to the community

Third, parents conceptualized some situations as threatening not only to them or their children but also to the community as such. This conceptualization was mainly associated with local deviants, whose behaviour was viewed by the parents as ignorant of the consequences to the wider community or to the image of the neighbourhood, which is why it was perceived as reinforcing the existing negative 'ghetto' stigma upon the neighbourhood. In such situations, parents made clear distinctions between those perceived as belonging to the community and those who were unwelcome. This manner of distancing themselves from the deviants enabled the parents to become unconcerned with the consequences of calling the police on the deviants and legitimized other approaches to managing the deviants than those which parents would rely upon in regard to 'everyday deviance'.

Tariq, a father in his forties, conceptualized it as 'right' to call the police in situations where outsiders were seen as bringing trouble into the neighbourhood without any regard for the local residents:

It's the same boys who stir up trouble in the city and hustle people, and then tell them, 'Whoa, just come to our neighbourhood if you want to do something about it.' And then they come here, putting the ordinary young boys at risk of being hurt, boys who don't have anything to do with it.

Because of what he viewed as the deviants' indifferent attitude, Tariq allowed himself to be similarly indifferent. With a clear conscience, he would call the police on them. Tariq had grown up in Blomsterengen and had himself been part of a delinquent group of boys. From his own experience of being 'inside', he knew how the deviants behaved and thought. Having crossed 'positions', he was aware that one could choose either one, which is why he also believed that one had to live with the consequences of that choice. Other fathers with a similar history of criminal involvement confirmed that if one was part of that world, police intervention was part of the game. Therefore, Tariq did not see it as a responsibility of law-abiding residents to protect youths with criminal lifestyles from the police.

The network that Shadi helped to mobilize relied on a conceptualization of local deviants as responsible for luring outsiders to the neighbourhood similar to Tariq's reasoning. The network would confront these local youths and present them with a choice: either they moved out or they refrained from deviant activities that had consequences for the community. If not, the network would then inform the housing association of their behaviour, with the possibility that they would be evicted. Going to

the housing association thus presented itself as an alternative to going to the police in order to solve the temporal dilemma of preventing dangerous situations from arising by removing the cause of their development.

Another example of a parent describing her distancing to local deviants was when Laila (also quoted earlier) blamed local troublemakers for the implementation of a new approach to the anti-ghettoization policies in which some apartment blocks in Blomsterengen would be demolished and their residents relocated (Government, 2018). As a result, Laila blamed the deviant youths for causing Blomsterengen to appear on the ghetto list and she abandoned her otherwise dominant inclination to refrain from calling the police on local youths for 'everyday deviance'. In her view, the youths had forfeited their right to the neighbourhood:

It's our neighbourhood. Nobody should ruin it. They [the troublemakers] should get out of here. [...] They ruin it for our children. It doesn't make any sense that we should move out, and they can stay here. Then it's better that they should leave, and we can stay. Sure, I know that it's a ghetto area, and it might not be the best place to live when you have children. But it's our neighbourhood, and they shouldn't be allowed to ruin it.

Like Tariq, Laila distanced herself from the local deviants because of the consequences of the youths' actions to the wider community. The difference, however, was that she was not reacting to the youths' actions as such, but to the political implications for the entire neighbourhood following their behaviour. Laila was also cited earlier in the section 'Dangerous Situations'. This shows how one parent can have a different conceptualization of the relevance of calling the police based on situational differences. Laila's distancing from the deviants shows how conceptions develop and change according to changing life conditions. Her changing inclination exemplifies the processual nature of a legal consciousness.

Discussion

This study contributes to the existing literature on police cooperativeness in the Nordic countries in several ways. First, by using the analytical concept 'problematic situations', it is shown how evaluations of experienced police encounters are influenced by situational circumstances other than police practices. For instance, negative experiences following police interventions in the community are downplayed when facing the risks of harm to self or others. In this regard, the study supports the finding from other Nordic studies that contrary to procedural justice findings (Tyler & Fagan, 2008), ethnic minority groups are more nuanced in their assessments of policing practices when evaluating them as fair/unfair (Saarikomäki et al., 2020; Solhjell et al., 2019; Wästerfors & Alm, 2020). This study shows that crime and insecurity as well as what has been described as 'territorial stigmatization' (Christensen & Jensen, 2012; Wacquant, 2007) are especially the types of situational circumstances that influence ethnic minority parents' decisions to involve the police. Consequently, negative perceptions of the police were found to coexist with cooperativeness. Second, by focusing on police cooperation this study goes beyond previous Nordic studies in that it not only analyses experiences of police encounters but also how these are perceived. The study goes beyond this by investigating how these experiences have affected parents' willingness to call the police when confronted with

a troublesome encounter. Following the first point, experiences with and perceptions of the police were found to influence cooperation only partially. Whilst hesitation to call the police could be rooted in experiences of unjust and ineffective policing practices, these concerns could be overridden by other situational circumstances such as the perceived risk of dealing with dangerous outsiders. Third, the study shows that, although the parents belonged to a neighbourhood-defined community, no collective attitude was identified, nor could the respective attitudes between the parents be divided into cooperative versus uncooperative as sometimes argued by procedural justice studies (e.g. Tyler et al., 2015). Rather, the same parent could be positively disposed towards calling the police in some situations while being hesitant to call them in others. These variations support Wästerfors and Alm's finding that perceptions of procedural justice are situationally dependent, which can explain why ethnic minority youths find police stops acceptable in some situations and humiliating in others (Wästerfors & Alm, 2020). Hence, no general stance towards calling the police could be found amongst the parents.

Nevertheless, and despite such variations, the study finds a noteworthy willingness among the parents to call the police *across a range of different 'problematic situations'*. This finding is in contrast to other studies of similar communities. According to these, the parents of this study would be most likely to express distrust and uncooperativeness towards the police due to police insensibilities towards community dynamics (Hancock, 2001; Walklate & Evans, 1999), discriminatory and unjust treatment by the police against minorities (Carr et al., 2007; Gau & Brunson, 2010, 2015), and harassment or brutal police behaviour (Anderson, 1999; Bourgois, 1996; Fassin, 2013). The examples of Jamal, Haamid and Shadi show that such concerns were certainly present within the community in Blomsterengen. However, especially two factors were identified to cause parents to disregard such concerns and negative experiences of the police. First, Blomsterengen represents a Danish equivalent to a high-crime neighbourhood. Parents were constantly aware that violent crime could take place in their neighbourhood, a condition that made many parents hesitant towards managing crime and deviance by themselves out of concern for their own safety. Moreover, by observing that some of the deviant youths showed little concern for the damage they were causing the community as a whole, the parents' concern for these young men eroded, as exemplified by Tariq in the section 'threats to the community'. This caused a process of social distancing between the community's law-abiding residents and the deviants, who they felt threatened the social order. Following, some parents even developed perceptions of procedural justice in regard to policing practices which the literature presented above traditionally describe as unjust, when these practices were concerned with managing the dangerous individuals (see the example of Adnaan in the 'dangerous situations' section). Second, this process of social distancing was enhanced by a perceived unjust territorial stigmatization imposed on the whole community through the anti-ghettoization policies. Christensen and Jensen have found how residents in another neighbourhood on the ghetto list dis-identified with this stigma (Christensen & Jensen, 2012, Chapter 4). Instead, they tried to cleanse themselves of the stigma by making a distinction between themselves and those residents they deemed non-respectable (Christensen & Jensen, 2012, Chapters 4, 5). Laila's sudden shift in inclination towards calling the police when the threat of demolitions was announced, as described in the section 'threats to the community', seems to exemplify a similar strategy of transferring the stigma onto deviant youths. Laila distinguishes between

those who deserve to reside in her neighbourhood and those who should be evicted. Sanaa's remarks about 'irresponsible parents' (described above in the section on 'Everyday Deviance') is further in line with Christensen and Jensen's finding of internal social distancing, in that they also found that parenting practices were used a measure of respectability (Christensen & Jensen, 2012, Chapter 5). The unexpected willingness towards calling the police amongst parents in Blomsterengen when confronted with various problematic situations, therefore, seems related to the erosion of social ties between law-abiding and deviant community members, where deviants are increasingly conceptualized as unwanted in the neighbourhood. Though this seemingly results in more cooperation between the ethnic minority parents and the police, previous studies of the breakdown of social relations in marginalized communities as a result of policy intervention indicate that it might lead to higher levels of crime as well as more fear of crime amongst residents (Thompson et al., 2013). It follows that high levels of police cooperativeness might appear as a positive development at first sight, but might conceal a more negative development of insecurity within the community.

Due to limitations in the data, no conclusion can be drawn with regard to how socio-demographic factors influenced ethnic minority parents' cooperation with the police. In light of the social divisions described above, however, it seems that willingness to call the police was strongest within the self-proclaimed 'responsible parent' group. Hesitancy about involving the police seemed more related to previous experiences from a deviant past and to experiences of the police as ineffective in managing crime and deviance. With regard to minor incidents, the data *tentatively* show that mothers expressed more willingness to call the police, whereas fathers tended to be more hesitant. This gendered difference did not exist in terms of willingness to address deviants directly, since both mothers and fathers expressed a readiness to do so even when the situations turned dangerous and if someone was hurt.

Although the parents who participated in this study represent a broad and diverse sample within the parent group in Blomsterengen, more studies are needed to obtain a full picture of the legal consciousness of calling the police in neighbourhoods such as Blomsterengen. In particular, studies on non-parents, residents more withdrawn from community activities, residents not included due to language barriers, residents with stronger religious beliefs and residents with more fragile citizenship/resident status could reveal more nuances and a more widespread distrust in the police than what have been described among the persons followed in this study. Also, the present study has focused narrowly on the consciousnesses revolving around calling the police. Further studies should address residents' consciousness about other aspects of law.

The findings are relevant for future police strategies for improving police-community relations in Danish ghettoized neighbourhoods as they provide insight into the types of situations in which residents are less inclined towards calling the police and what experiences influence cooperativeness amongst residents. Together, this gives indications of where local police forces in these neighbourhoods might focus their resources in order to promote more trust and cooperation within potentially distrustful parents' groups.

The findings have also revealed nuances of the social life within the ethnic minority community that challenge the dominant political discourse about 'parallel societies' in these communities in Denmark. In particular, the widespread willingness to cooperate

with the police stands in contrast to this representation of the community as does the finding that hesitancy towards working with the police is based on experiences of police effectiveness and treatment of deviants rather than on foreign cultural values.

Conclusion

Ethnic minority communities in Denmark have been increasingly subjected to stereotypical, proactive and multi-agency policing practices over the past two decades. International research on similar developments questions how these practices have influenced the minority communities' willingness to cooperate with the police. Based on data from a ten-month field study amongst ethnic minority parents living in a neighbourhood officially classified as a 'ghetto', this article has shown that these policing practices have led to some hesitancy about calling the police within the ethnic minority community. However, a range of situational circumstances tend to override this hesitancy and lead the parents to calling the police. Main situations conceptualized as 'dangerous' or as threatening to the wider community are found to lead to such a willingness. It is argued that these types of situations represent a process of internal social division within the community, causing deviant youths to be conceptualized as unwanted and making parents less concerned about what will happen to them following the involvement of the police. Some parents nevertheless maintain a widespread distrust in the police's ability to provide rapid and lasting protection against violent forms of crime, which is why especially in regard to such situations, alternative ways to ensure protection are developed by parents and other residents.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

Funding

This work was supported by the Independent Research Fund Denmark (Det Frie Forskningsråd) [24184].

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Title:	Dining with the police: resistance and acceptance of community policing
Authors:	Mads Madsen, Tobias Kammergaard

The article/manuscript is: Published Accepted Submitted In preparation

If published, state full reference:

If accepted or submitted, state journal: Nordic Journal of Studies in Policing

Has the article/manuscript previously been used in other PhD or doctoral dissertations?

No Yes If yes, give details:

The PhD student has contributed to the elements of this article/manuscript as follows:

- A. Has essentially done all the work
- B. Major contribution
- C. Equal contribution
- D. Minor contribution
- E. Not relevant

Element	Extent (A-E)
1. Formulation/identification of the scientific problem	B
2. Planning of the experiments/methodology design and development	A
3. Involvement in the experimental work/clinical studies/data collection	A
4. Interpretation of the results	B
5. Writing of the first draft of the manuscript	B
6. Finalization of the manuscript and submission	B

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Dining with the Police

Resistance and Acceptance of Community Policing

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Abstract

While community policing has been widely studied with regard to policing practices and attitudes of personnel engaged in community work, the reception of community policing from a community perspective has received considerably less attention. Based on 10 months of fieldwork in a Danish neighbourhood officially designated as a ghetto, this article explores local residents' reception of a specific community policing initiative. We find that community policing initiatives, while possibly benevolent in intent, might not always be received enthusiastically by all segments of the community. We argue that acceptance or rejection of such initiatives depends on the ability of the police to inscribe its initiatives into the social processes which constitute the social dynamics of the community and that a reflexive awareness of social relations between the police and the community can help the police reach distrusting community groups.

Keywords

Community policing, ethnic minority, extended case study, Denmark, territorial stigmatisation

1. Introduction

The policing of ethnic minority communities is a central and recurring topic in contemporary policing research. In particular, the question of whether ethnic minorities are disproportionately stopped and searched has garnered much research attention (Meehan & Ponder, 2002; Holmberg & Kyvsgaard, 2003; Miller et al., 2008). In particular, studies of how minority groups experiences police interactions have been conducted in the US (Brunson, 2007), the UK (Sharp & Atherton, 2007) and more recently in the Nordic countries (Solhjell et al., 2019; Saarikkomäki et al. 2020; Haller et al., 2020a, 2020b). This research has mostly focused on young people, leaving us with little insight on adult experiences of being policed. Community policing has also been a central element in the policing of ethnic minority communities (Lea & Young, 1993), though fewer studies have been conducted on how

such policing practices are experienced from community perspective. This article addresses both these knowledge gaps by providing an ‘extended case study’ of how adult community members, who are not necessarily stopped or addressed directly by the police, respond and react to the implementation of a community policing initiative in their neighbourhood. The article illustrates how the reception of community policing initiatives can be highly contested within communities. Drawing on the notions of ‘lateral denigration’ (Wacquant, 2007) and ‘ambient policing’ (Loader, 2006), we show that internal social differentiation within the community lead to varied interpretations of the initiative and differing inclination to support the policing approach. Based on the findings, we argue that support for community policing initiatives depends on the ability of the police to inscribe themselves positively into the socio-historical dynamics within a targeted community and we emphasise the importance of taking such dynamics into account when devising and implementing community policing initiatives, especially in marginalised or otherwise disadvantaged neighbourhoods.

1.1 The contested role of ‘community’ in community policing

By invoking and activating ‘the community’, community policing generally strives to be in greater correspondence with local community norms and desires, aiming at increased accountability and legitimacy in the community’s perception (Brogden & Nijhar, 2005; Cordner, 2014; Skogan, 2006; Trojanowicz & Bucqueroux, 1998). Several commentators have, however, argued that community-orientated policing has been reconfigured by law-and-order politics, securitisation and order-maintenance policing, favouring a control-orientated version of community policing and thus prioritising neighbourhood safety over accountability (Garland, 2001; Squires, 2006; Brogden & Nijhar, 2005; Liederbach et al., 2008; Reiner, 2010). Others have further pointed out that community policing only presumes to rearrange power relations while maintaining state objectives (Garland, 2001; Innes et al., 2020; Larsson, 2017; Somerville, 2009) and that due to institutional (Bullock & Johnson, 2018; Craig et al., 2010; Fielding, 2001; Harfield, 1997) and cultural (Campeau, 2019; Fielding, 2001; Herbert, 2006; Liederbach et al., 2008; O’Neill, 2017; Pelfrey, 2004) barriers, police forces struggle to adjust to local demands. This leaves communities’ role in community policing approaches contested, ranging from active partners to objects of control.

While the employment of community policing has received quite thorough research attention, little is known about how communities react to being ‘community policed’. Lyons’ (1999) study of the implementation of community policing in Seattle is a rare example of a study that includes community reactions and finds that the inherent position of the police as an outside force unavoidably makes community acceptance a barrier for successful community policing approaches. Herbert’s (2006) study, also from Seattle, shows how communities do not represent coherent entities to be included in partnerships. Some other studies of community perspectives have either still focused on police personnel’s perceptions of how they have been received (Bullock & Johnson, 2018) or on community members’ active participation in partnership *meetings* (Gasper & Davis, 2018) and participation in partnership crime-prevention activities (Choi & Lee, 2016; Bullock & Sindall, 2014), thus focusing on more formal participation. These studies indicate that class-related factors and specific neighbourhood contextual factors influence levels of support (Badiora & Ntamark, 2020; Bullock & Sindall, 2014), and neighbourhood attachment and belonging in particular have been found to promote participation and support (Badiora & Ntamark, 2020; Bullock & Sindall, 2014; Gasper & Davis, 2018). Thacher (2001a) has, however, pointed out that com-

munity policing that only pays attention to those who actively cooperate risk only being responsive to more resourceful community members, failing to deliver equal distribution of services to all. However, recent studies have shown that such efforts to reach marginalised groups in community policing can be successful (Kammersgaard, 2019; Houborg et al., in press).

Communities might respond to how community policing influences other public services provided to the community. Multi-agency and plural policing are integral elements of community policing (Loader, 2000; Squires, 2006). Though the police and other public institutions share goals, they serve different social functions, which makes institutional segregation key to delivering on these different functions simultaneously (Thacher, 2001b). By promoting cooperation between institutions, community policing can threaten this segregation when advancing safety and order concerns (Herbert, 2006, chap. 4). Simon (2007) has coined the term “governing through crime” to describe a development where social problems increasingly become reconfigured as issues of crime and security, making social issues a police responsibility. Loader (2006) describes a similar process in relation to the implementation of community policing and argues that security has “become the prevailing discourse for understanding social problems, the lens through which they are defined, examined, and acted upon” (p. 208). With the term “ambient policing”, he warns that policing strategies that aim at giving the police a broad and constant presence within marginalised communities might in fact turn out to undermine security and trust in the police, especially for the most disadvantaged groups in such communities, because it becomes “pervasive” (Loader, 2006, p. 204).

1.2 Background – community policing in Denmark

Community policing has been tried in Denmark (Balvig & Holmberg, 2004), though during the last decades the Danish police force has undergone major reorganisation leading to centralisation (Holmberg, 2014). One exception to the centralisation of the Danish police force has been the policing of officially termed ghetto areas.

Before 2010, Danish ghettoisation policies mainly addressed issues of integration (Danish government, 2004, p. 7). This changed with a new anti-ghettoisation strategy in 2010, that declared that “parallel societies” had emerged, where respect for the public authorities declined, unemployment was widespread and where irresponsible parenting resulted in high levels of youth crime and deviance (Danish Government, 2010). A central part of this strategy was defining a set of criteria for when a neighbourhood qualified as a ghetto, which made it possible to list these neighbourhoods to monitor the progress of countering ghettoisation. This strategy has been expanded twice, in 2013 and 2018, and the criteria have changed over time. During the fieldwork behind this study, the criteria were neighbourhoods with 1,000 residents or more, where at least 50 per cent of the residents were immigrants or descendants of immigrants from so-called “non-Western countries”, and fulfilled two of the following additional criteria: high unemployment rates, high rate of residents with only basic education, high rates of residents with a criminal record and a lower average income compared to the region average (Ministry of Transport, Buildings and Housing, 2018).

Across these ghetto policies, the police have been tasked with restoring trust and respect for public authorities, and with formulating a strategy for addressing crime and deviance in these neighbourhoods. In 2011, the Danish National Police published a general strategy overview (the specific strategy was classified) for their specific activities in ghettos and other problematic neighbourhoods, which showed that presence, visibility, prevention and cooperation with external partners in local communities were at the heart of their strategy

to reach these aims (Danish National Police, 2011), revealing central characteristics of community policing. In 2019, the Danish National Police published a new strategy paper, stating that “presence, visibility and control” were still the guiding principles for their community-orientated approach, with further focus on establishing “close relations” with residents and other local actors such as businesses, schools and local organisations (Danish National Police, 2019).

The ghetto policies have been subject to a range of research in their own right. Freiesleben (2016) addressed discursive and governmental aspects of the policies, while Seeman (2020) looked into how the policies have changed social citizenship status in Denmark. Other studies have addressed how the policies instigate a territorial stigma upon the neighbourhoods and the residents living there (Larsen & Delica, 2021; Jensen & Christensen, 2012). Noteworthy in regard to this article, such stigma has been found to influence intra-community relations based on how different community members react to and attempt to manage the stigma (Jensen et al., 2021). We return to this topic in the discussion, addressing how stigma management also influences relations to the police. First, however, in the following analysis we turn our attention to the resident-police relation rather than the ghettoisation aspect, though ultimately such division of topics is only possible for analytical purposes since community life, stigma and policing practices are intrinsically connected.

2. Method and data

The case material presented in this article was gathered by the first author as part of a 10-month field study of ethnic minority parents’ relation to the police in a neighbourhood figuring on the Danish ghetto list. The neighbourhood is anonymised as Blomsterengen. The participants are similarly anonymised with fake names in line with their ethnic origin. The study focused on parents, as opposed to youth, in order to gain insights into an understudied group within the ethnic minority communities in the ghettoised neighbourhoods. Further, the parent perspective was of interest in order to understand how the anti-ghettoisation and community policing strategies affected local perceptions of the police. Parents are targeted in two ways in these strategies: (a) through their children, who have increasingly been represented as possibly problematic youth; and (b) through a focus on parent responsabilisation in order to make the parents more engaged in the control of their children.

Being concerned with the resident perspective, the study was based on a combination of ethnography and biographic interview methods. This enabled an exploratory approach, avoiding unwarranted and homogenising assumptions about the ethnic minority community and instead providing insights into nuances and variations of doubts and debates within the parent group. The ethnographic approach further made it possible to gain a contextualised understanding of parent-police relations by including data on the parents’ everyday lives and the social dynamics within the neighbourhood. Access to the field was established with the help of a gatekeeper, a local young adult of ethnic minority background, who was well connected and respected both among adults and youth in the neighbourhood. Data was gathered as field notes from observations and interaction with residents and as recordings of conversations. Throughout the fieldwork, several parents became the main participants and were asked to give an interview. These were recorded and transcribed and took their departure from knowledge about the individual participant obtained when establishing a trusting relation. These participants were also selected in order to represent the diversity within the parent group, mainly in regard to age, gender, ethnic origin, religion, occupation, education, income, first/second generation immigrants/refugees/descendants and criminal

records. The gatekeeper also made it possible to use a local communal house as a base during the field study. This house was frequented by many different resident groups, which is why it was an opportune location to become known in the neighbourhood as well as to meet potential participants and follow them over time. This was essential in order to establish a relationship prior to the interviews and thus gain stories and opinions not necessarily shared during an initial encounter. In the end, a total of nine fathers and twelve mothers became central participants and agreed to be interviewed. Several other residents (neighbours and friends of the parents) also figure in the data. The study complies with Danish guidelines for ethical research, with voluntary participation, informed consent, anonymisation of participation and safe storage of data.

The main limitations of the study are related to language barriers and lack of access to the more secluded parent groups in the neighbourhood. The sample group was thus limited to parents who spoke either Danish or English and who, at least sometimes, participated in public life in the neighbourhood. Researcher subjectivity (a white, male, middle-class researcher, considered an outsider entering Blomsterengen with an agenda) also influenced the study, mainly by setting the frame for how rapport and access was negotiated with different groups of parents. In managing this, inspiration was drawn from Madison's notion of ethnography as performance (Madison, 2020) in order to develop a self-conscious appearance as an outsider wanting to learn the insider perspective. This made it possible to ensure that the participants would take the lead during conversations, while the researcher merely directed the topics towards areas of interest.

All data was coded using Nvivo, and the coding process followed two tracks. First, predetermined themes were used as broad categories of interest, including police, politics, crime and deviance, and parent responsibility. Secondly, sub-themes within the broader thematic categories were identified inductively, ensuring an empirically (parent) informed perspective on the themes of interest to the study. The data presented in this article are mainly drawn from the inductive code 'the youth club', which contains information about parents' reflections on how the police operate in and around the local youth club. The data are presented in form of an extended case study (Evans & Handelman, 2006). Based on an ontology of the social as process, this approach intends to capture a moment of the ongoing process within a chosen field in order to investigate how the situational circumstance of the moment came to be (Evans & Handelman, 2006; Kapferer, 2006). This means that we analyse how the announcement of a specific community policing initiative inscribes itself into an ongoing social process within a neighbourhood, and how the social history of the neighbourhood influences the reception of the community members residing there. Through empirical description of three episodes, we unfold how reactions to being community policed are influenced by: (a) past experiences of community life and policing of the neighbourhood, and (b) future hopes, fears and expectations of how community life and the relation to the police can develop. In line with the tradition of extended case studies, the analysis mainly provides raw empirical descriptions, which later in the discussion will be related to issues raised in the community policing literature.

3. The case – community receptions of the dinner initiative

When asked about their thoughts on how the police operated in the neighbourhood, several parents would, independently from one another, relate back to a specific story of when the police wanted to start visiting the local youth club for a shared dinner with the young people. Having observed this tendency, the topic was included in later interviews and brought up

during informal conversations to get a better understanding of how parents perceived what we term the ‘dinner initiative’. It turned out that the announcement of the initiative had stirred up some trouble in the community, and, though an event of the past, the tensions were still vividly present in the social relations between parents in the neighbourhood.

3.1 Episode one: the announcement of the dinner initiative

Jamal was a local father and an employee of the local youth club. This put him in a position where he often became involved in bridging the community with social services and thus had to explain to local families why the system worked the way it did. It was the same with the dinner initiative, only in this example it was his own workplace which he had to explain to the community. His partial insider position influenced his own reception of the announcement initiative, of which he recalled:

It was one of my superiors, who just, like, out of the blue, announced it. ‘So, from now on, you are going to have dinners with the police.’ And the parents, they were very sceptical about it.

Though the parents reacted with scepticism, Jamal stated that from the club and the police’s perspective the initiative was important in order to create a relation between the youth and the police:

We do it, so the children can get more acquainted with the police and get a relation to the police. So, when the police enter the neighbourhood, then they actually know the children – or have known them from when they were children. And so, the children know the police. ... So, in the future, when the child is maybe 20 years old, and out on the street and he is involved in something, then when the officer addresses him he can talk to him in a different way. Then there is a relation between them.

This quote illustrates how Jamal interprets the initiative based on a hope that, in the future, the youth and the police will have a better relationship. This hope was, however, rooted in a present concern of Jamal’s, a concern based on experiences of the past. He elaborated further on the need for the initiative:

It’s also to break down the negativity there is around the police, the bad talk about the police in this neighbourhood, by showing the children that the police are actually ordinary human beings like us. That they just do their work, and also that they can actually be really nice officers who you can talk to about all kinds of things.

According to Jamal, a negative spiral had developed in Blomsterengen. Starting from the age of 10, youths would throw insults at, and express an outspoken hatred of, the police. According to Jamal, Blomsterengen had its stories of police brutality and humiliation of residents in public, incidents that the youth also witnessed. From his perspective, it was these stories that fuelled the negative spiral. He acknowledged that as a result both the police and the youth acted in a less than ideal manner during confrontations – to no one’s benefit. But he also stressed that the neighbourhood had stories of good police encounters, where local officers would be greeted and welcomed in the community and be approached by locals with questions and the sharing of knowledge. If the initiative could make such positive encounters the prevailing experience among the youth and families in the neighbourhood, Jamal hoped the spiral would turn.

From a position of belonging to both the community and the social services, Jamal's central concern was to improve the relation between the police and the community, which is why the hope of better youth-police relations, and thus more constructive encounters in the future, led Jamal to be in favour of the initiative. But as he noted in the first quote, not all local parents in Blomsterengen received the announcement with such understanding. Instead, he noted that:

[The parents] blew it up to this huge problem. Actually, one of the parents wrote a long letter of complaint, with a lot of questions on behalf of the local parents. Especially about the club and the police.

3.2 Episode two: mobilising resistance against the initiative

Hassan was a local father in his 50s, unemployed, but actively engaged in local social activities to keep the youth out of trouble, and with sons attending university. He posted the letter around the neighbourhood, mainly at the entrances to the building blocks. The letter (a copy was obtained by the field researcher) mainly consisted of four questions directed at the youth club:

1. Have the members of the club approved of the arrangement?
2. Are the parents aware of the arrangement and have they accepted it?
3. What are the purposes of the arrangement?
4. Why the police? Why not a professional soccer player, or artist, or politician?

When asked why he took the initiative to write and post the letter, Hassan explained:

The club is a place for the children. Pedagogues, professionals, with skills for children, work there. It has a big responsibility to work with the youth. But now, they are working for the police. And the police are not pedagogues, so they don't know what to do. ... So, we wrote a letter, a group of us. About the club. Because why should the police be there, we will call them if we need them. The club is not a place for police, it is a place for pedagogues. The system is that if there is a crime, then you call the police. If it is a social activity, then why is the police there?! Now it is always police.

The perceived blurring of pedagogic and police work threatened what was for Hassan a citizen right to services in a welfare state, where especially the youth deserve support towards engagement in education and employment. This motivated the fourth question in the letter, concerning why the police rather than someone who could inspire the youth towards career paths. Hassan's critique of the dinner initiative was a reaction to an ongoing development where the police increasingly showed up in circumstances where he did not think they belonged:

And today there is a big problem because people think the pedagogues and housing association work for the police. And don't get me wrong, I want the police to be strong and effective, but now it is peace time. We don't need military police; we need social workers and pedagogues, sports activities and jobs. But the police are running everything. They are everywhere.

As a citizen, Hassan was not generally against the police. Rather, as is clear from both quotes, he had a clear idea of when and where the police were needed – in times of conflict, for

instance in times of gang conflicts, when called upon and when crime was taking place. With the development towards the police interfering in the work of other institutions, and working outside of his ideas of proper police work, he described that a general distrust of the police had developed in Blomsterengen:

People here, they don't believe that the police come to help, they believe that the police come to gather information and facts about them, so they can use it against them later. And this is why people hate them. And the police also hate and cheat them. Especially the young people, they don't want to be seen by the police. They are afraid that later, they can be registered.

Being convinced about the surveillance agenda of the police, it became further problematic for Hassan to accept what he perceived as their dominance over other institutions in the neighbourhood. He believed that this dominance exchanged care and concern for the youth with a control and punishment objective, which only served to distance local youth further from engaging with the broader society. He thus believed that the police exacerbated social issues in the neighbourhood through their community engagement. Past experiences with the police interfering in what Hassan perceived to be social and pedagogical concerns thus led him to be suspicious of the police visiting the youth club, since he feared that such visits would be used to prosecute local youth in the future and alienate the community further from the broader society.

Other parents also questioned the purpose of the police going to the club. Rizwana for example, a local mother in her 30s, employed in the healthcare system, noted about the dinner initiative:

There were also some months ago a letter about that now the police wanted to go to the youth club, to some dinners or something. And why should they do that?! Again, there is nothing criminal going on there. But it's probably because they want to observe who the young people are and such. But it's the police's task to protect, not to be cozy. So, what is their agenda? To show that they are always there – because they aren't! There are incidents where they weren't here and they should have been, like when there were shootings last year.

Rizwana questions why the police are spending resources and time on tasks that are not addressing crime specifically. She interprets this as a symbolic act to show the residents that they are always around to protect the residents, which is not true in her experience and she also shares Hassan's fear of a hidden surveillance agenda. Together, Hassan and Rizwana's scepticism shows how community policing can appear unclear and ambiguous to community members. This opens the initiative up to personal interpretations of its purpose and function, interpretations which are based on previous experiences of how the police operate in the neighborhood. In that regard, resistance from some community members seems to be closely linked to these community members' previous experiences and interpretation of a more or less antagonistic relationship between the community and the police.

3.3 Episode three: negotiating and accepting the initiative

Hassan's letter spread unrest among the parents in Blomsterengen. As a consequence of this, Jamal recalled that the youth club was contacted by the parent council, which had been set up by the club, who requested a meeting:

Then we were contacted by the chairperson of the parent council in the club; she called us and asked what our explanation for the initiative was, because many parents asked about it. Many parents were sceptical about it – what was it about? What are they going to talk about? The kids are only 10, 11 years old, why should they sit and talk to the police about crime and such? What is the purpose?

These questions echoed Hassan's letter, showing how others adopted his criticism. The chairperson was Sanaa, a local mother in her 30s. Although she wanted to confront the club with the widespread unrest about the initiative, she did not share Hassan's scepticism. Rather, she was sceptical about his letter:

There were these complaint letters all over, and first of all, I was pretty sure it wasn't written by a parent with kids in the club. And that's not OK, to post a letter like that and sign it as "parents", because it wasn't us who had issues with the municipality and the police. In addition, what is wrong with the police visiting the club for a dinner arrangement? As long as you have yours in order, then why should you fear a visit from the police in the club? ... I'm the chairperson for the parent council in the youth club. So, what I did was to call the club and demand a rush-meeting in the council.

At the meeting, both Sanaa and Jamal recalled that after a simple explanation of the reasons behind the initiative by the club staff, the parent council accepted it and even asked to expand it so that parents also were welcome at the dinners, so as to show the youth that the parents accepted the presence of the police. And Sanaa commented on the decision with:

And if someone doesn't want to participate, then they can just not go to the club that evening.

Sanaa thus expressed a willingness to accept the initiative without concern or apprehension about the police agenda for wanting to visit the club. To Sanaa, accepting the police, and showing the youth this acceptance, was the proper way of being a responsible parent, and her declarations that those who had their things in order had nothing to fear, and those who did not want to participate could simply stay away, was an indirect comment to those parents she deemed irresponsible. She described these parents:

There are some who know nothing about what goes on out here. There are quite many parents who are housebound. Who just sit in front of the TV, and that's all they think about, and what they should be cooking that day. They don't know what is going on around here.

Consequently, Sanaa described that the children of these parents were left to navigate the social dynamics of the public life in Blomsterengen on their own, often resulting in deviant lifestyles. Sanaa and other parents who shared her acceptance of the dinner initiative related stories of stabbings at local playgrounds, of their kids being threatened with guns and of being recruited by gangs. To these parents, the police were seen as a welcome help in managing crime and making Blomsterengen a place for law-abiding residents and a safe place for families – which was the goal for Sanaa's active engagement in the parent council as well as other community activities:

I strive to make my neighbourhood better. I think that there should be room for us and not the criminals. So, if we can get them out, then we better get them out. Blomsterengen is one of the

nicest neighbourhoods. I can't imagine living anywhere else than out here. That is why I want to work to get them out.

This attitude did not mean that Sanaa was unconcerned with the deviant youth and their families. She often took the initiative to arrange social activities in Blomsterengen and invited parents to attend. Thus, according to her, she did what she could in order to support those families who lived secluded lives. Nevertheless, she also believed that the sensible thing to do to manage crime and deviance was to call the authorities so the social services could get involved in helping the families and the youth, saving them from spiralling further into a deviant lifestyle. Her notion of getting the criminals out to make room for the law-abiding residents became more relevant during the fieldwork, when the third ghetto strategy was announced, bringing news of the possible demolition of apartment blocks in neighbourhoods that did not make it off the list before 2030. For several parents, this announcement marked a change in attitudes towards the troublemakers in the neighbourhood because the ghetto policies suddenly had the potential to affect the law-abiding residents in a very tangible way. In that regard, Laila, a local mother in her early 40s and a good friend of Sanaa's, seemed to change her stance towards troublemakers following the threat of demolitions. Previously, she had been engaged in a 'mothers patrol group' to informally manage crime and deviance in the neighborhood – avoiding formal reporting of local youth. Following the announcement of possible demolitions, her attitude towards the troublemakers seemed more resolute:

It isn't supposed to be us who have to leave, and them being allowed to stay so they can scare the elderly. Then it's better that they should leave, and we can stay. Also, because it is a place where we grew up. I know it's a ghetto area, and it might not be the best place to live when you have children. But we fight for our neighbourhood, because it is a nice area, and they shouldn't ruin it.

Together, these examples show how the acceptance or rejection of community policing might have less to do with the initiative itself and instead originates in a broader context of political and social circumstances, such as the ghetto policies which importantly frame the activities of the police in 'ghetto neighbourhoods'.

4. Discussion

This case illustrates that community support for community policing initiatives depends on the ability of the police to inscribe themselves positively into the socio-historical dynamics within a targeted community. This includes taking the pre-existing relation between community and police into consideration. Based on the empirical case presented, we wish to highlight two important contextual factors here that community policing initiatives should take into consideration: previous policing of communities and intra-community relations.

4.1 Previous policing of communities

The previous policing of a community constitutes the basis for what community members might expect from the police presence in their neighbourhood. This is evident in Hassan's critique of the dinner initiative, which he bases on experiences of policing practices that echo Loader's (2006) cautions against the consequences of what he terms "ambient policing". In line with Loader's theory, Hassan describes a development where police and other security operatives increasingly rely on visibility, involvement with local organisations and

institutions, and proactive measures, while being guided by public sentiments and demands for security work. Loader describes how this goal of visibility, cooperation and proactiveness risks giving the police a pervasive presence in neighbourhoods and that the police can potentially colonise other areas of public life, such as housing, education, and youth work, through these community-police partnerships. This aligns with Hassan's grievances about the involvement of the police in the youth club and his interpretation of this as a surveillance initiative. According to Thacher (2001b), different social functions are nested within different organisations exactly because the values they pursue cannot always be reconciled, and, by segregating them, they can be pursued simultaneously. In that regard, the fear about the agenda of the police potentially 'colonising' other social institutions corresponds with Thacher's (2001b) point, that even though other social institutions might share some goals with the police, they generally have other main concerns, like pedagogical work, which are not and cannot be entirely identical to those of the police. Overlapping with a widespread fear of having social services remove the children from the families, as also described by Johansen & Jensen (2012), many parents became even more fearful of such surveillance. Loader warns that such ambient policing can end up affecting the sense of belonging to the national democratic community within the policed population groups, who are often already marginalised and disadvantaged (Loader, 2006). This threat to the sense of belonging relates to a fear of being denied basic liberal democratic rights. Hassan expresses such a concern for basic liberal rights, echoed by Rizwana, since the police seem to them to be concerned with fuzzy objectives not fitting with an institution of the law. Hassan's resistance also aligns with such a fear on behalf of the local youth, since he fears that unjust experiences with the police together with the downplaying of pedagogical initiatives to guide youth into education and employment will alienate the youth from mainstream society. In that regard, Hassan and Rizwana's expectations of the police correspond to Loader's ideal of police institutions as "constrained, reactive, rights-regarding agencies of minimal interference and last resort" (Loader, 2006, p. 215).

4.2 Intra-community relations

The case reveals how neighbourhood stigmatisation influenced the internal social dynamics within the community, leading to tensions and groupings that community policing initiatives have to navigate. This is especially the case if the ambition of the community policing approach is to reach the whole community and deliver services and justice to all groups (Thacher, 2001a). Wacquant's elaborate theory of "strategies for managing stigma" (Wacquant, 2007; 2008, chap. 6) deals with how neighbourhood stigmatisation leads to "internal social differentiation" (Wacquant, 2008, p. 184) through "lateral denigration" (Wacquant, 2007), meaning that community members react to being labelled by pointing out how others within a community fit the stigma and are responsible for it. A similar process can be seen in the case of Sanaa in her distinction between those with their affairs in order and those with something to fear from police scrutiny, who she ultimately wants out of the neighbourhood so that she and those like her can stay. Sanaa, and other parents who shared her perspective, relied on lateral denigration in order to protect the neighbourhood from the stigma imposed upon it – through representing other residents as responsible for the stigma and thus legitimate to exclude from the community. Lateral denigration and social divisions within communities therefore pose a dilemma for community policing: how should the different groups, and the relations between them, be approached in community policing initiatives? In our case, the same initiative simultaneously attracted Sanaa, while Hassan felt alienated. Sanaa suggested that some families might keep their children away from the

youth club while the police were there, which might indicate that the youth most alienated from the police would be excluded from the relational work intended by them. Wanted or not, community policing became enrolled in local disputes related to the stigmatisation of the neighbourhood. If such disputes are not incorporated into the strategy of community policing, easy alliances might end up as barriers to dialogue and trust with exactly those community groups local police officers ought to focus on rather than those who already trust and respect the authorities: the most secluded, distrusting and critical within the communities. Thacher (2001a) similarly argues that it is important that community policing practitioners are mindful about actively seeking out the perspectives and demands of those community members who are less eager to approach and cooperate with the police, otherwise they will risk only responding to some segments of the community while potentially alienating others.

5. Concluding remarks

With this case, we present three episodes where community members react to a community policing initiative. The episodes illustrate how differences between community members lead to varied responses, thus revealing the community to be an incoherent and complex entity (Herbert, 2006). The case illustrates only one example of a community policing initiative. In this case, the initiative was developed in a rather top-down manner, without community involvement prior to the announcement. This indicates that community policing in Denmark is organised in a way where the police have the authority to set initiatives in motion without consulting and including the communities they police. This does, however, not mean that all community policing in Denmark is implemented top-down, and the case is not meant to represent community policing in general in a Danish context.

Even though this is a singular case, we believe the problematics and dynamics extend out to other similar neighbourhoods in Denmark. Similarities with Jamal's concern of a negative spiral amongst local youth, developing from experiences of police humiliation and brutality are found in research on "narratives of police violence" (Haller et al., 2020a). Moreover, Jamal's conviction that better relations between the youth and the police would lead to fewer problematic encounters in the future echo findings from studies on community police officers who rely on 'relationship-building' to minimise the use of force during encounters (Kammersgaard et al., 2021). Hassan's critique of the police's cooperation with other public institutions, and the related concern of being surveilled, strongly correlate with findings documented by Johansen (2012) and Johansen and Jensen (2017). Lateral denigration is also documented in other studies addressing ghetto stigmatisation in Denmark (Jensen & Christensen, 2012; Jensen et al., 2021). Consequently, similar and parallel concerns within ethnic minority communities in other neighbourhoods characterised as ghettos would probably resonate with our findings.

We have found that the extended case study method, where different community perspectives on a singular community policing initiative are explored, represents a suitable method for unravelling complex community responses to community policing. Similar approaches to analysing community police relations might prove useful for researchers engaged in collaborative research with the police, in order to help community policing become a reflexive practice considering the social relations between communities and the police, rather than solely being concerned with evidence-based methods to be implemented and later evaluated with little thought to the community being policed.

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Exceptionalism for most, Excess for Others

The legal foundation of a bifurcated criminal justice system in Denmark

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Submitted to the European Journal of Criminology

Abstract

Following a change in the Danish gang milieu in 2008, where ethnic minority street gangs challenged the established MC-gangs, the Danish government has formulated three anti-gang policy 'packages'. These 'gang packages' introduce untraditional penal practices in a Danish context. To unfold the development they represent to Nordic penology, this article analyses elements of both penal exceptionalism and excess in the policies and the legitimizing political statements behind the packages. The policies are found to introduce a range of excessive elements, mainly through the introduction of a gang-specific subsection into the Danish penal code that allows for the doubling of sentences for gang-related offences. The changes are discussed to be underpinned by an Othering of gang members as having turned their back on society and to being dangerous, thus becoming unworthy of penal leniency. However, if gang members choose to leave the gang milieu and enter an EXIT program, they are granted access to the traditional rehabilitative penal system. It is argued that this parallel justice system is to be understood as a process of bifurcation based on a status differentiation between citizens, which also is found in Danish anti-ghettoization policies.

Introduction

In their latest anatomy of penal systems across Europe, Ruggiero and Ryan noted a widespread bifurcation (differentiated treatment) across European penal systems (Ruggiero, 2013, p.288-290). This development showed itself through harsher penal treatment of select population groups, mainly those in marginalized and less powerful positions, and of separate treatment for distinct categories of offences. It was argued that these differentiated practices were reactions to nation-specific 'major

threats to social order and the reproduction of the status quo' (Ruggiero 2013, 288). Though such threats are severe, differentiated treatment in penal systems raises concerns over basic democratic values like equality under the law and citizenship status (Hudson, 1993).

Recent research has demonstrated that though traditionally described as a cluster of egalitarian societies with lenient penal climates (Pratt and Eriksson, 2013), Scandinavian countries also has developed bifurcated penal practices. This has mainly been described as differentiating between citizens and immigrants through merging immigration policies and penal logic in 'bordered penalties' (Aas, 2014; Aas & Bosworth, 2013). These bordered and bifurcated practices have been argued to be embedded in welfare nationalistic rationales of protecting the welfare services for the worthy population groups by excluding groups of Others discursive characterized by unworthiness (Barker, 2018). In most studies, unworthiness has been found to mean undocumented immigrants and other groups of non-citizens, while only few empirical examples have been put forth that show how other population groups with full citizen status have faced bifurcated practices. This article's main purpose is to present such a case. Through a detailed policy analysis of both law text and the political speeches that announced the laws, the article will show how three 'law packages' addressing gang crime in Denmark laid the foundation for a bifurcated criminal justice system. It has been noted that recent penological developments have been understudied in Denmark compared to both other Scandinavian countries and Europe in general (Barker & Smith, 2021), which is why a Danish empirical example is even more called for. Only a few studies have previously taken steps to analyze Danish gang policies coherently. One example is Nilsson & Delica (2015), who have studied the first gang package from 2009 in light of a Wacquanian discussion of a societal transition from welfare to prison fare in Denmark. This study focuses on the distinct development that prison sentences increasingly take centre stage as a way to address social issues in Denmark, which stands in contrast to the notion of Nordic exceptionalism (where imprisonment is found to be used in exceptional cases, see Pratt 2008a, 2008b), and notes how this is part of a process where groups causing social unrest are excluded from society. This tendency has, however, been enhanced through the subsequent gang packages, where especially the bifurcated element has been central in the development of what appears to be a parallel justice system, why a study of all three packages with focused attention on the bifurcation aspect is called for.

Developments in Nordic Penology

In 2008, John Pratt investigated what he saw as a lenient penal tradition in Scandinavia, which he termed Nordic Penal Exceptionalism, as opposite an Anglophone Penal Excess (Pratt 2008a, 2008b). Ever

since its formulation, the theory of Nordic exceptionalism has been debated vigorously, in some cases to discuss whether it ever was a sound theory, in other cases to discuss whether it remains relevant today. This article is concerned with this second line of research in that it utilizes Pratt's distinction between exceptionalism and excess as analytical concepts to unfold how the gang packages exemplify a development in Danish penology where the lenient system described by Pratt has changed. Thus, Pratt's theory serves as a baseline for discussing which elements in the gang policies stand out.

The original formulation of the theory of Nordic exceptionalism by Pratt (Pratt 2008a, 2008b) reflected on why it was that in an era where most Western countries saw a turn towards punitiveness, with increased incarceration, revocation of prisoners' rights, less focus on rehabilitation, etc., the Scandinavian countries seemed not to follow this pattern. At least not at the same pace. Levels of incarceration remained relatively low, and the conditions for serving a prison sentence remained quite humane and rehabilitation-oriented. In the original formulation of the theory, the explanation for this was found in a cultural-historic state of sameness in the populations, leading to a general consensus of egalitarian values. Neither ethnic nor class division was as problematic as, for instance, in England. This absence of division in society was seen as having the function of promoting social solidarity in the Scandinavian populations (Pratt, 2008a, 2008b; Pratt & Eriksson, 2013). This solidarity was described as the cultural cornerstone of a penal climate where prison sentences only were used *exceptionally* and where prison conditions was based on a 'normalization' approach (Balvig 2006, Pratt 2008a).

Normalization meant that the punitive element in prison sentences was solely the deprivation of liberty and that time in prison should support the inmate in returning to a 'normal' life, out of crime, following the end of the sentence. This stood in contrast to the excessive use of exclusively prison sentences found in the Anglophone countries. According to Pratt and Eriksson, penal excess was the result of a different intention with punishment: reassurance (Pratt & Eriksson, 2013, pp.27). Here, punishment is described as a political tool to reassert moral symbols of right and wrong. By Invoking 'tough' measures reactively in cases of public concerns over crime and deviance, punishment served as a symbol of reassurance to the public by showing that politicians took responsibility for ensuring law and order in society through ensuring long sentences, curtailments of release mechanisms, and revocation of prisoner rights.

Critique and refinement of the theory

Pratt warned against romanticizing the picture of the humane and mild criminal justice system in the North (Pratt 2008a). He argued that the Scandinavian criminal justice systems should be understood in

relation to the political and ideological project of the welfare societies they developed within. This meant that interventionist welfare politics was present in penal politics as well. Though such welfare politics are meant to do good, they can also be forceful, overwhelming, and inescapable practices for the receivers. According to Barker, this welfare-inspired penal politics contains a fundamental dilemma regarding respect for both individual human rights and a wish to rehabilitate deviants into the egalitarian community. Barker argues that *'these restrictive practices are not minor inconveniences for a few perceived outsiders but rather indicative of how power operates in this society more generally, and how it operates coercively but legitimately'* (Barker 2012). This has led to a description of the Scandinavian welfare society as Janus-faced: on one side a humane, tolerant, and inclusive system, and on the other a coercive and intrusive system, with a stronger concern for the general good than for human rights (Barker 2012). This is not just theoretical criticism; both the UN and the EU have criticized Scandinavian states for these practices and their lack of respect for human rights (Barker 2012, Langford et al. 2017). These observations are generally used to argue that the Scandinavian prison systems are not mild at all; instead, they are tough in another way. Though it might not resemble Anglophone excess, suffering is relative, and disciplining initiatives can be experienced just as punitive as other degrading conditions. Prisons are still prisons, even though they are open, as Smith and Uglevik have put it (2017, pp.528).

Another observation that critics have pointed out is the overrepresentation of ethnic minorities in the Scandinavian prison institutions (Barker, 2012; Smith & Uglevik, 2017). Migration was mentioned by Pratt (2008b) as a threat to the exceptionalism practised in the Scandinavian countries, or rather as a threat to the sense of sameness in these countries. It has been debated whether imprisonment of minority citizens in Scandinavia resembles exclusionary processes rather than the generally intended inclusion through rehabilitation (Barker, 2012). These debates often point to a recent rise in nationalistic sentiments in Scandinavia that, when merged with welfare politics, leads to an Othering of those deemed unworthy to receive the care of the welfare society. This Othering legitimizes exclusion towards the unworthy 'guests' in Scandinavia. Barker argues that Nordic Nationalism, an inherent trait of the Scandinavian welfare state, has lain dormant until activated by globalization and mass migration (Barker, 2018). According to Barker, this inherent trait has led politicians to respond by 'walling up the welfare state' by classifying groups of outsiders as not welcome or undeserving of welfare services. This is done to ensure the existence of welfare services for deserving citizens (Barker, 2018). Aas makes a similar argument in her theory of 'bordered penalty' in Nordic states (Aas, 2014) where especially non-citizens are found to be undeserving of *'certain standards of equality and justice, such as equal prison*

conditions, penal leniency and sentiments of solidarity and social inclusion, ..., which underpin treatment of national offenders' (Aas, 2014, pp.535). Todd-Kvam has described how 'bordered punitiveness' in Norway is driven by a populist political discourse (Todd-Kvam, 2019). Bordered penology is mainly concerned with the status of immigrants (Aas, 2014) who, as legal foreigners, are treated differently than full citizens, and this is also found to be the case in Denmark (Barker & Smith, 2021). Both the theories of bordered penalty and Nordic nationalism point to the fact that the groups defined as undeserving are governed through criminalization rather than a more classic social concern of the Scandinavian societies.

It is, however, still accepted in the literature on Nordic exceptionalism that *'the long term goal of a prison sentence in Scandinavia is, on paper at least, always inclusion'*, and *'the philosophy that prisons should ultimately be places of inclusion and that even prisoners are members of society that retain important citizens' rights'* (Smith & Uglevik, 2017, pp.524 + pp.527). Moreover, as pointed out by Pratt in the second part of the original formulation, even though Scandinavian prison rates were on the rise, prison conditions still do not even remotely resemble those of the countries that were ascribed as excessive (Pratt 2008b, p. 1+288-289). What is curious is, as Aas put it, that a parallel justice system seems to develop alongside the traditionally lenient, though disciplinary, Nordic justice system (Aas, 2014, pp.525).

Background—gang violence in Denmark

Before 2008, gang crime was of minor concern in Denmark. However, during the 1980s and 1990s, Denmark had experienced several MC-gang wars. According to Frederik Strand (2011), the level of violence in these wars was unprecedented in Denmark and included deliberate executions of rival gang members, shootings in public areas and at targets' homes, and the use of destructive weapons such as car bombs, rocket launchers, and hand grenades.

Parallel to these conflicts, a new type of gang grew in Denmark. Since the 1980s, different ethnic minority groups have settled in Denmark, and many have taken residence in disadvantaged neighbourhoods around the country. In these neighbourhoods, groups of deviant youth started to emerge. Initially, these groups were involved only in minor criminal and deviant behaviour. Terms like 'street gangs' would eventually be used to describe them, as some developed in size and organized structure, which caught the eye of the police.

What constitute a gang is blurred, and it is the Danish police who have the power to determine what qualifies. In the 2007 gang report, the police wrote that it monitored 'criminal groups and networks', where most lacked a formalized structure of membership, but where 'people, with affiliation, would act as a group, especially in regards to confrontations.' (Danish National Police, 2008, p. 5), and it was noted that the groups generally were engaged in drug crime, violence and weapon law offences (Danish National Police, 2008, p. 3). This definition of matching groups and networks with specific forms of crimes has not changed in the consecutive annual reports, though the reports formats have changed markedly.

In 2007, the Danish National Police monitored 141 individuals with affiliation to 14 groups and networks considered as gangs, both MC- and street gangs (Danish National Police, 2008). This was, however, only the more hardcore gangs that operated across police districts. Regional police districts would monitor smaller and locally operating groups. In a report on the 14 groups, the police noted rising tensions in the gang milieu in 2007, and in 2008, these tensions grew into what later became known as 'the first gang war', which was a conflict between the emerging minority gangs and the established MC-gangs. Thus, the annual report for 2008 included 80 gangs with 944 individuals affiliated – a rise both the result of changed report format so it includes all monitored gangs in Denmark and of more people having joined the monitored groups during the gang war (Danish National Police, 2009, p. resumé + p. 23).

The war started with a drive-by shooting, where a young man of ethnic minority background was killed. The shooting sparked a spiral of violence, where firearms were used recklessly and almost casually. The gang war thus introduced a societal awareness of, and concern for, the use of firearms in public areas in Denmark, which was something almost unheard of at the time. To the Danish consciousness, shootings took place in the US and in movies. Police reports on the use of firearms in Denmark paint a good picture of how extreme the development seemed to the general Dane: in 2007, the Danish National Police registered 28 incidents where firearms were used in public areas (Danish National Police, 2008). They noted that this number was an *increase from previous years*. Of these 28 incidents, 12 were linked to major gangs (Danish National Police, 2008:4). In 2008, the number of shootings in public areas registered by the police rose to 167 (Danish National Police 2009). The number of these episodes related to gang conflict cannot be directly compared to the previous report since the police changed the report format following the gang war, in part by expanding the list of gangs to include the previously regionally monitored groupings. The police, however, linked 76 of the 2008 shootings to gang-related conflicts. This number of *gang-related shootings* is *three times higher* than the *total number of shootings* the

previous year. Also, most of the shootings in 2008 were concentrated over a few months and happened in Copenhagen, where the risk of being shot at random made its way into people's consciousness and made for glaring tabloid headlines.

Initially, in 2008, the Danish Minister of Justice reacted by allocating extra funds to the police but urged caution regarding political action. He was quoted saying that, though the situation was out of the ordinary, *'bullets weren't flying by our ears'* (Dehnhart, 2012). Come April the following year, his rhetoric changed.

Data and analytical framework

The main interest of this article is the legal changes following three 'gang packages' presented by different Danish government to address the first and following two other escalations of gang conflicts. The main data for the analysis is the law documents: L501 (2009) for the first packages, L733 (2014) for the second package, and the agreement paper summarizing the total amount of law changes for the third package (ministry for justice, 2017). A second interest is the meaningful argumentation for the necessity of the law changes. The data for this part of the analysis consists of the minister's presentational speeches to the Danish parliament for the first and second gang packages (minister of justice 2009; 2014), and the speech delivered at a press conference for the announcement of the third gang package (minister of justice, 2017) as well as the text in the agreement paper of the package (ministry for justice, 2017). A deeper understanding of the legitimizing claims behind the law changes could be obtained by analyzing discussions on the respective packages in the parliament legal committee. Such an endeavour was omitted in this article because of space limitations and because all the packages passed through parliament votes with broad support mainly rooted in the same arguments as provided by the ministers of justice. Little additional knowledge regarding the meaning behind the packages would thus come from such analysis. However, it would give a better understanding of the oppositional parties and their effort to resist the development of bifurcation in the Danish criminal justice system. Throughout the analysis, quotes from the data are provided and have been translated by the author.

Drawing on Pratt's concepts of exceptionalism and excess as analytical categories, both data types are needed. Where the law changes show the objective conditions that gang members face when prosecuted, the legitimizing claims give insights into the intentions with the punishment, which is a central aspect of Pratt's distinction between punishment as rehabilitative or reassuring. Based on Pratt's

theory, two questions will be following the analysis: 1) In what regard do the gang policies rely on penal exceptionalism, using punishment to be rehabilitative? 2) How do the policies rely on penal excessiveness, using tough punishment to reassure the public?

The first gang package: establishing the foundation of a differentiated criminal justice system

At the time of the first gang war, Denmark had a liberal/conservative coalition government, supported by the Danish Peoples Party. In April 2009, the conservative minister for justice gave a speech to parliament where he presented a set of law changes that publicly was termed 'the gang package'. In his speech, he stated that *'the latest development, where confrontations occur in the streets and include firearms etc. that also hit completely random ordinary citizens walking around the streets of their own city, has according to the government meanwhile created a new situation that threatens ordinary everyday life in society and the affected areas, and society must respond with extraordinary tough countermeasures.'* (Minister of Justice, 2009a). These countermeasures mainly included tightening sentences, better investigatory measures for the police, and initiatives to ensure fast incarceration of perpetrators to *'establish security and safety for the citizens'* (Minister of Justice, 2009a).

At the core of the set of law changes was the introduction of a gang-specific subsection into the penal code, publicly termed 'the gang section'. This subsection was to pass into law with the following formulation:

§81a The sentence, that is prescribed in this law's [list of sections], can be raised to the double, if the offence has taken place as part of a mutual conflict between groups of individuals, and where the use of firearms or weapons of an explosive nature has been used several times as part of the conflict... (L501, 2009)

In his speech, the minister acknowledged that this was a controversial change since it could result in a situation where a minor offence could be punished more harshly than a more severe offence, breaking the principle of proportionality of offence and punishment. The minister, however, argued that this principle was secondary to the need for the protection of law-abiding citizens.

The policy package also raised the maximum sentence for illegal possession of firearms up to six years in prison and introduced a mandatory minimum sentence of one year in prison for this offence. Other punishment-related elements in the policy package included raising the sentence for obstructing the

police, fire services, and other public agencies. Incarceration was to be ensured by extending the access to pretrial detention of individuals involved in the conflicts and mandatory post-trial detention for convicted gang members. The conditions for serving out a prison sentence were also addressed in the package. Gang-related convicts were to be denied the options of early parole, of serving in freedom with ankle monitors, and neither were they allowed to postpone the moment for serving out a prison sentence.

The police as a cornerstone in the differentiated justice system

Besides the focus on sentencing, the package also extended methods and powers to the police. The police were allowed to use phone-tapping in cases where illegal firearms were involved (this was unlocked by raising the maximum sentence for this offence to 6 years, which makes it a 'severe offence' in the Danish penal system and thus allows the police to circumvent the right to privacy), and they were granted the power to extend zone bans to individuals they caught working as territorial guards for gangs in conflict. Also, since several of the elements in the policy package were to affect gang members only, the police were tasked with determining gang affiliation and involvement in ongoing conflicts. The police already had an internal and publicly inaccessible gang database, where they listed individuals known to have gang affiliations. This 'gang list' was updated so the Danish National Police database would have more comprehensive data than previously, especially regarding monitoring smaller and locally operating gangs. The list itself was classified. The police would thus be able to inform courts and prison services of any gang affiliation of which they were aware.

Though controversial and extraordinarily tough in its approach to deter and control gang violence through long prison sentences and compromised rights to privacy and movement, the first package proved insufficient in controlling the gangs. Since the gang war in 2008, conflicts in the gang milieu have almost become normalized in Denmark, and the number of shootings has never returned to pre-2008 numbers. In 2013, the number of shootings rose to a new high, which led to an expansion of the gang policy with the introduction of a second gang package in 2014. This pattern was also repeated in 2016, with a third package introduced in 2017.

The second gang package

Since the first gang package, there had been a change of government in Denmark. In January 2014, a Social Democratic minister for justice presented the second gang package. This second package had a stronger focus on social initiatives to prevent the recruitment of new gang members and initiatives for a

more coordinated approach by social services and police to stress gangs and hinder their activities. Stressing the gangs was mainly done through control over where they took residence. This included an extension of the radius of zone bans and that municipalities were to be instructed on how to expel gangs legally from locales used as clubs and meeting places. Also, social services were allowed to share personal information of individuals over the age of 18 with their parents and families if deemed necessary for preventive concerns.

The minister, however, stated the following to parliament when presenting the proposal of the package: *'People, who have chosen gang-related crime as a way of life should not expect any form of tolerance.'* (Minister of justice, 2014). This was echoed during the first treatment of the package in the Parliament Legal Affairs Committee, where the social democratic representative stated that: *'it pleases me that more MC-gang and ethnic minority gang members than ever before right now are behind bars in our prisons and thereby can't create more insecurity in the streets.'* (Legal Committee, 2013-14, 15.00). Incarceration was thus still a central element in the gang package, and the minister made it clear that the central concern was to ensure that gang conflicts did not take a form where the lives of ordinary citizens would be put in harm's way.

The second gang package included the following sentencing oriented element: a widening of the range of offence that could lead to double sentences per subsection §81a, a clear statement that illegal possession of a firearm in public spaces, especially together with designated ammunition, should weigh heavily when meting out sentences, and, repeat offences for carrying knives or breaking zone bans were to receive stricter sentences with each offence.

In terms of prison conditions, the package also extended the strategy of the first gang package. The denial of early parole was to cover a larger group of convicts with looser ties to gang milieus. However, the second package also introduced conditioned access for gang members to normal conditions for serving a prison sentence if they agreed not to return to their 'area of operation' or to seek out members from their criminal network during the parole time. This was supplemented with the intent to start a test program with GPS ankle monitoring during parole.

The conditions for mandatory post-trial detention were changed to match the same criteria for parole restriction, covering individuals with looser ties to gangs. Also, it was to be made easier to transfer one gang member from one prison to another. This was meant to prevent gang members from bringing conflicts and violence into the prisons, thus posing a threat to other inmates and prison staff.

Tough put forgiving policies—the introduction of an EXIT program

The logic of keeping dangerous individuals off the streets was clearly still dominant in the political approach to gang crime by the Social Democratic government. The minister, however, also stated that support for those wanting to leave the gang milieu was to be ensured, mainly through strengthening the EXIT strategy (Minister for Justice, 2014), which was a program initiated by the previous liberal/conservative government, under the title 'A Way Out' (Ministry of Justice, 2011). In this program, gang members who wanted to leave gang life behind could formally enter a program and receive coordinated support. In broad terms, an EXIT program was an individually designed plan for how to start a new life outside the gang milieu. A motivated gang member would be matched with an EXIT coordinator who would oversee the support programs offered by prison services, social services, and the police. The EXIT strategy did not introduce any new help but offered a coordinated approach to support. Thus, a motivated exitee would get help with establishing a new home, get a job/start education, addiction treatment, psychological treatment, protection from the old milieu, and be separated from gang members while serving a prison sentence. However, leaving the gang life behind would, for many, entail shutting childhood friends out of their life, and in some cases, family members too. It also entailed the risk of being seen as a snitch by your previous gang, often meaning that you risked retaliation, and since exitees were obliged to refrain from crime and violence, they relied heavily on police protection from their old milieu.

The third gang package and the cementing of a differentiated treatment of gangs

Following a rise in extreme gang-related violence in 2016, with higher rates of murders and also of more macabre acts like torture and parting of murders rivals, a third gang package was announced in 2017 by the then Conservative minister for justice. This package was especially motivated by an observed 'brutalization' within the gang milieu, which was mentioned in the opening sentences in the agreement between the government, the Danish People's Party, and the Social Democrats, termed 'Gangs behind bars' (Ministry of Justice, 2017). Leading up to the negotiations behind the agreement, the minister of justice argued for a further toughening of sentences and exclusionary measures and stated: *'Is it far-reaching? Yes. But these people have turned their back on society. And if you do that, you should feel the door slamming shut behind you.'* (Minister for Justice, 2017, p.4). The agreement included a total of 35

initiatives, divided into three main objectives: (1) Safety and security for Danish citizens, (2) Gangs off the streets, and (3) Pressure on gangs.

Safety and security for Danish citizens

'In Denmark, it must be the law-abiding citizens that set the agenda in a neighbourhood, not gangs' (Ministry of justice 2017:2). This statement summarizes the first objective of the third gang package, which intended to address the gang-related behaviour that affected citizens with no ties to the gang milieu. These included, for example, shop and bar owners who suffered from extortion, vulnerable groups, like the homeless, who were harassed and abused by gangs, and law-abiding people in general who risked being unwilling victims of gang violence. One approach to ensure the safety of these citizens was through stricter sentences for crimes that put these groups especially at risk. For example, sentences for extortion of business owners were to be raised by one-third if carried out in a systematic or organized manner by gang members (Ministry of justice 2017:3). Also, where section §81a initially doubled the sentence for offences committed in relation to gang conflicts, it was now rephrased to include offences that *could lead to the eruption of conflicts* (Ministry of justice 2017:2). The minimum sentence for the possession of illegal firearms was increased from one to two years, and when firearms and explosive weapons were used in public areas, the sentence was to be increased by 50% (Ministry of justice 2017:2).

It was also part of the agreement to implement legal options to prohibit gangs from using houses and locales as 'clubs' if it entailed a substantial nuisance for the surrounding area. In addition to this, the requirements for the police to temporarily close down a 'gang club house' was to be loosened so as not to be restricted to cases of ongoing conflicts. Also, the punishment for breaking a ban against taking residence in a given location extended by the police was to be doubled to 60 days in prison (Ministry of justice 2017:2).

Lastly, it was also part of the agreement that if a person had been found guilty in a gang-related offence or had ties to a group of people who collectively were behind a range of criminal offences, a court could include a ban for the person from taking residence in the municipality where his criminal conduct had taken place for up to 10 years (Ministry of justice, 2017:3-4). Only under particular circumstances, for instance, by entering an EXIT program, could exceptions be made.

Getting gangs off the streets

The incarceration of gang members was not only part of the objective of creating safety for the citizens; it was also the second objective of the agreement, where it was stressed that *'we must get the gangs off the streets. Therefore convicted gang members, who are not willing to leave the criminal milieu, should be kept in prison for as long as possible'* (Ministry of Justice 2017:4). Keeping gang members incarcerated was mainly to be achieved by making EXIT enrolment a condition for early parole. Invoking that condition meant that, as a general rule, gang members were to serve out the full time of their sentence (Ministry of justice, 2017:5), which was to be a long sentence based on the doubling of sentences. This was the difference from the second package, where parole still was an option, on the condition the gang member would not seek out the area his gang operated in, nor individuals from his gang, during the time of parole. Following the third package, it was either/or: if you are gang-related, there is no parole; it becomes an option if you enter EXIT and dedicate yourself to leaving the criminal milieu. In relation to this, it was also agreed that it should be possible for those entering an EXIT program to hand in illegal weapons without facing charges for possession (Ministry of Justice 2017:5), and it was to be explored whether gang members who wanted to leave could receive help with 'special address protection' (Ministry of justice 2017:6). It was further agreed to test GPS monitoring of convicts on parole if they had ties to groups of people who collectively were engaged in criminal activity. Also, it was agreed that convicts with ties to groups of people who were collectively engaged in criminal activity were to be subject to mail and visit supervision while in prison, and when the group they belonged to was involved in active conflict, they would be denied mail and visits in general.

A special concern in the second objective was to ensure that leading figures in the gang milieu were to serve their sentences removed from their group, and if they showed any form of controlling or manipulative behaviour while in prison, they should face severe disciplinary sanctions (Ministry of Justice 2017:5). Lastly, for the second objective, it was agreed to seek options for deporting foreigners in Denmark who took part in gang-related activities and criminality.

Pressuring the gangs

The third objective was to ensure that life as a gang member was as undesirable as possible by: *'ensuring that the police and other authorities continually have the right tools to be one step ahead of the gangs'* (Ministry of Justice 2017:6). This entailed a long list of initiatives including but not limited to more resources for operative intelligence personnel within the police, allowing the police to share data on the automatic license plate recognition system, oversight with gang influence on guard and bouncer

employees, restricting gang members' access to the leasing of luxury cars, making it more difficult to get medical approval to drive a motorbike without a helmet, and different ways to control financial activities for gang members, especially regarding fraud with social benefits (Ministry of Justice 2017:6-8).

At its core, this meant that the third objective was to be achieved by making sure that gang members would feel police awareness of their activities, experience irritation by making it illegal for them to behave as they want, and making it difficult to acquire milieu-perceived status symbols. Part of the agreement was also to start investigations into how much gang-related crime costs society and who those involved in the gang milieu are, especially regarding ethnicity and citizenship status.

Discussion

We can now address the exceptional and excessive elements in the packages. The first packages mainly addressed the threat that gang conflicts posed to 'ordinary random citizens' safety and security, founding the package clearly in a reassurance agenda. The need for reassurance and re-establishing order legitimized the incarceration-oriented measures (doubling of sentences, raising of minimum as well as maximum sentences, extending the use of pretrial detention) and curtailments of release mechanisms and prisoner's and citizens' rights (restrictions of early parole, of the option to serve sentences with an ankle monitor, and of postponing the beginning of serving a sentence, enabling phone tabbing, and using zone bans). In this regard, the penal changes in the first gang package strongly resemble Pratts' description of penal excess, both in terms of use of punishment and the meaning of punishment. Exceptionalism is mainly noteworthy in its absence in this package, where little concern for rehabilitation is voiced, and the curtailment of rights and release mechanisms contradict rehabilitative values in the Danish justice system. The first gang package thus takes a victim perspective that is more in line with excessive punishment than with exceptional concerns for offender rehabilitation. The introduction of the 'gang section' is the prime example of how the excessive concern materialized in an incarceration practice, with the doubling of sentences.

The second package maintained the focus on the protection of law-abiding citizens but also introduced a representation of gang membership as a choice of lifestyle. This representation legitimized further excessive measures since such a choice was not to be met with tolerance. Excessiveness is found in the package in the forms of further doubling and toughening of sentences and of curtailment of more prisoner and citizen rights, of which especially the facilitation of transfers between prisons stands in contrast to a traditional Danish focus on serving prison sentences as close to one's family as possible, in

order to maintain social relations and thereby minimize recidivism (Minke & Gottrup, 2014). Contrary to the first package, exceptionalism played a direct role in the second package. Since gang membership was represented as a choice, individual gang members were also allowed a choice between conditions for serving the prison sentences. This choice was enabled by the EXIT program, working as conditioned access to 'traditional' conditions, obtained if gang members openly distanced themselves from the gang milieu. Rehabilitative measures when serving a prison sentence was thus no longer a universal citizen right but something to be worthy of by adhering to morally acceptable behaviour, even in regards to crime.

The third package mainly continued from where the second ended. It followed up with even further excessive elements, with stricter sentences for crimes against non-gang members and possession of firearms, and with the rephrasing of the gang section to also double sentences for crimes leading to gang conflicts. However, the third package included a stronger focus on denial of citizen rights to gangs and gang members, a focus legitimized through a clearer representation of gang members as having turned their back on society, why society ought to slam the door behind them. It thus strengthened the perspective of gang membership as a choice of belonging to society and access to citizen rights as a responsibility rather than a universal right. Denial of the right to establish and gather in club locals is an example of this. Also noteworthy is the post-sentence ban on taking residence in a municipality where a convicted gang member had operated previously. The clearly stated intention is to keep gang members incarcerated for as long as possible if they do not choose to enter an EXIT program. Also, in line with the previous packages, this shows how the use of prison sentences rests on the purpose of incarceration rather than rehabilitation.

There is also an excessive element to all three packages in that they were presented as reactions to outbursts of violence from the gang milieu, which was of public concern. This underscores an intention to reassure the public, thus symbolizing that the government controls the situation.

Previous studies of differentiated treatment in the criminal justice system, either as bordered punitiveness (Aas, 2014) or bifurcation (Bottoms, 1977), have found such practices to rely on an active Othering as legitimating the differentiation. A similar process seems to be traceable in the sparse data on the political legitimation of the law changes as well. Though the first gang package referred relatively little to the offenders, focussing on the victims, the second and third packages actively employed two discursive representations of gang members as legitimizing the tough measures: having turned their back on society, society had no responsibility to tolerate gang members, and by casting gang members

as dangerous, it was meaningful to get them off the streets fast and for as long as possible. Seen together, this allowed the police a wide array of tools in their management of gangs, and it facilitated the revoking of prisoner rights and made it meaningful to prolong sentences. This indicates an Othering process of being unworthy to traditional treatment based on issues of moral belonging to society and to violent proneness. But further discursive studies of more detailed empirical data are needed to develop an understanding of how the Othering underpinned the law changes.

Though the leniency of the Nordic penal system is contested in the literature on Nordic exceptionalism, there is an agreement that inclusion, also through punishment, is the goal (Smith & Uglevik 2017), even if forced (Barker, 2012). However, the gang policies seem to indicate that another rationale of punishment is at play in regard to gangs. This rationale is incarceration-oriented and clearly exclusionary in that it aims at removing a population group from the streets. It is further noteworthy that key inclusionary practices in the Danish penal system, early parole and prison leave, become inaccessible to this population group. Not surprisingly, Storgaard has documented a general decrease in the use of prison leave and early parole in Denmark, arguing that the Danish anti-gang policies are a key factor in this development (Storgaard, 2020). At a macro level, Storgaard's study might indicate a general turn in Danish penology towards excessive punishment, where incarceration of dangerous offenders for the sake of 'containing problem populations' replace rehabilitative concerns. Such a turn has elsewhere been argued to take place in Scandinavia (Balvig, 2005; Shamma, 2016), and a previous study of the first gang package also concluded that Denmark seems to be in a transition towards a penal state, where welfare and punishment are merging (Nilsson & Delica, 2015). Sadly, it seems that Pratt's forewarning of exceptionalism being at risk of erosion seem to some regard to have been correct (Pratt, 2008b, p. 288). However, at the micro-level analysis in this article, this picture of a more general transition towards punitiveness seems less clear. Yes, excessive elements are found in the gang policies, but they are not found to replace the exceptional elements. Rather they seem to exist simultaneously. With the EXIT program bridging the traditional exceptional penal system and a new excessive system, the traditional and lenient system is maintained rather than dismantled. Rather than a transition, the development of the gang policies should be understood as a process of bifurcation (Bottoms, 1977; Ruggiero, 2013) in the Danish penal system, in line with the parallel justice systems noted by Aas (2014). Learning from Garland (2001, p. 168) this is not necessarily surprising, since Garland finds that developments in penal systems rarely takes form of one system replacing an old one, rather he notes that 'their strategic functioning and social significance' that transform. This poses the question of whether the gang packages illustrate a 'new Nordic culture of control', where bifurcation is developed in order to protect

the traditional penal system for the worthy offenders. This however stands in contrast to Barkers argument that bifurcation as an inherent trait in the Scandinavian nation states (Barker, 2018).

Bifurcation, as differentiated punishment, is not a new phenomenon in European and Nordic penology (Ruggiero, 2013; Snacken, 2006). Ruggiero has summarized European bifurcation as informal control mechanisms, like greater inclination to report crimes of minorities, and following institutional practices of speedily and routinely penalizing these groups (Ruggiero, 2013, pp.288-289), which result in bifurcated treatment of 'weak' groups in society and separate treatment for selected categories of offences that threaten the social order in a given society (Ruggiero, 2013, pp.290). Such informal discriminatory mechanisms were documented in Denmark well before Pratt formulated the Nordic Exceptionalism theory (Holmberg & Kyvsgaard, 2003). What is noteworthy with the gang packages is that differentiation is formalized, even intended. This intended bifurcated penology is more in line with the bordered penalties notes by Aas (2014) and differentiated treatment of foreigners noted by Barker in her formulation of Nordic penal nationalism (2018). Though these studies mainly address how foreigners are categorized as unworthy of receiving the Nordic welfare states' generous services, this study reveals how even formal citizens can be cast as unworthy based on a representation as dangerous. It is not new in the history of bifurcated penal practices that dangerousness is the demarcating characteristic qualifying selected groups of offenders for harsher sentences and restricted access to parole and other forms of prison leave (Hudson, 1993). What is noteworthy in these policy packages, however, is the choice presented to the offenders through the option of entering an EXIT program. While the choice legitimizes quite far-reaching restrictions for prisoner's rights and long-term incarceration, both at odds with human rights principles (Snacken, 2006), the same choice also makes it the individual gang member's responsibility to serve under such conditions or not, inscribing an element of responsabilization (Garland, 2001) into Danish penology. Even though the case hardly describes a general turn towards punitiveness in Denmark, this element of individual responsibility does speak to the moral regulation described in Wacquant's theory of the development of a neoliberal penal state relied upon by Nilsson and Delica (2015; Wacquant, 2010), in that the choice offered works as a sort of technique for disciplining gang members.

Bifurcation is a contested practice in several regards, though there should be no doubt that the need to address violent gang-related crime, where law-abiding residents come in harm's way, is, by all means, a just cause. The question, however, still remains if a bifurcated response is the best response to the issue, not least since penal populism (Pratt, 2007) might be a driving force in the formulation of the gang

packages—it certainly has been noted regarding bordered penalties (Todd-Kvam, 2019). More studies of the relationship between political discourse and media representation are needed to evaluate the driving forces of the gang packages. However, it is noteworthy how little difference there is between the packages, considering how little effect they seem to have had on the gang milieu and the number of shootings in public areas. This raises the question of whether the policies have been intended to address gang crime through innovative control mechanisms or if their main purpose has been to serve as reassuring tokenism. Bifurcation carries connotations of discriminatory practices of marginalized population groups (Fitzgibbon & Lea, 2010; Ruggiero, 2013), threatens the rights of offenders curtailments prisoner rights and unproportioned sentence lengths (Snacken, 2006), and it has been found to put pressure on the prison system in the form of both overcrowding (Snacken & Beyens, 1994) and a concentration of dangerous and difficult offenders (Hudson, 1993) which in its own right threaten the ability of prisons to deliver rehabilitative services, since resources have to be allocated to control practices (Hudson, 1993). Further studies could follow Storgaard in an endeavour to unfold issues of access to justice in regard to bifurcated penal practices (Storgaard, 2021).

Bifurcating penal practices have also been argued to threaten social justice (Hudson, 1993), thus entering the realm of everyday life of those population groups perceived as problematic. In this regard, it is noteworthy that the bifurcated practice of double punishment has migrated from anti-gang policies to anti-ghettoization policies in Denmark. In the latest anti-ghettoization strategy from the Danish government (Government, 2018), the police were granted the power to declare double punishment zones in neighbourhoods figuring on the Danish ghetto list. Seeman's study of Danish anti-ghettoization policies reveals how a range of welfare services also seem to be denied or conditioned for ethnic minority families residing in these neighbourhoods (Seeman, 2020, see also Freiesleben, 2016 and Simonsen, 2016 for studies on Danish anti-ghettoization policies). Seeman finds that these policies introduce a status differentiation between citizen groups, here mainly between ethnic minority and majority, where the level of services received from public institutions is determined by the status of a given group in the eye of the welfare state. The differentiated level of services noted by Seeman resembles a bifurcation of welfare services, though she does not use the term. Seen together, and they really ought to since there is a significant overlap in neighbourhoods characterized as ghettos and neighbourhoods with local gangs, the anti-gang and ghettoization policies raise questions of access to both legal and social justice of members of ethnic minority communities in Denmark. Empirical studies of the lived realities of these population groups are called for, in regard to understanding how these policies influence the everyday lives of members of these groups and how they perceive and relate to

the range of welfare and penal institutions from where they receive a differentiated treatment compared to other citizen groups who are treated 'normally'. Some studies have already done so, mainly with a focus on the policing of the groups (Haller et al., 2018; Haller et al., 2020; Johansen & Jensen, 2017; Madsen, 2021; Saarikkomäki et al., 2020; Solhjell et al., 2019), but further studies are needed that address the relationship between resident and a broader range of both penal and welfare institutions. Here we also see how Pratt's forewarning that the threat to homogeneity posed by immigration seems related to the penological development. The role of ethnicity in the development of the gang packages is however elusive. There is little talk of ethnicity in the discussion of the law changes. Ethnic Danish MC-gang members face the same bifurcated treatment as the ethnic minority gang members. It is however noteworthy how the gang packages differ from the countermeasures taken during the MC-gang wars in the 80's and 90's. Strand (2011) have gone through this history, generally noting how those conflicts made the police develop a stronger intelligence practice in order to ensure stronger cases for prosecution of the gang members. Those countermeasures thus mainly strengthened a reactive policing practice, while the gang package studied here moves into the realm of proactive control practices. There can be several reasons for the differences however, for instance the fact that though the MC-gang wars were brutal, uninvolved citizens were rarely at risk of being targeted. The gang conflicts from 2008 and onwards have in contrast introduced more reckless violence at cafés and streets, where innocent bystanders come in harm's way. The third gang package however more clearly addressed ethnicity, in that it focussed on ensuring that ethnic minority gang members were to be deported following punishment when ever possible. In this regard, the gang policies can be seen to be part of a 'racialized welfare state' where the policing of ethnic minorities are acts of internal border control (Mulinari & Keskinen, 2020, p.13).

Though it was previously argued that the gang policies hardly resembled a general transition towards punitiveness, this broader discussion of status differentiation might in fact hint at a development towards what Wacquant describes as a centaur state, where marginalized urban groups face a fearsome state and better off citizens remain in the gaze of a liberal and caring state (Wacquant, 2010). More studies in line with Nilsson and Delica's with a broader range of cases of penal development in Denmark are needed to investigate this (Nilsson & Delica, 2015). Recent research on drug law enforcement have for instance revealed how harm reduction strategies have replaced punitive practices enabled by the decriminalization of possession of drugs in open drug scenes (Kammersgaard, 2019). Thus, rather than studying general transformations in Nordic penology, it seems that a stronger focus on the control and management on different offences seems called for.

Conclusion

In reaction to the eruption of violent gang conflicts in Denmark, the Danish government has since 2009 formulated three anti-gang packages. These packages have mainly relied on tougher sentencing and curtailments of prisoners' rights to parole and early release in order to ensure the long incarceration of violence-prone gang members. The core of the packages has been the introduction of a gang-specific subsection into the Danish penal code, §81a, that allows for the doubling of sentences for gang-related offences. This subsection laid the foundation for differentiated treatment of gang members in the Danish penal system, ensuring that only gang members, not other types of convicts, face harsh sentences and lack of traditionally ensures prisoners' rights. The gang packages thereby introduce an intended bifurcation into the Danish penal system that enforces a development also seen in anti-ghettoization policies in Denmark of status differentiation between population groups by the welfare state. Status differentiation and differentiated treatment have previously been studied in relation to foreigners, and though there is an ethnic minority dimension to both gang and ghetto policies, the gang packages also address ethnic Danes, illustrating that differentiation, through the representation of worthiness, also take place between citizen groups. Rather than illustrating a general turn towards punitiveness in Denmark, the gang packages reveal a development of bifurcation in the Danish criminal justice system, enabling a system where most are treated by what Pratt termed penal exceptionalism, while Others are treated with penal excess.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

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