

MASTER'S THESIS

»BUT I'VE NEVER LOOKED AT IT AS A GHETTO«

—

Negotiating Territorial Stigmatisation
in a Danish Neighbourhood

4CITIES Erasmus Mundus Course in Urban Studies

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ABSTRACT

With anti-immigrant attitudes and a fear of 'the Other' increasingly dominating political discourses and informing biopolitical practices in many European countries, also the urban spaces inhabited by these marginalised groups are increasingly constructed as places of exclusion. Besides (political) interventions within these designated areas, also the labelling contributes to the stigmatisation of these spaces. An example of such a practice is the adaptation and institutionalisation of the concept of the 'ghetto' in the Danish context, which (discursively) establishes spaces of exclusion and contributes to the spatialisation and ethnicisation of social problems. This thesis draws attention to how the 'ghetto' as a socio-spatial imaginary is constructed and gains hegemonic position in the political field and as such has not only consequences as a policy but also because of the external representations it conveys of both targeted areas and residents. To elaborate how the externally imposed socio-spatial imaginaries of the 'ghetto' intersect with the everyday lived experiences of residents, a discourse-based document analysis is employed to trace how the 'ghetto' is discursively constructed and instrumentalised. Following from this, interviews with residents and local professionals of Tingbjerg, a neighbourhood classified as a 'ghetto', highlight how the national discourse is related to and negotiated at the local scale. The findings draw attention to the simultaneity of different conceptions of space, whose possibility of public communication, however, are subject to asymmetric power relations. Residents are thus involved in symbolic struggles over representation and the formulation of counter-narratives that potentially challenge the dominant socio-spatial imaginaries conveyed by the 'ghetto' discourse. It is also demonstrated that the 'ghetto' in Denmark should not be considered in terms of material and/or socioeconomic features but must be understood as a discourse in which social and spatial demarcations and hierarchisations intersect.

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“But I have never looked at it as a ghetto.” (Interviewee S) While this statement was only expressed in the last interview of my research process, it strongly resonates with implicit notions of this very same subjective negotiation process formulated by other participants but also my own astonishment that I was first confronted with during my initial visit to the neighbourhood of Tingbjerg, a residential area at the outskirts of Copenhagen that is officially designated as a ‘ghetto’. The above statement hence points to the negotiation of this designation and the demarcation of the associative concept of the ‘ghetto’ against residents’ own everyday experiences in space.

1. INTRODUCTION

With the political institutionalisation of the concept of the ‘ghetto’ in Denmark, immigration-critical and racist discourses were projected and fixated onto selected neighbourhoods, which thus became key sites for the negotiation of national discourses on society’s social cohesion and ‘Otherness’. Labelling these neighborhoods as ‘ghettos’, however, does not constitute a mere description but is instead politically motivated. As the term is symbolically charged and evokes vivid sociospatial imaginations of decay, deviant behaviour and formation of parallel societies among a vast majority of society, it is politically instrumentalised to justify political interventions against both the spaces and its inhabitants. Since the ‘ghetto’ is thus not a ‘neutral’ term, the designation of specific neighbourhoods as such contributes to the hierarchisation of urban space and the stigmatisation of targeted areas. The political utilisation of the ‘ghetto’ concept is therefore an expression of symbolic power through labelling (Bourdieu 1989, p. 23).

Although the categorisation of urban areas as ‘ghettos’ is widely seen as inappropriate in the Danish context due to historical, social, political and structural differences (Wacquant, 2006; Wacquant, 2008; Schultz Larsen, 2011), the introduction of the term to the political debate constructed a certain symbolic reality, which constitutes the (spatial) context for residents’ everyday life in the respective neighbourhoods. As the ‘ghetto’ is an association-rich concept, I hypothesise that its deliberate instrumentalisation and the (re)production and reinforcement of sociospatial imaginaries in the ‘ghetto’ discourse influence residents’ everyday experience of the neighbourhood. At the same time, however, it is at the level of the everyday life that “relations of dominance are lived, reproduced and contested” (Garbin & Millington, 2012, p. 2072).

To therefore illuminate how the configuration of the 'ghetto' is not only conveyed at the conceptual level but also negotiated in and through everyday life, I will pose the following question:

How do externally imposed socio-spatial imaginaries of the 'ghetto' intersect with residents' everyday experiences in stigmatised neighbourhoods?

I will thus trace the discursive sociospatial construction of the 'ghetto' and point to its negotiation and (symbolic) effects on residents at the local scale.

2. METHODOLOGY

In order to examine how the discursive production of the 'ghetto' imaginary is negotiated in and intersects with the everyday life of residents in stigmatised neighbourhoods, I followed a twofold approach. First, I conducted a discourse-based document analysis of key policy papers of the Danish 'ghetto' initiative to show how a certain definition of the 'ghetto' as a place and policy problem has prevailed and been institutionalised. Thereby, I aimed to critically examine how the political problem of the 'ghetto' is embedded in the simultaneous production of spatial representations of ethnicised socio-economic problematisations. These discursively produced socio-spatial imaginaries of the 'ghetto' were then related to the lived experiences of the inhabitants of a neighbourhood classified as a 'ghetto'. Through qualitative semi-structured interviews, I intended to highlight how different stakeholders relate to and negotiate the spatial and non-spatial representations of the 'ghetto'.

A qualitative single case study approach was employed, which allowed me to establish a profound familiarity with the field despite the limited time of data collection between November 2020 and August 2021. Through data and methodological triangulation (Beitin, 2012, p. 248; Kohlbacher, 2006, p. 7), the aim was to identify "the complex interactions of factors" (Cresswell, 2013, p. 47) and gain "an in-depth understanding of the case" (Cresswell, 2013, p. 98, emphasis in original). To provide as much space as possible for the experiences of the participants and to learn from the field, the research process was emergent¹ (Stake, 1995, p. 8). Through this openness to the participants' accounts

¹ As is often the case in qualitative research, the research process was emergent (Cresswell, 2013, p. 47). Since the access to the field and stakeholders was complicated by the Covid-pandemic and the related lockdowns, forms of data collection were adapted to the available options and the initially planned participatory observations were dispensed with. After a first phase of data collection, the research question was adjusted and broadened so that I could consider more participants for the interviews. Accordingly, I extended the focus of my

and prioritisations I aimed to “tell the story in its diversity, allowing the story to unfold from the many-sided, complex, and sometimes conflicting stories” (Flyvbjerg, 2006, p. 238). Accordingly, it was not intended to derive generalisations, “but to elucidate the particular, the specific” (Cresswell, 2013, p. 157; arguing against a focus on formal generalisation in case study research, see also Flyvbjerg, 2006, p. p. 226).

Following a single instrumental case study (Stake, 1995, p. 3), the negotiation of the political ‘ghetto’ discourse among residents in Tingbjerg² was chosen as an information-rich case “that manifest[s] the phenomenon intensely but not extremely” (Cresswell, 2013, p. 158). The site selection was therefore information-oriented (Flyvbjerg, 2006, p. 230) and followed the criteria:

- Due to the spatial demarcation from surrounding residential areas by a ring road and green spaces, it could be assumed that officials as well as residents have a coherent place idea and perception of the geographical extent of Tingbjerg.
- Tingbjerg³ is listed as a ‘severe ghetto’ under the government’s ‘ghettolist’ and was first listed with the introduction of the list in 2010. I hypothesise that the consecutive listing of the neighbourhood contributed to the consolidation of outsiders’ perception of Tingbjerg as a ‘ghetto’. I moreover hypothesise that this consolidation contributes to the readily availability of a chain of associations of the ‘ghetto’ with regard to Tingbjerg, both among outsiders and residents.
- Due to its classification as a ‘severe ghetto’, Tingbjerg is currently undergoing a profound redevelopment in which the ‘ghetto’ imaginary are contrasted and negotiated against socio-spatial visions of a family-friendly neighbourhood in the countryside.
- With a current population of almost 6.300, Tingbjerg is the second largest ‘ghetto’ in Denmark. Due to this size, independent (neighbourhood) institutions and associations have developed here, which in turn contribute to neighbourhood life and thus promote a stronger engagement of the residents with their immediate (social) surroundings. In relation to my research question, I assume that residents therefore interact more strongly with and in their neighbourhood and thus also deal more profoundly with the stigma.

research from the negotiation of the territorial stigma among youngsters organised in youth organisations to residents in general who are involved in the neighbourhood.

² Acknowledging the specific social, political, and spatial embeddedness of the residents’ experiences, I decided against anonymising the place. This was also informed by the fact that “anonymization wrongly assumes that the theoretical insights from place-based research can be unproblematically distilled and applied across other research settings” (Warr, 2005, p. 290).

³ For an introduction to the neighbourhood, see Appendix A.

- As claims have been formulated by various organisations in Tingbjerg to abolish the ‘ghettolist’ nationwide, I assume that there is an awareness of the impacts of the term and that these are also being discussed within the neighbourhood.

2.1 Discourse-based document analysis

As employing the term ‘ghetto’ in official policy making is neither neutral nor descriptive but instrumentalised in the discursive struggles for the occupation of dominant social and political positions (v. Freiesleben, 2016, p. 10), I conducted a discourse-based document analysis to account for the intersection of material and semiotic practices. Following a post-structuralist approach, language is hence considered to play a constitutive role in the social production of meaning (Hastings, 1999, p. 10). Accordingly, discursive practices are also central to the symbolic appropriation and production of spaces and their hierarchisation (Belina & Dzudzek, 2021, p. 124). In this context, discourse analysis can contribute to “make [...] the connection between language use and power relations [apparent]” (Jacobs, 2006, p. 47).

Discourse is here considered as the expression of

“a particular conceptualisation of reality and knowledge that attempts to gain hegemony. This ‘will to knowledge’ attempts to embed particular values and ways of seeing and understanding the world as natural, so that they become taken for granted and slip from critical gaze. It is thus an institutionalisation and fusion of articulation processes and practice forms, which generates new forms of knowledge and rationality, and frames what are considered to be legitimate social actions.” (Richardson & Jensen, 2003, p. 16)

Consequently, discourses do not represent an ‘objective reality’, but rather create the subjects they are dealing with (Wellgraf, 2014, p. 208). Approaching the Danish ‘ghetto’ initiatives as a discourse hence implies that the ‘problems’ that inform the ‘ghetto’ discourse emerge as problematisations through discursive struggles (Bacchi & Goodwin, 2016, p. 6). The ‘ghetto’ is thus “simultaneously material and semiotic in character” (Fairclough, 2013, p. 178).

In order to trace the shifts in meaning and the increasing ethnicisation and spatialisation of the ‘ghetto’ issue, I conducted a discourse-based document analysis of the government’s 2004, 2010 and 2018 ghetto initiatives, which mark nodal points in the discursive production of spaces of exclusion and stigmatisation. I thereby aim to illuminate how the discursive framing of certain areas and people and the labelling of these spaces as ‘ghettos’ is used to (re)produce, maintain and naturalise relations of dominance and social injustice (van Dijk, 1993, p. 254). As the focus is thus on the dialectical relationship between language and power, I followed a critical discourse analysis approach (Hastings, 1999, p. 9-10; Jacobs, 2006, p. 45).

The policy documents are understood here as “situated products” (Prior, 2003, p. 26) that emerged from discursive practices. To account for both these contextual as well as intratextual dimensions in the analysis, I adopted Fairclough’s (Lees, 2004, p. 104) three-dimensional framework for critical discourse analysis which comprises (1) text analysis (evaluation of linguistic structure and content), (2) discursive practice (consideration of the contextual embeddedness of the document in (public) debates) and (3) social practice (conceptualisation of “the more general ideological context within which the discourses have taken place” (Lees, 2004, p. 104)). The analysis thus not only refers to the mere content level, but also includes the discourse’s contextual production process as well as its wider (socio-political) effects.

Due to the limited scope of this thesis, however, I am not able to consider the context of the ‘ghetto’ discourse in-depth. Instead, I will focus on three key policy papers and respective speech transcripts that marked a further institutionalisation of the ‘ghetto’ discourse in political practices. While the consideration of only a few documents can potentially lead to selective accentuation and an inaccurate representation of the discourse, I understand the analysed documents as ‘micro-discourses’ which, due to their centrality in structuring the ‘macro-discourse’, are still able to point to issues of hegemony, exclusion and power as negotiated in the Danish ‘ghetto’ discourse (Strauss & Feiz, 2013, p. 312-313). I thus assume that (political) negotiation processes converge and condense in these documents. Moreover, the policy papers examined here also provide the discursive framework for legislation and are hence central to the reproduction and reinforcement of the hegemonic position of the discourse. However, as the deliberation process of this hegemonic position is not further elaborated in the context of this thesis, my approach can be described as a discourse-based document analysis.

2.2 Interviews

In order to elaborate how the discursive production of the ‘ghetto’ as the spatial context for everyday life of residents is negotiated on the neighbourhood scale, I conducted qualitative semi-structured interviews with nine residents and eight local professionals in Tingbjerg between November 2020 and August 2021 (for an overview of the interviewees and the interview settings, see Appendix D). The interviewed local professionals were in different ways associated with the social comprehensive plan of Tingbjerg and hence occupied an “interstitial role [...] in-between the state and authorities and the local communities” (Birk & Fallov, 2021, p. 266) and as such mediate between the production of the ‘ghetto’ discourse from above and its negotiation from below.

I conducted ten individual interviews, two interviews with two people each and one interview with three people⁴. Except for the local professionals, the participants were free to choose whether they wanted to conduct the interview in Danish or English⁵ and through (video)call or in person. The participants were thus offered a degree of control over the research setting, which seemed appropriate both with regard to the ongoing Corona pandemic and the (partly) sensitive topics discussed (Hanna, 2012, p. 239; Weller, 2017, p. 619).

The selection of the participants followed a purposeful sampling. For the group of local professionals, the main objective was to include those that can provide different perspectives and worked at different levels that are associated with the social comprehensive plan for Tingbjerg. The contact to this group was mainly established through a gate keeper. Initiating contact to residents was difficult due to the ongoing Corona pandemic, with many events being cancelled or limited in terms of the number of participants, but also due to the summer holidays, which coincided with the primary period of data collection. Eventually, contact was initiated via a neighbourhood Facebook group, where I contacted some residents based on their activities in the group I had observed over several weeks. In addition, I wrote a post in the group myself, in which I specifically addressed people who describe themselves as being engaged in the neighbourhood. In response to this post, I got in touch with another five people.

While the criteria of being involved/volunteering is not in itself a necessary condition for answering my research, through its inclusion I aimed to gain deeper insights despite the limited scope of my thesis. The identification of the targeted sample was thus informed by my assumption that individuals who self-identify as active and engaged residents of Tingbjerg would be more concerned with negotiating the effects of the 'ghetto' label for the representation of and lived experiences in the space. I thus did not aim to identify individuals who could speak as representatives for certain groups of residents, but instead "respondents are relied upon to speak primarily of and for themselves" (Tracy, 2012, p. 141).⁶ I thus follow Crouch & McKenzie (2006, p. 492), who stated for their own research that

⁴ Interviewees O and P were interviewed together at their own request. The other two multi-person interviews were conducted as such for practical reasons. In hindsight, I considered the interaction among the participants as valuable, as it allowed participants to "create meaning or supplement each other's answers" (Beitin, 2012, p. 245).

⁵ Although I myself am not proficient in Danish, I wanted to give the participants the opportunity to express themselves in their mother tongue / the language they use in their everyday life, as I assumed that the interviewees could describe their experiences more nuanced in their own language. This was also central to the analysis of the interviews, in which I was especially interested in the specific word choice.

⁶ Since 'the residents' do not constitute a homogeneous group, I do not claim to be able to represent the experiences of and with the 'ghetto' label for the group *in toto*. Still, limitations arise due to the small number of interviews conducted and the selection of participants. I only spoke to one male resident and the participants

“[r]ather than being systematically selected instances of specific categories of attitudes and responses, here respondents embody and represent meaningful experience-structure links”.

The interviews were structured around the participants' subjective perception of Tingbjerg, the neighbourhood community and their motivations to get engaged in the latter⁷. The interviews were based on flexible interview guidelines (Tracy, 2012, p. 139) and more precise (follow-up) questions evolved in the course of the interview. Accordingly, the questions were not pre-formulated but kept open “so that the participants can construct the meaning of a situation” (Cresswell, 2013, p. 24). Since it was important for me to understand the participants' choice of words, focus and framing in describing their everyday experiences of and in Tingbjerg, I introduced the aim of the study very broadly in the opening of the interviews as an investigation of the sense of neighbourhood community in Tingbjerg⁸. In order to avoid reducing residents' experiences to the 'ghetto' discourse and the stigmatisation of the neighbourhood, I have therefore only taken up this topic after it was brought up by the participants themselves in the course of the interview. The interviews were recorded and then transcribed. If the interviews were in Danish, I identified the passages relevant to the research question and translated them⁹. The transcripts were then anonymised and, in the case of the professionals' job titles/organisations, very broadly worded to address the concern of deductive disclosure (Kaiser, 2012, p. 457).

Since the residents relate different experiences and subjective meanings to living in Tingbjerg, it is significant for me as a researcher to “look for the complexities of views rather than narrowing meanings into a few categories or ideas” (Cresswell, 2013, p. 24). I have therefore not applied a priori classifications and categorical frameworks to the data analysis, but rather developed themes inductively (Cresswell, 2013, p. 24). Interpretation thus became central, whereby I as a researcher adopt a central position and less 'findings' than 'assertions' emerge from the research process (Stake, 1995, p.

were all either working, in education or already retired. It would have been particularly interesting to also include the perspective of younger male residents of an ethnic minority background, as these were identified by other participants to embody intersectional stigmata.

⁷ Due to the shift of focus in my research interest, the interviews with residents H, J, K, L focused mainly on their affiliation to and engagement in youth organisations. The interviews with interviewees A-G were not only conducted for the purpose of this thesis but were also used for a research project on the imaginaries involved in the current redevelopment of Tingbjerg. Although written and/or oral consent was obtained prior to the interviews, the change of the research focus raises issues with regard to informed consent. However, as this is mainly a shift in relation to the studied group rather than the topic itself, it is not considered problematic in the context of this study.

⁸ The specific purpose of the study was then revealed in the debriefing after the interview.

⁹ Participants were also given the opportunity to make changes after the transcription. Four participants made use of this opportunity, mainly for clarifications.

8, 42). To get familiar with the content of the interviews, transcripts were read successively and were then subject to a first cycle open and in vivo coding to capture the participants' attribution of meaning (Saldaña, 2013, p. 91, 100). In a secondary cycle coding, data was examined for common meta-themes by focused and axial coding. Through focused coding, “the most salient categories in the data corpus” (Saldaña, 2013, p. 264) could be extracted, which were related to each other through axial coding (Saldaña, 2013, 261; Wicks, 2010, p. 154). In this way, I was able to compare and contrast both the overarching categories as well as the different nuances of the respective participants, linking together the concepts raised.

3. LITERATURE REVIEW

3.1 The ghetto as a sociospatial device

Referring to the *ghetto nuovo* of Renaissance Venice, Wacquant (2010a, p. 166) traces how the ghetto emerged as a “sociospatial device permitting the joint economic exploitation and social ostracization” of Jews in Medieval Europe and, since the 20th-century, African Americans in the US context. While the respective seclusion fostered a rich cultural life, the development of independent institutions and close social bonds between the residents, the ghetto also constituted a means of social and spatial fixation and confinement employed by those in power, so that both the ghetto space as well as its residents were subject to extensive social, cultural and political restrictions (Slater & Anderson, 2012).

As such, in both the Medieval Jewish and the 20th-century American ghetto, the ghetto as an “*institutional form*” constitutes a “spatially-based concatenation of mechanisms of *ethnoracial control and closure*” (Wacquant, 1997, p. 343, emphasis in original). According to Wacquant (2006), the space of the ghetto is instrumentalised to reconcile the conflicting goals of economic exploitation of the confined population and the simultaneous exclusion of these population groups, which are “regarded as socially contaminating and corrosive” (Hancock & Mooney, 2013, p. 55). The resulting formation is a discrete space inhabited by a (racially) homogeneous group deemed undesirable (Slater & Anderson, 2012).

As a “janus-faced institution” (Wacquant, 2006, p. 136), the ghetto fulfils opposite functions for the two collectives it binds: for the dominant group, it serves as an efficient means of control and subordination to its material and symbolic advantage, while for the subordinated group it represents an integrating and protective institution, insofar as it shields its members from constant contact with the dominant group and promotes cohesion and community building within the restricted sphere. Within this sphere, the enforced spatial and institutional enclosure intensifies social exchange and cultural participation (Wacquant, 2006). The forced inward orientation thereby distracts from class and cultural differences between those living in the ghetto and contributes to an increased sense of solidarity and community (Wacquant, 2006).

Following Wacquant (2011, p. 5, as cited in Hancock & Mooney, 2013, p. 55), four components are thus central to a sociological understanding of the ‘ghetto’: “(i) *stigma*, (ii) *constraint*, (iii) *spatial confinement* and (iv) *institutional parallelism*” (emphasis in original). The understanding of the ‘ghetto’ as a social and institutional form hence differs from the widespread descriptive use of the term as a segregated and impoverished urban area and instead shifts the focus to questions of power as well as the role of the state for the formation and perpetuation of the ghetto. It does not constitute a “natural area” (Wacquant, 2006, p. 12) that has emerged from ecological dynamics, as it was, for example, conceptualised by Wirth (1928), but is an expression of a particular form of collective violence concretised in urban space (Hancock & Mooney, 2013; Wacquant, 2006). Accordingly, the process of ghettoisation is not uncontrolled and unplanned but brought about by state mechanisms (Wacquant, 2006).

Drawing on the US American context, Pattillo (2003) highlights racial segregation and subjugation as “key identifiers of ghettos” (p. 1047). While the ghetto is racially segregated, especially historically, it was an economically diverse area (Wacquant, 1997). Furthermore, Wacquant (2006) emphasises that while all ghettos are segregated, not all segregated areas are ghettos. For an urban area to be considered a ghetto, the segregation must be imposed and all-encompassing with the area exhibiting demarcated parallel institutions that enable the enclosed group to reproduce itself (Wacquant, 2006).¹⁰

Different forms of spatial separation can be distinguished from the ghetto, displaying unique characteristics and emerging from differing structural dynamics. According to Marcuse (1997, p. 231), “immigrant or cultural enclaves” differ in terms of the voluntary nature of segregation. Wacquant (2008b), again, contrasts the ghetto to another type of spatialised marginality which he denominates ‘ethnic cluster’. Since the ‘ethnic cluster’ is first and foremost based on class and not race, it contains a heterogeneous group. Moreover, marginalisation here is usually attenuated by state action. As such,

¹⁰ In this regard, segregated areas of the urban elite are not considered a ghetto as this segregation is voluntary.

the 'ethnic cluster' "can work as a springboard for assimilation through processes of cultural learning and social and spatial mobility whereas the ghetto constitutes a rather manifest barrier to integration because it creates both material and symbolic isolation" (Bakkær Simonsen, 2016, p. 87).

For the US American context, Wacquant (2008a, 2008b, 2016) further argues that the Black communal ghetto collapsed after the height of the civil rights movement and gave rise to the 'hyperghetto'¹¹ as a new organisational constellation. Marked by deindustrialisation and the shift to financial capitalism, the communal ghetto lost its economic function as a reservoir of unskilled labour. It henceforth functioned only as an exclusion mechanism of an outcast group whose members were now also economically excluded. At the same time, its institutional desertification advanced, for communal organisations "have been replaced by state institutions of social control" (Wacquant, 2008a, p. 114). As a result, "hyperghettoisation is economically underdetermined and politically overdetermined" (Wacquant, 2016, p. 1079) and the communal ghetto of the first half of the 20th century developed into a "mere receptacle for the stigmatized and superfluous fractions of the black proletariat: the unemployed, welfare recipients, criminals and participants in the booming informal economy" (Wacquant, 2008a, p. 114).

3.2 The 'ghetto' as a sociospatial imaginary

Although the denotation as 'ghetto' is widely considered inappropriate for any area in contemporary Europe (Schultz Larsen, 2011), it is "one of the most pervasive folk concepts" (Hancock & Mooney, 2013, p. 54) employed in both everyday contexts and politics as an umbrella term for varied urban problems such as (racial) segregation, delinquency, poor housing conditions and deprivation. Adopting the concept of 'ghetto' in the European context implies an apparent convergence between poverty and race relations in the US American context and socio-spatial expressions of urban marginality in Europe (Wacquant, 1993). As such, the term is instrumentalised in the political context to evoke and mobilise negative images and emotions in the wider public in order to justify political interventions in the respective urban areas (see chapter 3.5.3).

Whilst zones of urban deprivation in both the US and European context omit the same position "at the bottom of the material and symbolic hierarchy of places that make up the metropolis" (Wacquant, 2016, p. 1080), European working-class districts differ in structure, function and scale, as well as in the political interventions they receive (Schultz Larsen, 2011; Wacquant, 2016). For the European context, Wacquant (1993, p. 368) highlights that declining neighbourhoods instead constitute

¹¹ Marcuse (1997) uses the term 'outcast ghetto' to refer to this socio-spatial constellation.

'ethnic clusters' which are produced by different institutional logics and mechanisms of segregation than the Black ghetto in which "exclusion operates on the basis of colour reinforced by class and state" whereas in the French (and European context more generally) it operates "mainly on the basis of class and mitigated by the state". These declining neighbourhoods in Europe are furthermore characterised by rising ethnic heterogeneity, the absence of parallel institutional structures, "an absence of a collectively held identity" (Hancock & Mooney, 2013, p. 56) and porous boundaries allowing for geographic and social mobility of the inhabitants (Hancock & Mooney, 2013; Slater & Anderson, 2012; Wacquant, 1993; Wacquant, 2008a; Wacquant, 2016). According to Wacquant (2008a, p. 118, emphasis in original), such areas constitute the opposite of ghettos and are more aptly understood as "*anti-ghettos*". The discourse on ghettoisation in the European context is hence said to spatialise and ethnicise social problems instead of relating those to the precarisation of wage labour in a post-Fordist economy. It "partakes of the symbolic demonization of lower-class districts, which weakens them socially and marginalizes them politically" (Wacquant, 2008a, p. 115). If the term 'ghetto' is employed in the European context, the relationship between poverty, concentrated deprivation and disadvantage, and ethnic clustering is obscured, as are the (political) mechanisms that produce them (Birk, 2017; Hancock & Mooney, 2013; Schultz Larsen, 2011).

Particularly since the 1990s, the 'ghetto' trope is increasingly circulating in the European context and relates to a new crisis consciousness, in the course of which economic insecurity and migration issues are condensed into discussions about urban decline (Wellgraf, 2014, p. 207). In many European countries, an associative and effective 'ghetto' discourse can thus be identified even without 'real' 'ghettos'. Following Laclau, Wellgraf (2014, p. 206) therefore argues that the 'ghetto' in the European context functions as an 'empty signifier' which links a chain of disparate elements and thereby puts them into a discursive context. The term 'ghetto' can only become a discursive node by largely losing its specific meaning and ultimately standing as a hollow cipher for an equivalence relationship between different problem constellations, whereby their specificities and different structural causes are obfuscated.

Recourse to the trope of 'ghetto' is therefore in general seen as problematic in the European context, especially as it informs policy making (Bakkær Simonsen, 2016; Hancock & Mooney, 2013; Schultz Larsen, 2011). Since 'ghetto' is not a neutral term, it is not simply descriptive but an expression of symbolic power through naming (Bourdieu, 1991). In this regard, the political and media instrumentalisation of the term is aiming "to shock public conscience by activating the lay imaginary of urban badlands" (Wacquant, 2016, p. 1080). Thus, employing the term does not merely reflect but "*enacts a reality*" (Birk, 2017, p. 770, emphasis in original) for "urban environments and urban problems do not

exist independently of categories of perception” (Tissot, 2018, p. 152; see also Ahearn, 2001; Bakkær Simonsen, 2016).

While the ‘ghetto’ is thus not appropriate as an analytical concept for addressing urban marginality in Europe, Pinkster et al. (2020, p. 524) argue that “it is nevertheless relevant as a sociospatial imaginary”.

“Spatial imaginaries help shape material practices molding geographies through their linguistic circulation and embodiment. Part of this agency stems from spatial imaginaries (re)producing, and changing, social perceptions about places even among those whom have never been there. Thus, while the imagination is often thought of as individual in nature, spatial imaginaries refer to ideas about spaces and places shared collectively.” (Watkins, 2015, p. 509)

As works on the ‘welfare ghetto’ (Hancock & Mooney, 2013), ‘reputational ghetto’ (Slater & Anderson, 2012) or ‘ghettos of the mind’ (Byrne & Chonail, 2014) illustrate, the ‘ghetto’ imaginary “is used to identify a mythical other place that is characterised by crime, gangs and societal breakdown and forms the home of a deviant urban underclass” (Pinkster et al., 2020, p. 524-525). Spatial imaginaries are thus closely interwoven with social imaginaries and mainly refer to characteristics of the US American ‘hyperghetto’ as conceptualised by Wacquant (Watkins, 2015, p. 510). Although they do not represent an objective ‘reality’, they are regularly taken as common sense and thereby contribute to differentiations between people and places and the normalisation of urban inequalities (van Gent & Jaffe, 2017, p. 553).

These socio-spatial imaginaries, again, are mobilised in “processes of othering” (Pinkster et al., 2020, p. 523), which reflect the power relations within a society. Othering describes a “power in representation” through which the dominant group has “the power to mark, assign and classify [...] to represent someone or something in a certain way” (Hall, 1997, p. 259). For the Danish context, the ‘ghetto’ is discursively constructed as ‘outside’ of ‘proper society’ and takes on a symbolic function as a “*spatialization* of otherness” (Bakkær Simonsen, 2016, p. 90, emphasis in original; see also Glasze et al., 2012; Johansen & Jensen, 2017). As this spatial Othering constitutes a hierarchical organisation of (urban) space and its populations, a consequential demarcation between ‘them’ and ‘us’ is drawn, which “allows for generalised conceptions and collective beliefs to frame the constructed group [...] as an abstract and impersonal ‘other’” (Schultz Larsen & Delica, 2019, p. 551). With the ‘ghetto’ being constructed as the space of these ‘Other’, it is conceptualised as both the spatial and social margin of society. However, Johansen & Jensen (2017, p. 298) note that this margin is “not far away but central to the reproduction of the state, since the state and the margin are continuously defined in opposition to each other through the invocation of images of the proper citizen” (see also Das & Poole, 2004).

As spatial Othering, however, is inherently connected to the exercise of power of a dominant group, the agency of the dominated groups is often overlooked. Turning to the concept of ‘bordering’,

again, points to the reciprocity and the negotiation involved in the production of urban spaces as multiple. In this context, Scott & Sohn (2019, p. 298) interpret bordering “in terms of creating, re-creating and contesting socio-spatial distinctions at the formal (e.g. political) as well as everyday level”. Bordering is thus closely related to both place narratives and place-making. As a process, it “often involves a tension between ‘official’ and instrumental forms of place-making and informal, everyday narratives of place” (Keresztély et al., 2017, p. 1081). Scott & Sohn distinguish between three bordering mechanisms and in doing so point to the interconnectedness of social and discursive dimensions:

“we define three practices that communicate place ideas and give place borders: attribution, appropriation and representation. [...] *Attribution* points to the characteristics that are cognitively associated with place (functions, lifestyles, milieu, social image). [...] *appropriation* relates to the everyday practices of using/experiencing urban places that allow for identification with place and transformations of place identities (for example, the naming of places, uses of public places, performative practices, coding of physical space). *Representation*, finally, refers to the socially communicated place ideas that generally include the first two bordering mechanisms.” (Scott & Sohn, 2019, p. 301, emphasis in original)

While in contemporary Europe, (the construction of) the ‘ghetto’ space is an expression of a process of (spatial) Othering, the concept of bordering draws attention to the negotiation processes involved in its (re-) production and potential contestation. Hence, the analytical focus shifts from physical and/or social features that make up the ‘ghetto’ space to the construction of social boundaries and structural contexts and mechanisms from which it stems (Blokland, 2008, p. 377). Since the ‘ghetto’ trope is associated with value-laden notions of immigration and extensive (socio-economic) problems, stigmatisation contributes to its construction as a marginalised space in the urban hierarchy. In the Danish context, the ‘ghetto’ as both a label and an institutionalisation is therefore closely related to the concept of territorial stigmatisation, which Wacquant (2007, p. 67, emphasis in original) introduces to capture what he terms a “*blemish of place*” that is “superimposed on the already existing stigmata traditionally associated with poverty and ethnic origin or postcolonial immigrant status, to which it is closely linked but not reducible”.¹²

¹² Territorial stigmatisation is often conjugated with racialised stigma. In this context, deprived urban neighbourhoods are racialised “through selective accentuation or fictive projection: The populations of these disparaged districts are nearly always painted in darker and more exotic hues than their demography warrants” (Wacquant et al., 2014, p. 1274). Jensen & Christensen (2012) note in this context that while territorial stigmatisation has structural causes, individual cultural markers are used at the micro level to fuel stigmatising discourses. Slater & Anderson (2012) similarly describe how stigmatising discourses in St Paul’s, Bristol, are fixated on the Black community despite their status as a minority within the deprived neighbourhood. Hancock & Mooney (2013), Rhodes (2012) as well as Junnilainen (2020) again point to the conjugation of territorial stigmatisation, class stigma and stigmatisation directed towards (residents of) social housing estates.

3.3 Territorial stigmatisation and advanced marginality

Arguing against the notion of a transatlantic convergence of US American ghettos and French banlieues, Wacquant (2008a, p. 115) emphasises that instead, “a new regime of urban poverty [is emerging] on both sides of the Atlantic”, which he refers to as “*advanced marginality*” (emphasis in original).

“This *advanced marginality* is fed by the fragmentation of wage labor, the reorientation of state policy away from social protection and in favor of market compulsion, and the generalized resurgence of inequality – that is, it is marginality *spawned by the neoliberal revolution.*” (Wacquant, 2008a, p. 115, emphasis in original)

Hence, the focus of analysis shifts from the examination of the concrete manifestations of urban marginality to their characteristic properties and the structural logics that produce and drive it. In this context, Wacquant distinguishes four structural logics which fuel advanced marginality: “occupational dualization and the resurgence of inequality (macrosocial), the desocialization of wage labour (economic), the retreat of the social state (political), and concentration and defamation (spatial)” (Dangschat, 2009, p. 835). In light of rising levels of insecurity and accompanied by the decrease of public and private resources, more and more people experience “relegation to decaying neighbourhoods” in which residence is accompanied by “heightened stigmatization” (Wacquant, 2008b, p. 25).

Wacquant argues that six distinct yet interconnected properties of advanced marginality can be derived: (i) deregulation and degradation of wage labour; (ii) “functional disconnection from macroeconomic trends” (Wacquant, 2008b, p. 236), implying that most deprived groups and neighbourhoods remain unaffected of periods of economic growth; (iii) “territorial fixation and stigmatisation” (Wacquant, 2008b, p. 237) referring to the concentration of marginalised groups in specific urban areas which are (publicly) regarded as degraded and degrading; (iv) territorial alienation and “dissolution of ‘place’” (Wacquant, 2008b, p. 241), meaning “the loss of a humanized, culturally familiar and socially filtered locale with which marginalized urban populations identify and in which they feel ‘at home’ and in relative security” (Wacquant, 2007, p. 69); (v) “loss of hinterland” (Wacquant, 2008b, p. 243) such that residents of deprived neighbourhoods can no longer take recourse to collective (informal) support networks and institutions within the area; and furthermore (vi) “social fragmentation and symbolic splintering” (Wacquant, 2008b, p. 244). Constituting a core feature of the regime of advanced marginality, the causes and consequences of territorial stigmatisation can thus only be understood against the backdrop of the interaction of these properties.

The concept of territorial stigmatisation was introduced by Wacquant (2007, 2008b) building on his comparative sociological work on French working-class banlieues and the Black American ghetto, noting that “advanced marginality tends to concentrate in isolated and bounded territories

increasingly perceived by both outsiders and insiders as social purgatories, leprous badlands at the heart of the postindustrial metropolis where only the refuse of society would accept to dwell” (Wacquant, 2007, p. 67). Many empirical studies have subsequently approached territorial stigmatisation and applied it – with different focuses on either the production of (see chapter 3.5) or responses to (see chapter 3.6) it – in different sociocultural and political contexts. While the findings of some of these studies support Wacquant’s assumptions and conceptualisation, others point to issues of transferability to contexts with, for example, a different welfare regime or shortcomings regarding the assumed (non-)agency of residents in light of territorial stigmatisation¹³. While these empirical works complement and/or expand the concept, Wacquant’s work remains the seminal point of reference.

Acknowledging that neighbourhood taint as such is not a new and distinctive phenomenon in the urban landscape, Wacquant et al. (2014, p. 1273, emphasis in original) argue that “the disgrace that afflicts contemporary boroughs of dispossession differs from the spatial smear of earlier epochs in at least five ways”: (i) the territorial stigma of such places is “closely tied to, but has become partially *autonomized* from, the stain of poverty, subaltern ethnicity [...], degraded housing, imputed immortality, and street crime” (p. 1273); (ii) “territorial stigma has become *nationalized* and *democratized*” (p. 1273) insofar as in each country, certain neighbourhoods are renowned as places of urban degradation and their name is circulated in public discourses “as synonyms for social hell” (p. 1273); (iii) these neighbourhoods are represented as “vortexes and vectors of social *disintegration*” (p. 1274); often discursively constructed with regard to (iv) “*racialization through selective accentuation or fictive projection*” (p. 1274); and (v) the stigmatised districts are subjected to “stern corrective reactions driven by fright, revulsion, and condemnation” (p. 1274) and performed by the dominant actors.

Wacquant’s concept of territorial stigmatisation draws on and combines Erving Goffman’s interactionist theory of stigma and Pierre Bourdieu’s theory of symbolic power as “to link subjective experiences of stigma to a structural analysis of how stigma is socially, symbolically, and politically produced” (Schultz Larsen & Delica, 2019, p. 540). Following Goffman (1963, p. 9), stigma¹⁴ – understood as an attribute that is “deeply discrediting” – disqualifies its possessor “from full social acceptance”. Hence, stigma is not conceptualised as static or fixed but relational, as it only emerges through interactions between “normals” (p. 15) and individuals that possess “an undesired

¹³ Wacquant’s inattention to the agency of residents in stigmatised neighbourhoods has, for example, been criticised by Gilbert (2010), Jensen & Christensen (2012) and Kirkness (2014).

¹⁴ In a differentiated elaboration, Link & Phelan (2001, p. 367) define stigma “as the co-occurrence of its components labeling, stereotyping, separation, status loss, and discrimination” that unfold in a power situation. While this definition refers to stigma in relation to individuals, it is still useful to consider in the context of territorial stigma as the definition points to the multidimensionality and simultaneity of several components involved in the stigmatisation process.

differentness from what we had anticipated” (p. 15). In this respect, Goffman (1963, p. 14) distinguishes between three broad aspects to which stigma can refer: “abominations of the body”, “blemishes of individual character”, and “tribal stigma of race, nation and religion”. Wacquant (2007, p. 67) adds to this the “blemish of place”, thereby revealing the importance of “space as a distinctive anchor of social discredit” (Wacquant et al., 2014, p. 1272). In order to connect this perspective of territorial stigmatisation from below with questions of institutional mechanisms of relegation and stigmatisation, Wacquant employs Bourdieu’s (1991) understanding of symbolic power as “a *deeply consequential form of ramifying action through mental and objectal representations*” which as such “affects how myriad agents feel, think, and act as it percolates down and diffuses across the social structures of the city” (Wacquant et al., 2014, p. 1275, emphasis in original). While Bourdieu focusses on how symbolic power contributes to generating groups, Wacquant “adds the *crucial mediation of place as material container, social crossroads, and mental imagery* carrying deep emotional valences, in and through which collectives will emerge (or not) through struggles to establish claims over the built environment” (Wacquant et al., 2014, p. 1272, emphasis in original). Hence, territorial stigmatisation is said to involve socio-spatial group makings and category constructions that are integrated in “multilevel structural processes whereby persons are selected, thrust, and maintained in marginal locations” (Wacquant, 2016, p. 1078).

By bringing the two theories together, Wacquant fosters an understanding of urban marginality from above and from below:

“Bourdieu works from above, following the flow of efficient representations from symbolic authorities such as state, science, church, the law, and journalism, down to their repercussions upon institutional operations, social practices, and the self; Goffman works from below, tracing the effects of procedures of sense-making and techniques of ‘management of spoiled identity’ across encounters and their aggregations into organizations. They can thus be wedded to advance our grasp of the ways in which noxious representations of space are produced, diffused, and harnessed in the field of power, by bureaucratic and commercial agencies, as well as in everyday life in ways that alter social identity, strategy, and structure.” (Wacquant et al., 2014, p. 1272-1273)

3.4 Excursus – Production of space

In Wacquant's account of territorial stigmatisation, space is thus not conceptualised as static and fixed, but instead the importance of the (symbolic) struggles for representation in the production of stigmatised territories is emphasised. As these categorisations imply a hierarchisation of urban space, space can be understood as one element of the creation and maintenance of social inequality (Neely & Samura, 2011, p. 1940). Accordingly, an understanding of prevailing power structures is essential when examining and framing spatial processes and representations (Neely & Samura, 2011, p.

1935). (Power) struggles over space enable elites “to make place, define its borders and its contents as well as the people who legitimately can occupy it as a group” (Sandbjerg Hansen, 2021, p. 8). In this context, Bourdieu (1991, p. 239) emphasises that it is above all the labels given to places, people, activities and objects that construct realities. Space is hence multidimensional and understood as both material and semiotic.

Based on the premise that space is created through “a mix of legal, political, economic, and social practices and structures” (Martin et al., 2003, p. 114), Lefebvre (1991, p. 26, emphasis in original) concludes that “([s]ocial) space is a (social) product” and accordingly both socially and historically specific. Thus, Lefebvre argues that space is continuously (re-)produced and contested, so that the focus shifts “from *things in space* to the actual *production of space*” (Lefebvre, 1991, p. 37, emphasis in original). Lefebvre hence develops the concept of the spatial triad, which interprets space as the dialectic interplay of three dimensions: (1) *spatial practice*, (2) *representation of space*, and (3) *spaces of representation* (Lefebvre, 1991, p. 38-39).

Spatial practice refers to the perceived space, which describes the “material dimension of social activity and interaction” (Schmid, 2008, p. 36). The material features of a place serve as the basis of spatial practices and accordingly shape the everyday life of its inhabitants (Lefebvre, 1991, p. 38). The second dimension, *representations of space*, describes the conceived space and thus the “rationally abstracted space [...] where ideology, power and knowledge dominate” (Buser, 2012, p. 284), which is mediated at the level of language and discourses. Hence, although representations of space are primarily abstract, through their implementation in plans and designs they are momentous for physical social relations (Lefebvre, 1991, p. 41). The third dimension, *spaces of representation* refers to the subjectively imagined or felt aspect of space. Lefebvre identifies this as the lived space, which due to subjectivity also allows for “alternative imaginations of space” (Simonsen, 2005, p. 7). It is “directly *lived* through its associated images and symbols, and hence the space of ‘inhabitants’ and ‘users’” (Lefebvre, 1991, p. 39, emphasis in original).

Based on Lefebvre's spatial triad, space is understood as the reciprocal relationship of the three equal and simultaneous spatial dimensions and accordingly also processual. Since the evaluation of the relationship of the three dimensions is individually conditioned, Lefebvre (1991, p. 27) points to the “multiplicity of spaces”, “characterised by a ‘contemporaneous plurality’” (Bork-Hüffer et al., 2016, p. 135). However, this multiplicity “may give rise to various tensions and conflicts over the use of places” (Brun, 2001, p. 20) and highlights their political nature as both encompassing and displaying uneven power geometries while also offering the potential for contestation and rearrangement of those (Bork-Hüffer et al., 2016). While space is thus potentially open, spaces of inclusion as well as

exclusion can be established both physically and discursively through the utilisation of power (Bork-Hüffer et al., 2016).

3.5 Production of territorial stigmatisation

The exercise of power is thus also inherent to territorial stigmatisation, which directs the focus to the production of territorial stigmatisation as an intentional process. The notion of 'production' of territorial stigma in this context implies that "symbolic systems do not simply mirror social relations but help constitute them" (Slater, 2017a, p. 117), shifting the focus to the actors in this process and the structures within which they operate. Accordingly, one strand of research analyses "the symbolic power of negative images that are reproduced by the media, politicians or other public actors" (Geiselsart, 2017, p. 216). Another strand again discusses "how stigmatised territories are 'made' through the physical and symbolic construction of spatial concentrations of poverty, marginality, and disadvantage" (Sisson, 2020, p. 2). Ultimately, these examinations refer to two sides of the same coin, since in addressing the production of territorial stigma the motives of (state) institutions have to be considered within a broader political economy of neoliberal capitalist accumulation (Tyler & Slater, 2018; Wacquant et al., 2014). Urban marginalisation is thus analysed "as the outcome of symbolic power through which elites impose and justify their own interests by defaming the places of the 'other'" (Cuny, 2018, p. 888). Hence, asymmetrical power relations are inherent to the conceptualisation of territorial stigmatisation – "it takes power to stigmatize" (Link & Phelan, 2001, p. 375).

In order to address how territorial stigma is socially, symbolically, and politically produced on a structural level, Tyler & Slater (2018) argue for an understanding of territorial stigma as a "social process" (p. 728) which "functions as a form of power" (p. 721). Wacquant (2008b, p. 24), again, refers to stigma as a form of "violence from above" and thereby points to both its source as well as mechanism. In this context, the intimate link between stigmatisation and neoliberal governance in the forms of "attempts to manage and/or change the behaviour of populations through deliberate stigma strategies which inculcate humiliation and shame" (Tyler & Slater, 2018, p. 727) is highlighted. These 'stigma strategies' are employed by individuals, communities and the state to (re)produce social inequality and thus relations of domination and subordination (Sisson, 2020). With the introduction of the concept of territorial stigmatisation, Wacquant links the subjective experiences of stigma to these macro-contexts and the intensification of urban marginality under neoliberal urban governance.

3.5.1 Making of spatial concentration

Constituting a synergy of state policies, financial interests and market forces, also the structure of the housing market contributes to the production of territorial stigmatisation as its structure and allocation policies unequally distribute agents, social categories and capital across physical space (Schultz Larsen, 2014; Schultz Larsen & Delica, 2019). In this context, social housing estates in particular are subject to territorial stigmatisation due to both the (perceived) built structure and the socio-economic composition of the residents (Hastings & Dean, 2003, p. 172). Their stigmatisation is mostly related to 'residualisation' and the allocation of the poorest and most vulnerable people and households to the housing stock of the social housing sector (Schultz Larsen, 2014; Sisson, 2020). Resident groups possibly already stigmatised at other levels and therefore constructed as 'Other' in dominant discourses are thereby concentrated "within physical environments which are often aesthetically distinctive and increasingly neglected by housing authorities, thus compounding stigmatisation" (Sisson, 2020, p. 4; see also Leaney, 2020). In his study on the making of spatial concentration of deprived households in Copenhagen, Schultz Larsen (2014) portrays how differentiated forms of housing subsidies and housing allocation mechanisms contributed to the concentration of dispossessed households in specific places. He argues that the institutionalisation of a dualised and asymmetrical housing market with the Danish government favouring homeownership fostered spatial concentration and defamiation of neighbourhoods with a high share of social housing.

3.5.2 Representing discredited places

In order to understand how certain areas "become so widely shunned, feared and condemned over time" (Slater, 2017a, p. 116) the circulation of dominant representations of these spaces in media and political discourses have to be taken into account. Territorial stigmatisation is exercised by a range of actors both within and outside the state "whose social, political or economic position allows them to create or promote territorial stigma, sometimes for economic ends" (Butler et al., 2018, p. 498). While in the context of this thesis only the most dominant forces in the field, namely media and politics¹⁵, are addressed, it is recognised that these actors do not act independently, but are deeply embedded in and constitutive of the dominant political-social nexus¹⁶.

¹⁵ Most authors refer to 'the media' and 'politics' as producers of territorial stigmatisation in general and not to journalists, commentators, politicians or public representatives as individualised actors. Territorial stigmatisation is hence a collective activity. The focus of analysis is thus shifted to the structural and systemic forces which inform and spawn territorial stigma (for an exception, see Schultz Larsen, 2014; Slater, 2017a).

¹⁶ Marelli (2019) points to this embeddedness in macro-level structures even for organisations working within the neighbourhoods on de-stigmatisation strategies. As these organisations depend on (financial) resources from

The media is widely referred to as being central in the production of territorial stigma, as media coverage tends to focus on “sensationalistic portrayals of people and places” (Sisson, 2020, p. 7) and to reproduce dominant representations, thereby reinforcing the views of dominant groups (Kirkness, 2014; Sisson, 2020; Slater, 2017a). As stated by Kirkness (2014), however, the media are not solely responsible for the processes of labelling and stigmatisation but pick up on and circulate (urban) policy discourses.

Public institutions and actors hence contribute to the production and reinforcement of territorial stigmatisation. Slater (2017b, p. 244) points out that the state is not a “bureaucratic monolith delivering uniform goods” but is active in shaping discourses through the production, distribution and representation of ‘problem’ categories and the policies derived from it (Garbin & Millington, 2012; Kirkness, 2014; Wacquant et al., 2014). Hence, the state is said to constitute a “potent stratifying and classifying agency that continually moulds social and physical space, and particularly the shape, recruitment, structure, and texture of lower-class districts” (Slater, 2017b, p. 244).

A “network of representations” (Kirkness, 2014, p. 1282) of the tainted areas is produced through a synergy of urban policies and the instrumentalisation of statistics, mappings and naming, which designate particular areas as spaces of intervention (Birk, 2017; Garbin & Millington, 2012). These representations “make territory appear as pre-given or innate, as opposed to actively produced political constructs” (Sisson, 2020, p. 15) and thereby obfuscate processes of political-economic restructuring and policy interventions that produced them in the first place. Wacquant (2016) illustrates this process by referring to the instrumentalisation of the trope of the ‘ghetto’ in the European context. Through the labelling of an urban area as ‘ghetto’, the state becomes active in producing a certain reality by evoking depictions of these spaces as “urban purgatory” (Wacquant, 2016, p. 1083) and thereby mobilising public anxieties. Labelling thus “closes off alternative diagnoses and facilitates the implementation of policies of removal, dispersal or punitive containment” (Wacquant, 2016, p. 1083).

Wacquant's conceptualisation of territorial stigmatisation hence has a strong discursive dimension building on the more general understanding of the “production of space as a discursive process” (Glasze et al., 2012, p. 1193). It is the labelling of certain urban areas as *Problemquartier* (in Germany), *quartieri degradati* (in Italy), *banlieue-ghetto* (in France) or *krottenwijk* (in the Netherlands) which evokes and facilitates (negative) mental representations and emotions (Wacquant et al., 2014, p. 1273). Language is used “as a form of social practice that constructs and attaches reputations, stigmas and stereotypes to certain geographies and those who live there” (Butler et al., 2018, p. 497). Wacquant notes that territorial stigmatisation does not necessarily have to reflect ‘real’ conditions in

the outside, the stigma is taken up, reproduced and instrumentalised to generate funding. This ‘commodification of stigma’ thus contributes to its consolidation while the acquired funds are used on de-stigmatising initiatives.

order to have material and psychological effects: “[w]hether or not these areas are in fact dilapidated and dangerous, and their population composed essentially of poor people, minorities and foreigners, matters little in the end: the prejudicial belief that they are suffices to set off socially noxious consequences” (Wacquant, 2007, p. 67). Naming thus always implies the exercise of power (Tuan, 1991, p. 688).

3.5.3 Political activation of territorial stigma

Within the political sphere, territorial stigma is hence deployed to justify and publicly legitimate both broad political and financial agendas as well as particular (small-scale) interventions. Tyler (2013) notes in this context that territorial stigma is often used as a consensus-building tool to justify punitive state interventions directed at those living at the bottom of the class structure. Thus, the production and mediation of territorial stigma is seen not simply as an expression of neoliberal ideologies and policies, but as a “core organ” of “neoliberal governmentality” (Tyler, 2013, p. 212; see also Hancock & Mooney, 2013; Schultz Larsen & Delica, 2019). As such, territorial stigmatisation has been central to the “legitimation of neoliberal welfare reform agendas, which have often been accompanied by stigmatising discourses that portray welfare recipients as ‘undeserving’ and intervention as therefore fair and just” (Sisson, 2020, p. 6). These interventions are designed to both manage populations and their behaviour¹⁷ as well as to produce and extract value (Sisson, 2020; Slater, 2017a).

State and urban policies directed at stigmatised urban areas often open up profitable opportunities for different enterprises. Since the “symbolic denigration of places that are physically deteriorated builds public support for redevelopment and ‘primes’ them for reinvestment” (August, 2014, p. 1319), the tainted yet often distorted associations evoked by the stigma provide a justification for the valorisation of social housing estates and their reinsertions into the real estate circuit (Sisson, 2020, p. 6). Different authors thus point to the direct relation between the defamation of place and processes of gentrification (August, 2014; Kallin & Slater, 2014; Slater, 2017a; Slater & Anderson, 2012).

¹⁷ Johansen & Jensen (2017) use the example of Gellerupparken in Denmark to show that the transformation of physical space in the context of a state-initiated regeneration project is closely linked to the “perceived need to reform residents through a host of biopolitical interventions” (Johansen & Jensen, 2017, p. 297). Birk (2017), through his concept of ‘infrastructuring the social’, also shows how the circulation of professionals into marginalised residential areas follows a normative agenda and aims to “reintegrate the areas and residents designated as problematic into [...] capitalist relations of work and a notion of ‘Danish society’” (Birk, 2017, p. 769, emphasis in original).

The recourse on territorial stigma seemingly legitimises and justifies state interventions that can perpetuate or even exacerbate structural problems (Sisson, 2020; Tyler, 2013). As Wacquant states:

“Once a place is publicly labelled as a ‘lawless zone’ or ‘outlaw estate’, outside the common norm it is easy for the authorities to justify special measures, deviating from both law and custom, which can have the effect – if not the intention – of destabilizing and further marginalizing their occupants, subjecting them to the dictates of the deregulated labour market, and rendering them invisible or driving them out of a coveted space.” (Wacquant, 2007, p. 69)

The deliberate mobilisation and instrumentalisation of territorial stigma by and through policy discourses thus contributes to the further marginalisation of residents of stigmatised areas while producing (financial) value for the elites.

3.5.4 Obfuscating structural problems

It is widely acknowledged that real (social) problems exist in stigmatised areas. However, scholars criticise that the focus of media attention and public (policy) discourses is often solely directed towards the individuals and/or their spaces of residence, thereby obfuscating the underlying structural and systemic causes of poverty, marginality and disadvantage as well as the political and economic processes which produce them (Hancock & Mooney, 2013; Sisson, 2020; Slater & Anderson, 2012). Structural problems are thereby increasingly individualised, (in some cases racialised) and spatialised.

Negative representations of social housing estates, the notion of neighbourhood effects (Slater, 2017b) and the social mix paradigm¹⁸ (Birk, 2017; Johansen & Jensen, 2017; Slater & Anderson, 2012) inform discourses through which certain neighbourhoods “*become the problem* rather than the expression of the problems to be addressed” (Slater, 2017a, p. 121, emphasis in original). The spatial concentration of marginalised people is thereby represented as the cause of poverty and marginality so that the “spatiality of problems” become “problem spaces” (Sisson, 2020, p. 9), thereby “making poverty, marginality and deprivation seen and treated as the responsibility of the poor, marginalised, and deprived themselves” (Sisson, 2020, p. 5).

¹⁸ Research on neighbourhood effects is often criticised as to neglect structural and institutional dimensions involved in the construction of urban marginality and thus to represent the neighbourhood as the essential problem (Slater, 2017a, p. 121). Likewise, research on the benefits of social mixing locates the problems primarily in the concentration of certain population groups in certain urban areas, thus neglecting the role of (symbolic) structures that contributed to this concentration in the first place.

3.6 Negotiating territorial stigmatisation from below

Territorial stigmatisation is thus neither a static urban phenomenon nor a neutral process “but a consequential and injurious form of *action through collective representation fastened on place*” (Wacquant et al., 2014, p. 1270, emphasis in original). Hence, the “blemish of place” (Wacquant, 2007, p. 67) has consequences for the self-image and the conduct of residents, the actions of private businesses and public bureaucracies, as well as the policies of the state towards the deprived urban areas (Wacquant, 2016). However, the actors affected widely differ regarding their involvement in the production of the stigma, their (potential) scope of agency and thus their strategies and tactics in light of territorial stigmatisation. For the residents of degraded neighbourhoods, the territorial stigma constitutes “a lived everyday experience” (Junnilainen, 2020, p. 46). As often the stigma of the place becomes the stigmatisation of its residents (Slater, 2017b, p. 245), it is possibly affecting employment prospects, receipt of social assistance, approval of mortgages, or educational attainment of residents (see for example Kirkness & Tijé-Dra, 2017; Slater, 2017a; Slater & Anderson, 2012; Wacquant, 1993, 2008a).

In order for (local) elites to instrumentalise territorial stigma, it is constructed with recourse to simplified and overtly negative imaginaries, “prejudices and collective fantasies” (Schultz Larsen & Delica, 2019, p. 552), and as such influences outsiders’ perception of the respective neighbourhood and its residents *in toto*. Although these external views may impact how residents themselves perceive their neighbourhood, it is widely emphasised that their overall attitude towards their place of residence is mostly positive or at least ambivalent, hence pointing to a significant divergence between residents’ perceptions and dominant representations of stigmatised areas (August, 2014; Birk, 2017; Hastings & Dean, 2003; Jensen & Christensen, 2012; Kirkness, 2014; Slater & Anderson, 2012; Wacquant, 1993). This misrepresentation as identified by the residents, as well as the stigma it spawns, is therefore understood as an “injustice” (Garbin & Millington, 2012, p. 2072), compelling residents to mediate between negative external perceptions and the endeavour to maintain a positive self-image (Christensen & Toft Hansen, 2018; Leaney, 2020).

Accordingly, most of the ethnographic studies find that residents are aware of the stigmatising depiction and can invoke the associations implied by it (see, for example, Cairns, 2018; Garbin & Millington, 2012; Jensen & Christensen, 2012; Wacquant, 1993, 2007; Warr, 2005). Regardless of the (presumed) deprivation of the neighbourhood, the stigma itself is thus often identified as the “most persistent issue” (Warr, 2005, p. 299) for residents of defamed places. The concrete consequences of the stigmatisation become particularly evident in residents’ interactions with institutions and actors outside the neighbourhood. Independent of a subject’s coping/resisting strategy or the individual perception of the area, territorial stigma may thus evoke sentiments of guilt and shame which potentially

undermines a sense of belonging and local solidarity and thereby may accelerate existing problems in stigmatised areas (Wacquant, 1993, 2008b, 2016; Warr, 2005; for studies challenging this notion, see August, 2014; Garbin & Millington, 2012; Kirkness, 2014; Pereira & Queirós, 2014; Slater & Anderson, 2012).

However, based on their own experiences, residents of stigmatised areas usually perceive both the spatial characteristics and the social composition of the respective area in a more nuanced and heterogeneous way than external imaginaries convey (Byrne & Chonail, 2014, p. 15; Cairns, 2018, p. 1230; Permentier et al., 2008, p. 836). In this regard, Schultz Larsen & Delica (2019, p. 554) note a "structural asymmetrical representation of the stigmatised territories". As negatively exaggerated and therefore distorted imaginaries imposed from outside and above often prevail and are hence reproduced and reinforced in everyday discourse, media, and political discussion, residents of stigmatised neighbourhoods often only have a minor influence on their own external representation, limiting the possibilities of formulating alternative and positively connoted counter-narratives and communicating them publicly (Wacquant, 1993). Yet, this does not imply that residents remain passive and accept the externally imposed stigma for themselves unchallengedly. As stated by Jensen & Christensen (2012, p. 88) "[w]hat is internalized, then, is not the discrediting itself, but rather awareness of being discredited".

Residents are perceived as agents (Cuny, 2018, p. 890) who adopt different strategies to negotiate and counter territorial stigmatisation, ranging from exit strategies and the internalisation of stigma to more explicit, overt, and externally identifiable forms of resistance (Kirkness, 2014, p. 1282). As the different strategies are not hierarchised or mutually exclusive, various strategies usually occur side by side, each employed by different groups of residents (Garbin & Millington, 2012; Jensen & Christensen, 2012; Kirkness, 2014; Pereira & Queirós, 2014; Slater, 2017a; Wacquant et al., 2014). The recourse to specific responses is attributed to "individual differences in access to personal, social and economic resources" (Junnilainen, 2020, p. 44) as well as context specific "structures of opportunities" (Pereira & Queirós, 2014, p. 1299). As Junnilainen (2020) notes, also the particular places and their historical and cultural context shape residents' responses to stigmatisation. However, not only the reaction to the territorial stigma differs between individuals, but also the experience of it, depending on both ethnic and socio-economic characteristics as well as societal structures.

3.6.1 Submissive strategies

Wacquant argues that various forms of submission – especially the internalisation of the stigma – “tend to be the dominant (if not exclusive) strategies employed by residents of degraded urban zones” (Slater, 2017a, p. 120). Residents would ultimately strive to exit the neighbourhood, but as most are lacking financial and social capital for moving, other submissive strategies are employed. Territorial stigma is thus said to incite

“residents to 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)

However, ethnographic work in different contexts indicates that submissive strategies generally and internalisation of the stigma more concretely are only one potential response among others (see for example Cuny, 2018; Jensen & Christensen, 2012; Junnilainen, 2020; Slater, 2017a). Kirkness (2014), Warr (2005) and Garbin & Millington (2012) note that when internalisation is observed, it is usually limited to certain elements of the stigma.

Another submissive response to territorial stigmatisation identified by Wacquant is dissimulation (Tyler & Slater, 2018). As territorial stigma is not immediately perceivable from the outside, residents of stigmatised neighbourhoods may intend to ‘pass’ and thereby “protect themselves from association with a tarnished place” (Wacquant et al., 2014, p. 1271) by hiding their address or denying their belonging (Kirkness, 2014; Warr, 2005). In this context, Warr (2005, p. 303) moreover observes that some people limit their interactions with people outside their neighbourhood in order to avoid being confronted with the territorial stigma.

A further strategy identified is the retreat into the private sphere and thus a “rejection of the public sphere as an arena for neighbourhood sociability” (Slater, 2017a, p. 119; see also Wacquant, 2010b, p. 218). Pereira & Queirós (2014, p. 1315, emphasis in original) observed in the Portuguese context the emergence of a “subsistence sociability”, implying that residents mainly stay and act within the private realm and “limit their public sociability to a *subsistence* level”. As the stigma is less apparent in the private sphere, Warr (2005) states that residents tend to feel safer and more comfortable in these settings. However, it is still noted that the retreat into the private sphere and the implied alienation from other residents may undermine social networks and cohesion within the neighbourhood (Warr, 2005, p. 285).

While outsiders often perceive stigmatised areas as uniform and homogenous (Slater, 2017a; Wacquant, 1993), residents generally are aware of their often diverse demographic composition and cultural characteristics. This nuanced understanding enables residents to identify micro-differences

which allow for the construction of internal dividing lines between oneself and potentially troublesome individuals or groups (August, 2014; Schultz Larsen & Delica, 2019). By pronouncing these micro-differences, the stigmatisation is diverted away from oneself onto a “faceless, demonized other” (Wacquant, 2007, p. 67). For oneself or one’s group, the applicability of the stigma is negated, yet, for the neighbourhood in general, it remains uncontested (August, 2014; Cuny, 2018; Jensen & Christensen, 2012; Leaney, 2020; Warr, 2005).

3.6.2 The notion of resistance

Recent research on residents’ responses to territorial stigmatisation mainly identifies individual coping and contesting strategies from below¹⁹, which in the following both are regarded as (potential) forms of resistance. In this context, Sisson (2020) introduces the concept of “*territorial struggles*” (p. 2, emphasis in original) in order to stress that “territorial stigmatisation is contestable rather than inevitable or innate” (p. 2). Different ethnographic studies support this notion of agency among residents of stigmatised areas, thus challenging Wacquant’s assumption of internalisation of stigma as dominant response (see for example Gilbert, 2010; Jensen & Christensen, 2012; Kirkness, 2014). Garbin & Millington (2012, p. 2079), again, emphasise that all strategies employed to respond to stigmatisation inevitably partake in the reproduction of the stigma: “resistance can never proceed from a position ‘beyond’ the territorial stigma”. While resistance can thus never be in a position of exteriority in relation to the stigma, it is however noted that “alternative practices and representations of territory can and do change these structures” (Sisson, 2020, p. 16; see also Garbin & Millington, 2012, p. 2079).

As has been stated, residents are usually aware of the devalued representations of their place of living and therefore have to “negotiate a positive sense of self within dominant discourses” (Leaney, 2020, p. 392). In addition to the pronouncement of micro-differences, this is said to be primarily achieved by emphasising the positive aspects of (living in) the respective neighbourhood (August, 2014, p. 1329). In this context it is noted by Kirkness (2014, p. 1289) that also stigmatised areas “have some real emotional value to their residents”. It is observed that residents often experience belonging and attachment to the area despite its tainted representations (August, 2014; Jensen & Christensen, 2012; Kirkness, 2014; Kirkness & Tijé-Dra, 2017). In addition, August (2014) and Kirkness (2014) point to the emergence of a strong sense of community within stigmatised neighbourhoods. Growing up in a defamed area can moreover become the source of a feeling of pride as it is perceived as a sign of inner

¹⁹ Only few studies engage with collective strategies (for exceptions, see for example Junnilainen (2020) and her work on two Finish neighbourhoods, and Pereira & Queirós (2014) in their examination of community strategies in Porto).

strength, resilience and individual adaptability (Cairns, 2018; Garbin & Millington, 2012; Kirkness, 2014). Slater & Anderson (2012), Christensen & Toft Hansen (2018) and Garbin & Millington (2012) identify senses of pride despite, and as a defensive response to, external defamation. The source of the sense of pride is mainly the cultural diversity of the respective neighbourhood. In addition to a symbolic appropriation of the neighbourhood, these feelings of pride foster place attachment which in turn contributes to a physical appropriation, in that people gain visibility in 'their' neighbourhood and use its (public) spaces for everyday activities. The stigma of the neighbourhood as being exceptional and unwelcoming is thereby challenged by residents' everyday interactions in and with space (Kirkness, 2014, p. 1286).

It is widely argued that symbolic territorial struggles are brought forward by residents through alternative representations of the area and the formulation of counter-narratives (August, 2014; Cairns, 2018; Cuny, 2018; Garbin & Millington, 2012; Kirkness, 2014). Being able to represent one's own place of living despite dominant discourses contributes to the "symbolic work of re-scripting place" (Cairns, 2018, p. 1239) and hence its (re-)appropriation. The counter-narratives mainly address positive attributes of the area and point to often overlooked or misrepresented positive dimensions of spatial concentration such as sense of community, accessibility, or provision of physical amenities (August, 2014; Cairns, 2018; Garbin & Millington, 2012; Kirkness, 2014; Slater & Anderson, 2012). Furthermore, Kirkness (2014) and Slater & Anderson (2012) describe how negatively connotated words of the dominant discourse are inverted by residents, associated with positive connotations and thus appropriated.

While these subtle, mundane, and often fragmented forms of resistance are frequently found in the most diverse variants in degraded neighbourhoods, they are seldom recognised as such due to their 'everydayness'. Even more fundamentally, it is questioned if / to what extent residents' desire to cope constitutes a moment of resistance (Ortner, 2006, p. 56). Yet, as also these everyday activities may challenge dominant representations of space, I will follow Garbin & Millington (2012, p. 2079), who argue that "resistance often occurs while people are busy doing other things".²⁰

²⁰ As more visible yet less prevalent forms of resistance to territorial stigmatisation, few studies also describe how residents intervene in the physical space through alternative territorial practices. Ranging from artistic interventions (Garbin & Millington, 2012) to the creation of "counter-public space" (Sisson, 2020, p. 13) or street protest (Wacquant, 1993, p. 372), these physical territorial struggles deliberately are aimed at "forc[ing] a rupture in the stigma" (Garbin & Millington, 2012, p. 2077).

4. ANALYSIS

4.1 Discursive construction of the Danish 'ghetto'

As Wacquant et al. (2014) argue, territorial stigmatisation is not static, which implies that also “the contextual structures that support the symbolic structures of urban marginality” (Birk & Fallov, 2021, p. 268) have to be accounted for. In order to contextualise the symbolic (re-)production of the ‘ghetto’ as a space of territorial stigmatisation in the Danish context, I will therefore critically examine the government’s ‘ghetto’ initiatives. I will thereby illustrate how the representation of the ‘ghetto’ and its residents and symbolic boundary drawing culminates in territorial stigmatisation and a hierarchisation of (urban) space. In the following document analysis, I will discuss three key policy documents²¹ that mark nodal points in the institutionalisation of the concept of ‘ghetto’ in Denmark and thereby trace its increasing spatialisation and ethnicisation²²:

- ‘The government’s strategy against ghettoisation’ (58 pages) from 2004, issued by a centre-right coalition government;
- ‘Return of the ghetto to society. Taking action against parallel societies in Denmark’ (48 pages) from 2010, issued by a centre-right coalition government;
- ‘A Denmark without parallel societies – No ghettos by 2030’ (40 pages) from 2018, issued by a centre-right coalition government.

Moreover, I will consider the preceding speeches of the ‘ghetto’ initiatives, with which the respective heads of government set the discursive framework for the policy papers.

²¹ While these policy papers might convey a closed and consistent discourse, even within parliamentary debates and especially within civil society, contestation is formulated, mainly regarding the use of the term ‘ghetto’, its delimitation and the problematisation of the residents on the basis of ethnicity (see for example v. Freiesleben, 2016, p. 163). The focus of analysis here is thus not on the negotiation of the ‘ghetto’ as such, but how the hegemonic discourse is structured.

²² With a change of government in 2011, the social-democratic coalition published its strategy paper ‘Vulnerable housing areas – the next steps. The government’s proposal for a strengthened effort’ (Regeringen, 2013) in 2013. The criteria for designating neighbourhoods as ‘ghettos’ were expanded from previously three to five, so that now also income and education level in the neighbourhood were taken into account (see also Appendix C). This marked an attempt to shift focus away from the previously strong ethnicisation of the ‘ghetto’ to a more holistic socio-economic examination of the policy problems identified. However, while in the strategy paper itself the term ‘ghetto’ was substituted by ‘vulnerable housing areas’ avoid further stigmatisation, the term was still used in the annually published ‘ghettolist’. Despite increasing discussions in the political field about the appropriateness of the ‘ghetto’ trope and its delimitation and framing, the hegemony of the ‘ghetto’ discourse was not substantially challenged.

The aim of the following analysis is not to present or evaluate the policy measures proposed to address the identified problems in detail²³, but to trace how the ‘ghetto’ is constructed and represented as both a spatial and social entity²⁴. I will demonstrate how the representation of the ‘ghetto’ as a place and a policy problem in a state of exception has prevailed, thus allegedly legitimising far-reaching interventions, and how the delimitations of the ‘ghetto’ have been institutionalised. Since the concept of the ‘ghetto’ is not neutral, its matter-of-course transition from everyday language into policy making and hence its institutionalisation is not accidental but instrumentalised as a political tool in the discursive occupation of dominant social and political positions (v. Freiesleben, 2016, p. 10). It is therefore important to emphasise how the designation of certain areas as ‘ghetto’ is employed as an object of political action and as such affects the way we analyse problems and organise society. I will hence show how these processes of production and problematisation contributed to the development of a hegemonic ‘ghetto’ discourse in which power is exhibited (van Dijk, 1993, p. 259).

In the public debate in Denmark, the notion of ‘ghettoisation’ gained momentum in the 1990s, when the concentration of migrant population groups and refugees in certain social housing estates was increasingly problematised (Frandsen & Hansen, 2020, p. 15; Seemann, 2020, p. 6). While these encompassed problem constellations of integration and housing policies alike, the dominant discourse was primarily determined by the perceived challenges posed by the increasing number of (labour) migrants and refugees and the risks emanating from their spatial segregation. In addressing the ‘problem’, the focus thus shifted from a multidimensional examination of immigration policies, allocation mechanisms and the development of an asymmetrical dual housing market (Schultz Larsen, 2014, p. 1400) – which spawned the concentration of certain population groups in social housing estates in the first place – to an allegedly linear cause-effect relationship of immigration and ‘ghettoisation’.

While the ‘objective’ material conditions in the neighbourhoods in question have thus not changed significantly, the intense concern of ‘ghettoisation’ since the 1990s and especially after 2001 is due to an immigration-sceptical climate in Denmark and the concurrent rise of populist right-wing parties (Bakkær Simonsen, 2016, p. 84). Against this background, the adaptation of the term ‘ghetto’ into the political discourse is central to classifying space and implementing new and stricter policy measures. As also Tissot (2018, p. 152) notes for the French context, the representation of the ‘ghetto’ as a state of exception “built legitimacy for a spatial vision of social ills, which in turn paved the way

²³ For an overview of the priority areas identified in the respective policy papers, see Appendix B.

²⁴ Due to the limited scope of this thesis, I will thus focus on a few aspects only. As there are moreover different motifs that are taken up in all three of the policy papers, I will not repeat those as I am not aiming to reproduce the problematisations of each individual paper. The focus is instead on the representation of the ‘ghetto’ throughout the policy papers.

for the explicit stigmatization of these populations and for locally targeted, repression-based programs”.

4.1.1 ‘The government’s strategy against ghettoisation’ (2004)

The center-right coalition government in power since 2001 “brought about a profound shift in the country’s immigration policy, with an increased focus on assimilating immigrants and individuals of ‘non-Western’ origin into Danish society and on tightening access routes to residence and citizenship” (Seemann, 2020, p. 8). In this context, ‘The government’s strategy against ghettoisation’ (Regeringen, 2004) was published in May 2004, in which the term ‘ghetto’ was employed in a policy paper for the first time. Already in his 2004 New Year’s speech, the then head of government Fogh Rasmussen set the discursive frame by linking ‘ghettoisation’ to immigration and a lack of integration:

“Years of failed immigration policies have created immigrant ghettos where men are unemployed, women are isolated and families speak only the language of their home country. Children grow up without learning proper Danish. Some are influenced by hard-line criminals. They come to confuse Danish liberal-mindedness with capriciousness. Danish freedom with emptiness. Danish equality with indifference.” (Fogh Rasmussen, 2004)²⁵

By drawing a value-based distinction between ‘us’ – the people who comply to Danish values like freedom and equality – and ‘them’ – the people who lack or disregard these values – the ‘ghetto’ as a place of concentration of allegedly poorly integrated immigrants is constructed as a policy problem. ‘Ghettoisation’ would hence lead to “violence and crime and confrontation [...] And we cannot and will not accept that in Denmark” (Fogh Rasmussen, 2004).

The perceived connection between immigration, lack of integration and ‘ghettoisation’ is also taken up centrally in the strategy paper. Although no decisive delimitation of the ‘ghetto’ as a place is made, eight residential areas are exemplarily designated as ‘ghettos’ based on the following characteristics: a high proportion of adult residents living on transfer payments, low education levels, a dominance of subsidised housing estates, asymmetric moving patterns with resourceful tenants moving out and socio-economically disadvantaged tenants moving in, and an overall lack of private investment (Regeringen, 2004, p. 15). Following the non-discriminatory basis of Danish policy, the problem constellations identified in the context of ‘ghettoisation’ are thus ostensibly ascribed to class indicators. However, the framing of the policy paper indicates that ‘ghettoisation’ is primarily attributed to the concentration of immigrants and descendants of non-Western backgrounds in certain social housing estates (Regeringen, 2004, p. 12). Structural social problems such as unemployment are thus framed

²⁵ In this chapter, I translated the quotes of policy papers and speeches from Danish to English.

as problems of ethnic minorities embedded in and spatially limited to the 'ghetto' space. Although not an official criterion, the problematisations and ideals expressed in the policy paper hence revolve strongly around culture and ethnicity.

Furthermore, it is argued that residents of 'ghettos' would contribute less to the welfare state compared to other segments of the Danish population. This deviation is attributed to the perception that 'ghetto' residents would not adhere to basic values " – simply because there is no knowledge of the core values" (Regeringen, 2004, p. 11). 'Ghettoisation' would hence also entail the risk that immigrants and descendants of non-Western origin would withdraw into "true ethnic enclaves or parallel societies without significant economic, social and cultural contact to the wider society" (Regeringen, 2004, p. 12), which would "constitute a serious barrier to integration" (Regeringen, 2004, p. 7). A causal connection is thus established between specific locations and the formation of parallel societies. The 'ghetto' as a spatial expression of the identified problems is thus imagined as a potential threat to social cohesion and the functioning of the welfare contract.

The 'ghetto' is represented as a place that is "physically, socially, culturally and economically isolated from the rest of society and where the everyday life of the individual is characterised by limitations and lack of opportunities" (Regeringen, 2004, p. 7). While the physical isolation of the 'ghetto' area is mentioned, this physical isolation is relative and mainly associated with social isolation, so that the former is supposedly conditioned by the latter. Based on these problematisations, the measures proposed evolve around spreading out ethnic communities by changing housing allocation procedures, introducing more flexible letting rules and introducing stricter policing and education programmes to the areas. At the same time, the introduction of private housing to the areas is used to encourage (Danish) citizens with greater resources to move in²⁶. The 'ghettos' are thus to become places where non-Western immigrants can "meet with Danes. Where networks are established across personal and cultural differences. Where you hear and learn Danish" (Regeringen, 2004, p. 11). Thereby "knowledge of the norms and values that apply here [in Denmark]" (Regeringen, 2004, p. 11) should be increased. In addition to the differentiation of 'we' and 'they', a line is also drawn between 'here' (Denmark) and 'there' ('ghettos'). Even without explicit criteria for its distinction, the discourse of the 'ghetto' and its inhabitants as outside Danish society is thus already established in 'The government's strategy against ghettoisation' In 2004.

²⁶ The proposed measures hence do not address the existing problems but aim at resolving their spatial concentration.

4.1.2 'Return of the ghetto to society. Taking action against parallel societies in Denmark' (2010)

In 2010, this narrative is taken up again and further institutionalised by the introduction of an official 'ghettolist' with corresponding 'ghetto criteria'. The very title of the paper in which these are outlined presents the 'ghetto' as outside Danish society and establishes a causal connection between 'ghetto' and parallel societies.

In his opening speech of parliament in October 2010, then prime minister Løkke Rasmussen addressed 'ghettos' as what he termed "holes in the map of Denmark" where "Danish values are obviously no longer leading":

"Ghettos are areas where a large proportion of residents are unemployed. Where many criminals live. And where many Danes with an immigrant background live. [...] We want to tear down the walls. We want to open up the ghettos to society. [...] Ghettos are stone deserts with no links to the surrounding society. These are the fortresses we must break through." (Løkke Rasmussen, 2010)

In his speech, Løkke Rasmussen underlined the need for decisive action and announced the imminent publication of a strategy paper focusing on both "the walls" and "the people behind the walls" (Løkke Rasmussen, 2010). The 'ghetto' is referred to with spatial metaphors, which are also taken up in the subsequently published strategy paper. In this way, the alleged social distance and divergence of 'ghetto' residents and the "surrounding society" (Regeringen, 2010, p. 5) is discursively expressed as a physical distance between the "isolated" (Regeringen, 2010, p. 9) 'ghetto' space and its surrounding. 'Wall' thus becomes a metaphor for a shielding and opaque barrier between 'us' and 'them' as well as 'here' and 'there' and thus refers to both mental and physical demarcations, while the recourse to the metaphor "fortress" (Regeringen, 2010, p. 6) conveys that this segregation emanates from the 'ghetto' and its inhabitants.²⁷ The space within this 'fortress' is portrayed as a 'stone desert' and thus discursively related to both bleak architecture and a general 'lack of'. Already in 2004, the government presents itself as the institution that wants to "build bridges between the ghetto and the outside world" (Regeringen, 2004, p. 41) and thereby lead it both materially and socially back to society. The metaphor of the 'bridge', however, always implies a preceding separation. By stating that 'ghettos' are to become "ordinary Danish urban areas" (Regeringen, 2010, p. 6) again, the discursive construction of the 'ghetto' hence also spawns a temporal dimension. The 'ghetto' is represented as a break in the country's unity that needs to be restored through its "return to society" (Regeringen, 2010, p. 9), implicating

²⁷ Due to this self-attributed isolation, it is also seen as the responsibility of the immigrants and descendants of non-Western background themselves to integrate into Danish society, which is also emphasised again in the strategy paper 2018: "The individual immigrant themselves has the greatest responsibility. To learn Danish. To get a job and become part of the community. To integrate in their new home country. Too few have seized the opportunities Denmark offers" (Regeringen, 2018, p. 5). Poverty, low education levels and unemployment are thereby presented as self-inflicted.

that in its current state, the 'ghetto' space and its residents are imagined as located outside Danish society.

In contrast to the 2004 policy paper, the 2010 paper provides a precise 'ghetto' definition, which was subsequently enacted into law. Based on this definition, the government publishes an annual 'ghettolist' (see Appendix C). In 2010, three criteria for its delimitation are specified, of which at least two criteria have to be fulfilled to qualify as a 'ghetto': low employment levels, high crime rate and a high share of non-Western immigrants and descendants (Regeringen, 2010, p. 5). By including ethnicity as a legal criterion for the designation as a 'ghetto', the spatial and ethnic were thus further coupled and the 'ghetto' as a policy problem was explicitly presented as an ethnic and cultural problem and not (only) as a socio-economic one. With the introduction of the 'ghettolist' and the formulation and institutionalisation of official criteria for its delimitation, 'ghettos' have moved from everyday language and the front pages of newspapers to being a state-sanctioned reality that has subsequently been maintained and supported bureaucratically as well as politically (Schultz Larsen, 2011, p. 48). The problematisation of the 'ghetto' as a state of exception outside Danish society is furthermore utilised as a legitimisation for extraordinary political measures spatially limited to the 'ghetto' space: "Normal solutions are not sufficient. We face special problems, which demand special solutions" (Regeringen, 2010, p. 6).

While the goal of achieving a more balanced composition of residents within the 'ghetto' areas is also formulated in 2010, there is nevertheless a clear break in the understanding and problematisation of the underlying issue: "Today, more than six out of ten residents of the 29 ghettos are immigrants or descendants from non-Western countries. This is not acceptable. No area should have a predominance of immigrants and descendants from non-Western countries" (Regeringen, 2010, p. 15). In contrast to 2004, it is not the spatial segregation of socio-economically disadvantaged immigrants that is problematised, but the high concentration of immigrants in certain areas in general. The 'ghetto' is thus no longer framed as a social problem, but primarily as a problem of an alleged lack of integration. Following this line of argument, the 'ghetto' is again associated with the formation of parallel societies, in which "a high concentration of immigrants means that many remain more attached to the country and culture they or their parents come from than to the Danish society they live in" (Regeringen, 2010, p. 5). Integration of individuals residing in 'ghettos' into Danish society is thus seen as a prerequisite for dissolving parallel societies. At the same time, however, the incompatibility of the values and norms allegedly prevailing in 'ghetto' areas with Danish society is emphasised.

Overall, many of the motifs and problematisations formulated in the 2004 strategy paper are reiterated but with a more explicit focus on ethnicity, hence discursively contributing to an ethnicisation of structural problems. Moreover, the value-based distinction between 'we' and 'they' is further

emphasised by employing 'we' as the grammatical subject throughout the document and thereby conveying a sense of unity and cohesion.

"In Denmark, over generations, we have built a safe, rich and free society. The crucial glue has been and still is our values. Freedom to be different. Equal opportunities for men and women. Responsibility for community. Democracy. Respect for society's laws. A basic trust in wanting each other to be well."
(Regeringen, 2010, p. 5)

The enumeration of these supposed Danish values without further context or explication forms a chain of equivalence that, in interplay, lends meaning to 'Danishness'. Thus, in the first paragraph of the policy paper, solely Danish society and the Danish values that characterise it are outlined, only to be contrasted in the next paragraph with the 'ghetto', "where Danish values are no longer leading" (Regeringen, 2010, p. 5)²⁸. The discursive framework for understanding the 'ghetto' as a problem is thus already clearly defined at the beginning: in opposition to the Danish 'we', the 'ghetto', due to its perceived lack of integration, represents a deviant and problematic identity. The 'ghetto' discourse is hegemonic at this point and both perpetuated and reinforced through its institutionalisation in the 2010 strategy paper and the introduction of the 'ghettolist'.

4.1.3 'A Denmark without parallel societies – No ghettos by 2030' (2018)

Until 2018, the representation of the 'ghetto' as a state of exception is further consolidated, particularly through circulation in the media in connection with the annual publication of the 'ghettolist'. This discourse, which is established by this time, is also taken up by then prime minister Løkke Rasmussen in his New Year's speech. He once again rhetorically sharpens its problematisation by stylising the 'ghetto' as a coherent entity with an inherent will:

"the ghettos also send out tentacles out on the streets, where criminal gangs create insecurity. Into the schools, where neglected kids hang on the edge. Down to the finances of the municipality, where the tax income is smaller, and the expenses are larger than they have to be. And out in the society, where Danish values as equality, open-mindedness and tolerance lose ground." (Løkke Rasmussen, 2018)

This framing, which is also employed in the yet most far-reaching strategy paper 'A Denmark without parallel societies – No ghettos by 2030', accentuates the perceived "threat against our modern society"

²⁸ A similar chain of equivalence is employed to frame 'Danishness' in the 2018 policy paper: "The government wants a cohesive Denmark. A Denmark based on democratic values such as freedom and legal certainty. Equality and freedom. Tolerance and equality. A Denmark where everyone actively participates." (Regeringen, 2018, p. 4) These are contrasted with an enumeration of supposed characteristics of immigrants and descendants of non-Western background and replete with associations: "But there are too many who do not actively participate. Parallel societies have emerged among people with non-Western backgrounds. Too many immigrants and descendants have ended up disconnected from the surrounding society. Without education. Without a job. And without knowing adequate Danish." (Regeringen, 2018, p. 4)

(Regeringen, 2018, p. 5), which would emanate from the 'ghettos'. Against these narratives of threat, the government's intervention with decisive and far-reaching measures is seemingly legitimised.

Within the subsequent strategy paper, this claim is further taken up by using 'ghetto' and 'parallel society' synonymously and derive from this the necessity to eliminate the 'ghetto' "once and for all" (Regeringen, 2018, p. 6). Since 2018, three different types of deprived residential areas are differentiated, which are targeted by different policy measures according to the problem situations identified in the respective categories. Residential areas would now be defined as 'vulnerable areas' if it met two out of the following four criteria: (i) The share of residents between 18–64 of age outside labour market exceeds 40%; (ii) The share of criminal convicts exceeds 2,7%.; (iii) The share of residents between 30 and 59 years of age with no more than basic school education exceeds 60%; (iv) The average gross taxable income for individuals between the age of 15 and 64 is less than 55% of the regional average (Regeringen, 2018, p. 11). A residential area is designated a 'ghetto', again, if it meets the criteria of a 'vulnerable area' and, in addition, the share of immigrants and descendants of non-Western origin exceeds 50%. Ethnicity thus becomes an essential criterion of the 'ghetto' definition. Finally, the label of the 'severe ghetto' is introduced for areas that have been on the 'ghettolist' for (more than) four consecutive years. The classification as 'severe ghetto', again, is associated with significant authoritative policy measures and area-based interventions²⁹, which do not target residents as individuals, but apply to all residents alike qua their place of living. Hence, the 'ghetto' policies "have introduced a *spatialized* citizenship ideal in which an individual is no longer viewed in relation to their individual contribution to the welfare state, but also in terms of their social and ethnic environment, as translated into geographic territories" (Seemann, 2020, p. 16, emphasis in original).

Following on from 2010, the metaphor of "holes in the map of Denmark" (Regeringen, 2018, p. 5) is again invoked in reference to 'ghettos'. These 'holes' are described as residential areas in which

²⁹ The representation of certain areas as being problematic legitimises stern corrective measures in the public debate, while the introduction of a legal definition makes the enactment of different measures legally binding. The designation as a 'ghetto' is thus consequential for the areas and their residents alike. The most far-reaching measures have so far been formulated in relation to the policy paper published in 2018. Non-profit housing associations in areas classified as 'severe ghettos' are obliged to reduce the social housing stock to a maximum of 40 % by 2030. This can be done through demolition, privatisation, new construction or relabelling, in accordance with a development plan submitted by the non-profit housing associations to the Ministry of Transport and Housing for approval. The current non-profit housing stock is thereby to be transferred to the private market in order to change the residents' composition in 'ghetto' areas and to achieve a higher valorisation of the housing stock. Moreover, welfare recipients may no longer be allocated to 'ghetto' areas and family reunification is suspended. Instead, the non-profit housing associations must give preference to wage-earners, individuals in education, in an apprenticeship or self-sufficient residents. Further regulations have been introduced regarding mandatory Danish-language day care for all children above the age of one and double sentencing for crimes committed by residents of 'ghettos' (Regeringen, 2018, p. 22-31). These spatially targeted and punitive measures thus curtail the equality of 'ghetto' residents.

“many live in more or less isolated enclaves. Too many citizens are not taking sufficient responsibility. They do not participate actively in Danish society and the labour market. We have a group of citizens who do not adopt Danish norms and values. Where women are considered to be of less value than men. Where social control and lack of equality place narrow limits on the individual's freedom of expression.” (Regeringen, 2018, p. 5)

The recourse to the metaphor of ‘holes’ evokes the imagination of something destroyed, of something that is torn apart. ‘Ghettos’ would therefore constitute areas in which the substance of ‘Danishness’ was no longer present and henceforth as such challenged the cohesion of society. It is thus discursively conveyed that these places, and synonymously the people who live in them, need to be ‘repaired’ in order to become part of “ordinary Denmark” again (Regeringen, 2018, p. 7).

This cleavage of ‘ghettos’ and ‘ordinary Denmark’ in both spatial and social terms is again taken up when referring to the ‘perils’ the ‘ghettos’ would pose. By referencing different statistics regarding alleged deviant norms and values of people of non-Western background throughout the policy paper, the government underlines the ‘threat’ and insecurity emanating from the ‘ghettos’ due to incompatible cultures. This framing, then, justifies stern corrective measures of the government to restore public security. By identifying parallel societies as the policy problem, the perceived solution is the elimination of parallel societies and hence ‘ghettos’ as the places where these evolve: “In some of the ghetto areas, the challenges with parallel societies, crime, and insecurity are so massive that the only solution, politically and economically, is a total demolition of buildings and to start over” (Regeringen, 2018, p. 14). It is implied that some ‘ghettos’ are already ‘beyond salvation’, so that the state would have to intervene with authoritative force to break the “negative spiral leading to counterculture” (Regeringen, 2018, p. 5). While this statement refers mainly to the areas classified as ‘severe ghettos’, it is also generally stated that “All ghettos must go. All.” (Regeringen, 2018, p. 7) The government thereby expressly underlines that only when the ‘ghettos’ are “completely gone” (Regeringen, 2018, p. 6) and thus also parallel societies are “broken down [...] Denmark can be Denmark again” (Regeringen, 2018, p. 6).

4.1.4 Statistical representation of the ‘ghetto’

The discursive construction and categorisation of the ‘ghetto’ through labelling and (rhetoric) delimitation is further reinforced by the statistical representation of the respective areas. Hence, the ‘ghettolist’, which was introduced in 2010 and has since been published annually³⁰, “*through* its

³⁰ Currently, the ‘ghettolist’ is published by the Transport and Housing Ministry. The criteria and threshold values for classification as ‘ghettos’ have been changed several times since its introduction. The most significant changes to date were made in 2013, when two additional criteria were added to the original three, and in 2018, when

territorial stigmatization and *through* its connection to the otherings of Danish policies participates in *making space*" (Birk, 2017, p. 770, emphasis in original). Furthermore, it establishes the legal definition and demarcation of the 'ghetto' space, so that "targeted measures could now become binding and legally enforced in these areas" (Seemann, 2020, p. 12).

The 'ghetto' ostensibly became a measurable and concrete thing. The statistical representations, however, disguise the structural production of (urban) marginality by presenting the data as a mere depiction of 'objective realities' (Birk & Elmholdt, 2020, p. 158). As Sisson (2021, p. 410) states, "when they are (or are made to appear) guided by quantitative data and statistics, systems of classification and hierarchization that might otherwise be highly contentious or objectionable, along with the policies and interventions that reify them, can proceed as rational and fair" and thereby support the discursive claims. Different indicators are invoked to underline that particular residential areas would constitute state of exceptions and thus justify their designation as spaces for intervention (Fallov & Birk, 2021, p. 5; Frandsen & Hansen, 2020, p. 15). Their statistical representations are thus neither 'neutral' nor 'objective' descriptions but are employed "as enablers and legitimisers of certain kinds of government action" (Birk & Elmholdt, 2020, p. 161)³¹.

Furthermore, both the discursive framing and the 'ghettolist' itself make "the ghetto a decontextualised space; the differences between the local areas disappear, as do their individual histories, their populations, their local politics" (Birk & Elmholdt, 2020, p. 150). Despite some great variations between the residential areas, their grouping under the term 'ghetto' implies sameness and comparability so that 'one-size-fits-all' interventions are employed. Birk (2017, p.770) therefore remarks that "the list enables a totalizing topographical depiction of particular spaces as ones of disorder and marginality".

three different types of vulnerable housing areas were distinguished. The respective threshold values were also subject to change. For a detailed breakdown, see Appendix C.

³¹ Accordingly, criticism is repeatedly voiced regarding both the selection of criteria and the threshold values. For example, many of the qualifications acquired abroad are not recognised in the calculation of the education level, it is criticised that the threshold values for the recording of crime levels have been changed in such a way that more areas fall into the 'ghetto' designation and, in addition, changes are only shown with a delay, as the data always refer to the last two years. Another point of criticism is that the income level is set in relation to the average income of the region and not of the country, which means that especially in Copenhagen, where the regional average is above the national average, some areas are classified as 'ghettos', which, if they were located in other parts of the country, would fall out of the criterion and thus out of the 'ghettolist'. "In addition, this quantified definition of the ghetto implies that some areas may turn into 'normal' residential areas from slight changes in one of the criteria, if they are near the threshold, while other areas may suddenly turn into ghettos" (Bakkær Simonsen, 2016, p. 93).

Throughout the policy papers, the 'ghetto' is mainly denoted as a space. However, its delimitation refers to socio-economic criteria, so that social and spatial imaginaries are closely interwoven in the 'ghetto' discourse. While there is no causal relationship between the criteria for classification as a 'ghetto', a chain of equivalence is constructed by subsuming these criteria and the problematisations associated with them under the 'ghettolist'. The structural and systemic embeddedness of these problematisations is thus obfuscated in a discursive process of spatialisation and instead represented as an encompassed problem in a certain space and of a certain segment of society. Since the socio-economic criteria included in the 'ghettolist' are discursively primarily attributed to ethnicity and a high share of non-Western immigrants and descendants constitutes a necessary condition for the classification as a 'ghetto' since 2018, also an ethnicisation of the 'ghetto' discourse can be discerned. Perpetuated by the 'ghettolist', structural problems are hence spatialised and ethnicised by attributing them as inherent to and fully encompassed within the 'ghetto' space.

4.1.5 The Danish 'ghetto' as a discourse

The 'ghetto' has been constructed as a problem at the convergence of poverty, unemployment, immigration/integration, and crime/safety. The political 'ghetto' discourse is based on the use of the term in everyday language, while the representations conveyed in everyday language and media are again influenced by the political institutionalisation of the 'ghetto' as a problem category. Hence, a circuit of references is discursively established through which the categorisation is ratified as supposedly applicable. With the constant reproduction of these socio-spatial imaginaries associated with the 'ghetto', the actual physical and social conditions in the respective residential areas are relegated, so that the 'ghetto' becomes a generic, decontextualised and homogenising container term of diverse problem categories. These are attributed as inherent to the residents due to their non-Western background and are represented as fully encompassed within the 'ghetto' space. Hence, structural problems are ethnicised and spatialised through the 'ghetto' discourse.

By adopting the 'ghetto' term in political discourse and charging it with allegedly spatially encompassed problematisations, the state (symbolically) classifies and stratifies urban space. Since its introduction in 2004, the 'ghetto' discourse, which establishes a chain of equivalence of spatial concentration of immigrants and descendants of non-Western background, 'ghettoisation' and the formation of parallel societies has gained hegemonic status through increasing institutionalisation and mostly consensual application in the political sphere. With the introduction of the categorisation of 'severe ghetto' in 2018, the discourse is translated to concrete policy actions with major legal consequences for the designated areas.

The 'ghetto' policy problem is framed as an issue of lack of integration, due to which it would constitute a threat to the country's cohesion and hence the functioning of the welfare state:

"The securitization both has an economic dimension, which presents immigrants as a burden to the welfare system because they detract more than they contribute, and a cultural dimension, which presents immigrants as a challenge to the cultural homogeneity of society because they do not support the values responsible for maintaining social cohesion." (Bakkær Simonsen, 2016, p. 85)

The proposed solution is hence the integration of the 'ghetto' and its inhabitants into Danish society, which however is understood as a one-sided assimilation, for "what is sought is restoration (of society) through subversion (of the ghetto)" (Bakkær Simonsen, 2016, p. 95). At the same time, the 'ghetto' discourse again acts as an exclusionary mechanism by circulating negatively charged socio-spatial imaginaries that prevent the integration of both spaces and residents. The 'ghetto' thus constitutes a form of spatial Othering, in which the 'Other' is constitutive of the own. Thus, while it is proclaimed that the 'ghetto' should become part of Danish society again,

"Danish national identity needs the ghetto as a negation that allows Danishness to appear as a fixed and full identity. The Ghetto Plan [of 2010] thus unites Danish society against the common threat that the ghetto represents, and [...] this implies the impossibility of the ghetto's integration into Denmark." (Bakkær Simonsen, 2016, p. 84)

The recourse to a value-based differentiation between 'us' and 'them' is moreover "used to justify inequality through paired complementary strategies: positive representations of one's own group, and negative representations of 'others'" (Mullet, 2018, p. 119). This representation presupposes a homogeneous and fixed identity on either side, thereby further expanding the difference between the two as antagonistic entities (Bakkær Simonsen, 2016, p. 89). This distinction of 'we' and 'they' also has a spatial dimension in that the 'here' as an 'ordinary Denmark' is contrasted with 'ghetto' space as an 'isolated fortress' (Regeringen, 2010, p. 6). Dominance and inequality are thus legitimised through the symbolic hierarchisation of the 'normal' and the deviant 'Other'.

In the critical examination of the 'ghetto' initiatives, it becomes apparent that the meaning of the 'ghetto' space is contingent and potentially open. Processes of symbolic boundary drawing, delimitation, and categorisation from a position of power hence bring the 'ghetto' into being. "This indicates the value of analyzing the ghetto as discourse rather than a physical space since that space is not constant over time." (Bakkær Simonsen, 2016, p. 93) The spaces produced in the discourse in turn constitute the spatial context of residents' everyday experiences. In order to understand how the national discourse intersects with and is negotiated at the neighbourhood level, I will turn to the everyday

experiences of residents and local professionals in Tingbjerg, a neighbourhood classified as a 'severe ghetto' under the government's 'ghettolist'³².

4.2 Negotiating the 'ghetto' at the neighbourhood scale

By conducting interviews with residents and local professionals in Tingbjerg, I aim to illustrate what significance they attribute to the 'ghetto' label, how the socio-spatial imaginary constructed in the hegemonic discourse intersects with everyday experiences in targeted residential areas and hence how the national discourse is negotiated at the neighbourhood scale. Since the 'ghetto' label through its discursive framing contributes to and spawns territorial stigmatisation, I will understand the 'ghetto' not as a policy but as a lived everyday experience³³. It is thus assumed that the 'ghetto' discourse influences how phenomena are experienced. However, these experiences are not overdetermined by the hegemonic discourse, but implicitly and explicitly negotiated and challenged by residents' everyday practices. Against the tension between the politically induced and instrumentalised representation of the 'ghetto' and the lived experiences of the space by residents, the findings suggest that territorial stigmatisation is not internalised but that residents of Tingbjerg are involved in a variety of symbolic and socio-spatial practices that potentially challenge the dominant 'ghetto' discourse.³⁴ These everyday struggles over representation of space, however, are characterised by asymmetric (symbolic) power relations.

Although the interviews indicate that the 'ghetto' label has an influence on the lived everyday experiences of residents in Tingbjerg, not every statement should be interpreted as a sign of dealing with territorial stigma³⁵. As also emphasised by the residents, Tingbjerg is more than the 'ghetto' label

³² For an introduction to the neighbourhood, see Appendix A).

³³ This notion refers to Junnilainen (2020, p. 46), who understands stigma as a "lived everyday experience".

³⁴ Due to the limited scope of this research and the small number of interviews conducted, I do not claim to represent the diversity of strategies that may be identified in Tingbjerg. Furthermore, it should be noted that territorial stigma and its impact is experienced differently by different residents depending on their social situation and position (Sandbjerg Hansen, 2021, p. 168). This became particularly evident in the interviews I conducted with two older White residents. Since the territorial stigma is closely interwoven with individuals of non-Western background through its construction in the 'ghetto' discourse, Interviewee O and Interviewee P can supposedly cope with the impact of the stigma more easily as they can dismiss it from themselves as subjects. The interviews with residents of an ethnic-minority background, again, opened up a very different perspective, since in the dominant discourse they are constructed as the subjects who embody the stigmas identified as the source of the neighbourhood's discredit. This in turn influences how they negotiate the territorial stigma.

³⁵ Especially so as the 'ghetto' label and the effects of Tingbjerg's external representations on everyday life were not introduced as the explicit topics of the interviews but only taken up once addressed by the interviewees

and the negotiation of it. Due to the limited scope of the thesis, however, I will not be able to take into account these holistic representations of Tingbjerg and the neighbourhood life as formulated by the interviewed residents, but instead will focus on those aspects that implicitly and explicitly point to the impact of the 'ghetto' discourse on residents' life.

'But I have never looked at it as a ghetto'

The dissonance between Tingbjerg's reputation and the insiders' perception of the area is pronounced by all interviewees. The outside perception is mainly influenced by discursive media and political representation of the ghetto space as characterised by crime, deviance, isolation and physical decay. The stigma of Tingbjerg hence resonates with elements of a global imaginary of the 'ghetto' as well as connotations of parallel societies brought about by the Danish 'ghetto' discourse, so that cultural, ethnic and material dimensions intersect in the construction of outsiders' perception of Tingbjerg. Tingbjerg is thus primarily perceived as a 'ghetto', whereby place-specific features take a back seat to the generic label. The labelling as a 'ghetto' through the state is therefore decisive for the outsider's perception of the area, as noted by Interviewee F:

"[the labelling] of course had a negative effect, because the bad reputation has [...] been even 'badder' because of the 'ghetto' label, it's like we already know that this is an area where there is social problems, and now we should all be aware of it and media should talk about all the time, and the people who live there should be aware of it."

The residents are thus aware of the negative reputation, but due to their lived experiences in space describe the neighbourhood more nuanced and hence depict it in a more positive way. Interviewee S, who moved to Tingbjerg three years ago, described this not only as a subjective perception, but as common within the neighbourhood: "We are all very happy for living here [...] I mean it's only people from outside that have a negative image from Tingbjerg." Her own positive experiences in and with the neighbourhood are thus contrasted with the dominant representations from outside, which she also attributes to the designation as a 'ghetto'. For herself, however, Interviewee S states: "But I have never looked at it as a ghetto". The statement reveals a process of negotiation about the meaning and the socio-spatial imaginaries associated with the term 'ghetto' and the extent to which these apply to Tingbjerg and are appropriate to conceive residents' everyday experiences in and with the particular space. The meaning and appropriateness of employing the term 'ghetto', however, is not only negotiated between residents and outsiders, but also between residents on the neighbourhood scale.

themselves. It was thus only in the analysis that I as a researcher related certain statements to the negotiation of the 'ghetto' discourse on the neighbourhood scale.

By referring to the official 'ghetto' criteria as comprehensible indicators for the designation of an area as a 'ghetto', Interviewee M perceives the labelling of Tingbjerg as justified for it would reflect real existing problems in Tingbjerg, yet it would also constitute something that was induced from the outside – something that 'happened' to them:

“there are politicians who have labelled us a ghetto. And that is in relation to how many people from non-western countries live here, how many don't have an education and how many crimes are committed. So based on these you are categorised as ghetto. And that happened to us.”

While on the one hand Interviewee M accepts the labelling by acknowledging that “we are one [ghetto]”, the 'we' implies an agentic dimension of the residents for potential change that emanates from the neighbourhood itself. In this respect, Interviewee M reproduces the narrative of the dominant discourse, which locates the responsibility for the dissolution of the 'ghetto' within the targeted subjects.

Other residents, however, negate the appropriateness of the 'ghetto' label both for Tingbjerg but also for any residential area in Denmark in general. The chains of associations with the term 'ghetto' that they draw on are not based on the Danish 'ghetto' criteria, but instead on (global) socio-spatial imaginaries of the 'ghetto' as spaces of deviance, decay and isolation. These residents therefore express their incomprehension about the choice of the term, which they argue is not descriptive but politically motivated:

“all the characteristics of the ghetto, you can't see. But I don't know why they call it ghetto. There are no poor people, who live on the street. There are also no ones who don't eat during the day. There is also not so much crime or people who beat you up on the street. So, basically the students' level in school, that is very good. We have many young people that get an education. We have many that are on the labour market.” (Interviewee R)

The designation of the neighbourhood as a 'ghetto' would therefore evoke associations that do not reflect the actual characteristics and lived experiences and would thus constitute a distorted yet powerful and consequential representation of Tingbjerg. The resulting dissonance between outsiders' and insiders' perspective, however, cannot be overcome by the residents themselves. As the outsiders' perception of Tingbjerg is dominated by its categorisation as a 'ghetto' and hence draws back on the hegemonic 'ghetto' discourse, Interviewee J identifies the source of Tingbjerg's bad reputation in the employment of the 'ghetto' trope in the political field. Addressing the politicians, she thus asks: “when are you going to stop calling a place like Tingbjerg for a ghetto?”.

Interviewee R therefore emphasises: “I can say actually, and I have said that all the time, that Danish politicians play a big role in all ghetto areas. Negative roles.” Politicians are hence not only made responsible for the instrumentalisation of the 'ghetto' label, but also for the emergence of the spatial concentration of ethnic minorities in the first place, which was then problematised in the

discourse. Interviewee N therefore states that “when the politicians start talking about ghetto, they should maybe also look into where people,- how people come to Tingbjerg”, indicating that these are not deliberate choices but determined by allocation policies and the structure of the housing market more generally.

‘It should not sound like Tingbjerg is bad’

While the ‘ghetto’ discourse fixates on problematisations, these represent only a fraction of residents’ everyday life experiences. Hence, in their accounts they associate Tingbjerg also with green areas, quality housing and neighbourhood sociability. Residents’ connotations with Tingbjerg are thus not embedded in the dominant ‘ghetto’ discourse but are formulated in distinction to it. The validity and applicability of the discourse is thereby contested through lived experiences.

Although the people I interviewed did not deny that there are problems in Tingbjerg, the representation of the neighbourhood should not be reduced to these. Interviewee O, after listing some of the challenges he identified in Tingbjerg, is eager to emphasize that “it should not sound like Tingbjerg is bad”. The outsiders’ perception is thus not intended to be reproduced and reinforced, but instead to be expanded by a more nuanced and thus supposedly more accurate representation. The problematisations formulated in the context of Tingbjerg are seen as concerning society as a whole but would be exaggerated by media and politics if they were related to Tingbjerg, as it would feed the narrative and thus ostensibly justify the categorisation of the neighbourhood. The residents are thus involved in a symbolic struggle over distinction and representation, in which demarcation from the socio-spatial imaginaries conveyed within the dominant discourse is sought through the formulation of counter-narratives.

Within these counter-narratives, affirmative accounts otherwise neglected and receding behind the stigmatising ‘ghetto’ label are emphasised and highlighted in an effort to move beyond the hegemonic discourse of ghetto areas. Interviewee J, for example, describes how as a member of a youth organisation she shares her experiences in Tingbjerg with young people from other areas, “trying our best to promote Tingbjerg in the most positive way that it can be”. At the same time, however, even in formulating these counter-narratives she has to engage with the dominant representations that seem to be ubiquitous. While lived experiences are thus neither overdetermined nor are the residents passive recipients in the face of outsiders’ representations, they often wield more limited symbolic power and thus less capabilities in actually influencing the orientation of the public discourse. Interviewee J remarks:

“some of my friends that I knew in that grade, they were like: ‘Oh, so you live in Tingbjerg? Aren't you afraid to live there? I heard that they stab each other, the guys over there. I heard that the police is always there. How do you feel safe?’ So, the questions there let me think how do they see it. But when I actually try to tell them that it's not bad, they got a problem. And the problems that they hear about are only television, on the media. They will be like: ‘Yes, but the media shows us something else what you're telling us is something else.’ So, if you know somebody who lives in Tingbjerg, they will always tell you that it's a nice place.”

Due to the constant reproduction and hence reinforcement of negative images of Tingbjerg, the validity of her accounts is questioned and despite familiarity she loses control over the public representation of her place of residence. Although some residents are thus consciously formulating counter-narratives, these are often disregarded outside the neighbourhood as they do not confirm to the hegemonic discourse. This results in a simultaneity of different imaginaries, whose (possibilities of) communication, however, are based on asymmetric power relations³⁶.

‘I know this is weird, but I feel Tingbjerg is my home’

The external perception thus has an influence on residents’ everyday life, as they cannot position themselves completely outside the ‘ghetto’ discourse. For example, Interviewee M was initially reluctant to move to Tingbjerg two years ago, “because you are hearing so much about it”. Due to a lack of alternatives, she eventually had to move but did not feel confident about it:

“In the beginning I would have done anything to move. I was fighting against the municipality, against ‘boligselskab’, police, all possible - emergency housing, ... I have fought, fought, fought a whole year just to get away. And that was hell, because I could not calm down and settle in my new home, I could not enjoy to be in my new home, I could not enjoy.”

³⁶ These power imbalances in Tingbjerg's external communication become also evident in the context of the current redevelopment, with real estate developers involved in formulating counter-narratives. Interviewee F, who works for one of the housing associations and closely collaborates with the private developers, states in this context: “[...] basically we are working with changing the image of Tingbjerg from the ghetto label and the ghetto perception into what Tingbjerg actually is [...] it is very green, there is a lot of nature around it, surrounding it. It's quite small-scale architecture, so you get a lot of light and air, and you will still get a lot of light and air although we are - not we, but NREP, the private partner are building some small houses in the big - the green areas between the houses that we have today.” Challenging the stigmata attached to Tingbjerg with its listing as a ‘ghetto’ is thus primarily motivated by the potential valorisation of the area. Interviewee F further remarks: “In the years when Tingbjerg was called a ghetto, there hasn't been much focus on, you know standing up against that label [...] So now we are using the development of Tingbjerg [...] to gain the interest from the media and to hold the interest from the media on that perspective, and we feed into that perspective in the media, and we also try to feed in to the change of like normal people, how they look into Tingbjerg and of course [...] we have people's ear because they now get the possibility to actually buy quite cheap, private housing in Tingbjerg.” It would thus be due to the (symbolic) position of these new actors involved that the counter-narratives are now also perceived beyond the local scale. However, these are instrumentalised for valorisation purposes, which implies that the empowering element of formulating counter-narratives among residents is omitted and public representation of Tingbjerg (once again) denied to the current residents.

Interviewee N, who moved to Tingbjerg in the early 2000s³⁷, describes similar experiences: “When I started looking for apartments in my younger days, I never put Tingbjerg on my list. I didn’t want to move to Tingbjerg. [why?] Because of the stories at that time. People selling drugs everywhere.” Even though both Interviewee N and Interviewee M knew Tingbjerg from own visits before moving, it were the external (media) representations that dominated their evaluation of Tingbjerg as a potential place to live³⁸. Although some of Interviewee M’s initial fears were confirmed, her everyday experiences of and in the neighbourhood expanded the dominant external representations, which are therefore no longer the only source for her perception of Tingbjerg. Meanwhile, Interviewee M can hence state, that “It is nice [to live in Tingbjerg]. I got used to it”.

By living in Tingbjerg and hence making experience-in-place, the neighbourhood has changed in perception from a state of exception to a place that acquires personal meaning for the residents. This is particularly pronounced in the case of Interviewee R, who describes herself as ‘Tingbjergner’ and is referred to by others as ‘Interviewee R Tingbjerg’. Despite the negative perception from the outside, her place of residence is thus a source of self-identification. Although Tingbjerg is thus referred to as ‘home’ by many residents, also this notion is not unaffected by the ‘ghetto’ label. Interviewee J notes:

“I know this is weird, but I feel Tingbjerg is my home. Not, not only because in the place that I live in, but I feel the whole Tingbjerg is my home. And all these people who live in Tingbjerg is quite a family for me, because I know them all.”

She assumes this statement could be perceived as ‘weird’ from the outside, as the ‘ghetto’ label implies that Tingbjerg is not a place where one can feel comfortable and to which one can establish positive connections in terms of both the place and the people. According to Kirkness (2014, p. 1268) the attachment expressed here constitutes a subtle challenge to the dominant discourse, since the state of exception conveyed by the ‘ghetto’ label is contested in its validity through positive experiences in and with the space. Interviewee S is also involved in formulating such implicit counter-narratives by emphasising that I should stress in my thesis “that I [Interviewee S] want to stay here”.

³⁷ The negative reputation of the area thus precedes the institutionalised ‘ghetto’ discourse. However, the term ‘ghetto’ was already before associated with Tingbjerg in everyday language.

³⁸ Interviewee S, too, describes that she was aware of the negative reputation of Tingbjerg before her move, but that for her, her own positive perception, which she associated in particular with the green spaces in Tingbjerg, prevailed. Although the move was thus a conscious decision, it still proved to be an evaluation process of her own experiences and external perceptions.

'If I'm not gonna do it then who's gonna do it'

This interweaving of awareness of the stigma and the negative reputation on the one hand and the own positive connotated experiences in neighbourhood on the other hand is then again mentioned by the residents interviewed as a source of motivation for their own engagement in the neighbourhood. They thus do not distance themselves from their neighbourhood, as some other studies on territorial stigma have noted, but instead get involved and actively shape neighbourhood life³⁹: "Tingbjerg is my neighbourhood, that's where I live and where my son lives and where my childhood friends come and visit me. So, I really wish that it stays attractive area where you can feel yourself safe" (Interviewee R). Interviewee R expresses a certain ownership of and attachment to both place and the community. Accordingly, the externally attached stigma of Tingbjerg is experienced as a stigmatisation of one's own person. Tingbjerg thus has significance for Interviewee J's own engagement in that

"it is very important for me because I live there, I was born there, I grew up there. So the fact that somebody is like talking about the place I live in, in a negative way makes me mad and sad at the same time. It's like nobody else can say something about my place. Nobody."

She thus experiences the externally imposed (mis)representation of her place of living as a deprivation of her possibility to publicly represent the place and related to this also her own person.

The contestation of the 'ghetto' label becomes the subject of an open protest formulated from within the neighbourhood. However, since the claims made in this protest do not only refer to the local level, but address problems of society as a whole, an upscaling of this protest beyond Tingbjerg can be identified:

"So, the problems that we have in Tingbjerg is also one of the problems that we have in whole Denmark and all other countries, like racism [...] So, when I'm talking about the stigmatisation there in Tingbjerg, I'm also talking about the more global." (Interviewee J)

Interviewee J is therefore involved in a local youth organisation that campaigns for the abolition of the 'ghettolist'. In this context, she feels a special responsibility as a young person and Muslim from Tingbjerg, who embodies intersectional stigmas, and thus deduces "so, if I'm not gonna do it then who's gonna do it". Her own experiences of being stigmatised thus serves as a motivation to speak out against the 'ghetto' label as an expression of a profound racist discourse in Denmark:

"Because all of the things that I have went through, is one of the things that keep me activated in this organisation [...] that I have this feeling that 'ok, some day or some time there will be something that doesn't - that nobody will call Tingbjerg for a ghetto'. Or this racism that there are wouldn't be here

³⁹ However, this assertion is biased as I only interviewed residents for who self-identified as being engaged. The results presented here are thus not representative of residents in general. As Interviewee S states: "It seems like there is a certain section of the residents in Tingbjerg that are very passive." Moreover, the stigmatisation is not experienced as a source of motivation by all residents, so that Interviewee G observes that "the continuous racist discourse that exists, also we experience like it demotivates people to participate".

soon, I hope. So, all these things that I went through, is helping me and motivating me, to like keep focusing on all this.” (Interviewee J)

In the context of the current redevelopment of Tingbjerg, which originates from the neighbourhood's classification as a ‘severe ghetto’⁴⁰, the local protest against specific building projects and expropriations is taken up and related to a national discourse. Through this upscaling of local protests against the effects of both ‘ghetto’ policies and ‘ghetto’ discourse, locally formulated specific causes are related to and feed into a criticism of the (political) system. While the ‘ghetto’ discourse for the residents is thus concretely negotiated on the neighbourhood scale, it emanates and hence remains embedded in national struggles. Consequently, the initiatives brought forth against the ‘ghetto’ initiatives in Tingbjerg are inherently both local and national and thus have an (implicit) aspiration of upscaling.

‘It doesn’t fit with what they expect’

As the (media) representation of Tingbjerg as a ‘ghetto’ space is ubiquitous, it is mainly through the own experience of the neighbourhood that these mostly negative perceptions of Tingbjerg among externals are challenged. Interviewee F, who works with promoting the area, describes:

“I have been to Tingbjerg with a lot of people that didn't know Tingbjerg before [...] and they were all very surprised by the looks of Tingbjerg, because of the bad reputation, I think they [...] thought that it would be like a concrete kind of area, and they are quite surprised that it's so cozy out there, like a cute small-scale architecture. So I'm happy to find that the people who are visiting and discover Tingbjerg quite fast actually have this new idea of Tingbjerg. It's like it changes the perception - it doesn't fit with what they expect. And that's a good thing. But of course it's still a problem that there is a lot of people who have never visited Tingbjerg and they still have an idea of Tingbjerg to be something that it is not. [...] Like when we tell them Tingbjerg is actually very beautiful, Tingbjerg has a lot of potential, Tingbjerg is full of green, maybe people be quite sceptical when you start talking to them about this, but then when we take them out to Tingbjerg, the green, like they say 'well, we see this, I don't understand why it has such a bad reputation'.”

The ‘ghetto’ label thus evokes a certain expectation of the neighbourhood, which is primarily mediated by media coverage but also the recallable associations of the ‘ghetto’ term. The actual qualities of the Tingbjerg thus take a back seat to its ‘ghetto’ image. For outsiders, Tingbjerg is thus not a neighbourhood among many on the outskirts of Copenhagen, but a ‘ghetto’ discursively charged with the decontextualised socio-spatial imaginaries of the same. While one’s own experience in and with the neighbourhood may potentially ‘correct’ or at least nuance these negative reputations, the latter usually prevent the own experience of it in the first place:

⁴⁰ Due to the designation as ‘severe ghetto’, the share of social housing stock has to be reduced to 40 % by 2030. In Tingbjerg this is to be achieved by adding private housing units in the current green areas as well as some demolitions and evictions. Especially the demolition of housing units for the disabled is resisted in Tingbjerg. For a more detailed explanation, see Appendix A.

“We conducted a survey, it was a big questionnaire where around 2.000 Copenhageners answered, and it was clear that [...] a majority of them, like 90 % of them, think that Tingbjerg has issues with crime, crime-related problems, and people who live here, or visit can't feel safe walking around. And all of them had never been here before. That's like a typical picture. And none of them wanted to move here. [...] And their reasoning for that was Tingbjerg's bad reputation. It is definitely a vicious circle that keeps on going and going.” (Interviewee B)

'The media also blows it up'

This bad reputation is mainly attributed to media coverage of Tingbjerg and 'ghettos' more generally, which reproduces and thus reinforces the dominant 'ghetto' discourse. These are often exaggerated, so that problem situations which exist throughout Denmark are increasingly problematised in Tingbjerg, as these negative and sensational images conform to dominant imaginaries of the area. By relating national discourses on integration or deviant behaviour to specific residential areas, these become 'located' and thus tangible for the general public. About the role of these circulating images, Interviewee O hence states that “the media also blows it up”. The media thereby contributes to the territorial stigma being nationalised and democratised (Wacquant et al., 2014, p. 1273) by locating “everything bad that happens [...] in Tingbjerg” (Interviewee N):

“every time something happens in the vicinity of Tingbjerg, they will use a clip of Tingbjerg, they will say it is in Tingbjerg, even though all of us living in the area know that it's not. It's in Husum, or it's in Brønshøj, it's actually in Gladsaxe, but because the people living in the other parts of the country don't know these places, they will always just say it's here at our place, even though it's, it isn't.” (Interviewee A)

The residents are then also permanently confronted with these representations:

“I think it is still a topic [...] in work, when I'm out with my friends and when I'm home. Because you see it everywhere, you see it on the media, social media, you see, ... you hear it in some other places. Like, if you go out, some people will just say it out loud 'just go back to the ghetto'. [...] So, this topic is, would never like 'close'. I think it will only like close when the politicians are stopping using the word 'ghetto'.” (Interviewee J)

Again, a close connection between the use of the 'ghetto' term in a political context and the external representation of Tingbjerg can be discerned. The origin of the media discourse is thus traced back to the political instrumentalisation of the 'ghetto'.

'They feel that they are seen as something different'

This constant confrontation then also has an effect on the self-perception of especially young residents, who may relate these external representations to themselves and internalise them. Interviewee L hence cautions:

“But now the thing is it's everything, so political comments, Rasmus Paludan who comes to the area and on YouTube, on the phone, Instagram, TikTok, it's everywhere. So a child of eight years sees it if they have a mobile phone, have a smartphone, then they can read. And if you as a child keep hearing the same thing over and over again, [...] they make it part of their identity.” (Interviewee L)

Interviewee M, a mother of a teenage son in Tingbjerg, expresses her fear of a self-fulfilling prophecy, especially for young men, who are well aware of the stigmatisations they are confronted with:

“And I know many who dream about becoming something big, and be a good person but if you always hear about the negative, negative, negative, it becomes difficult. That doesn't contribute to something positive if you always are nonetheless that negative. So you could just be negative. Especially as a young person, they have a hard time [...] That makes them realize that they are seen, they feel that they are seen as something different, that they are not a part. It is just hard to grow up here.”

Interviewee M hence identifies the lack of recognition of young people based on their ethnicity and place of residence as the aggravation that makes life in Tingbjerg difficult and has a concrete impact on the young people's life chances. The stigma of Tingbjerg thus becomes the stigmatisation of youth. Interviewee L, who as a young adult in Tingbjerg is involved in a youth organisation, in this context remarks:

“the young people are much more than just being from Tingbjerg. And that's kind of what I think is forgotten when talking about it overall. It becomes all about 'you are from this and this place', but you're much more than that.”

Based on their place of residence, certain expectations and negative perceptions would be placed on the young people. They would thus not be recognised as individuals with their own abilities but would be reduced to a stigmatised imaginary informed by the representation of their place of residence. Interviewee R conceives this equalisation imposed by the 'ghetto' discourse as an expression of dehumanisation: “basically, I hate the word 'ghetto' or all the words, which are negative. They minimise the human of us human beings.”

The stigmas associated with the 'ghetto' label are also readily available to the residents themselves:

“Actually, when you say 'a ghetto', so you think completely negative. Because when you find yourself in a ghetto place, you become very very concerned. Because the problem of the ghetto,- that means that you are inactive in the society, that means that you're exposed, that means that you're vulnerable, that means that you are criminal.” (Interviewee R)

In order to not be related to these connotations and reduced to 'being-from-Tingbjerg', young people in particular conceal their address when applying for a job.

However, how the affiliation with Tingbjerg is evaluated from the outside also depends on one's status and whether one fulfils the other stigmas associated with the 'ghetto' label. Interviewee P, an old White female, emphasises:

"I will always tell that it's nice to live in Tingbjerg. When the people ask, 'where do you live?', so, are there many who say 'no, I'm just living in Brønshøj or in Husum'. But I say, 'no, I'm living in Tingbjerg'. 'In Tingbjerg?' So, I say 'yes, there it is really good out here', I tell them. Because the journalists nonetheless promote it as a bigger problem than it actually is. [...] 'Well, I thought that it was so terrible to live out there' and when I see them I am not afraid to say that I live out there."

'And that hurts'

While the 'ghetto' in the Danish context spans both a discursive and a legal dimension, for the people I interviewed, the personal impacts are mainly ascribed to the external representation. Although many residents thus express that they like living in Tingbjerg they are not unaffected by the territorial stigmatisation it is subjected to. Residents with an ethnic minority background expressed that they feel othered by the majority society. Though this experience of 'Othering' is not only attributed to their place of residence, it however intersects with the construction of the mutually exclusive categories of 'Dane' and 'Muslim' in the 'ghetto' discourse and its spatial fixation. In this regard, Interviewee J expresses that her belonging is categorically denied by some state representatives just because she is a Muslim. She recalls a discussion with a politician from the right-wing populist Danish People's Party:

"And I was like: 'Ok, but... So you would never accept a person like me?'" And he was like, he was answering me: 'Yeah, I would never do that, because you are not a Danish person.' I was like: 'But I live here, I'm born here in Denmark. [...] At the end they were like: 'Ok, but how could you accept me then if I don't live in Tingbjerg? How could you accept if I go out and I actually study? I do work. I do go and do all these things that you want me to do. But at the same time, you will never accept me.' And one of the guys was like: 'How could you accept me for ... all these - you would never accept me for all these things, but you are the ones who told me that I will never be anything. I will never be someone Danish.'"

Interviewee J describes this denial of her belonging and the rejection of her as a person because of her religious affiliation as a painful experience: "And that hit me very very very good, that hit me very good". The demarcation formulated in the 'ghetto' discourse thus does not remain on the discursive level but is consequential and hurtful for the targeted people. Interviewee N, too, describes hearing about the associations of outsiders with her place of living and hence implicitly also herself as a person as a painful awareness: "And then they hear I'm living in Tingbjerg. "Oh my god, how can you live in Tingbjerg?" - "What do you mean?" - "But it's a place for criminals." So, it's basically known as a place for criminals. And that hurts."

The residents I interviewed are thus aware of the stigmatisation they and their place of living are subjected to. Accordingly, the designation as a 'ghetto' and the associations and prejudices that emanate from it are identified as one of the most significant problems of Tingbjerg. Interviewee R states in this regard: "And as Tingbjerg became a ghetto, so with that come just all kinds of problems."

As mentioned above, it is thus not primarily 'real' problems that are experienced as exerting a negative influence, but the political labelling and the restricted possibilities to address the problematisations due to their framing in the discourse.

When asked what it would mean for her personally if Tingbjerg was no longer on the 'ghetto list', Interviewee M replies:

"That means that we no longer have to be embarrassed to be a part of Tingbjerg. That we're not getting denounced so much anymore. That the people who don't want to come to Tingbjerg because they are afraid of going here, and that's seriously how it is. They think they'll get shot if they come to Tingbjerg. All of these prejudices you have."

Interviewee M expresses a certain shame for living in Tingbjerg because of the external representation of the area, which again potentially undermines an affirmative self-identification with the neighbourhood. At the same time, this statement underlines the interactional dimension of the stigmatisation as mainly experienced in contact with externals. Interviewee N elaborates how the stigmatisation influences her (social) life outside of Tingbjerg in that colleagues are surprised when they hear that she lives from Tingbjerg, while her daughter has to deal with avoidance by friends: "When my daughter, she tells someone that she is living in Tingbjerg, most of her friends' parents won't allow them to come here and visit her, because it's not a good place, it's a ghetto." The stigmatisation of the area is also perceived when applying for a job. Interviewee J shares: "It is like quite hard to apply for a job or something, because they know about Tingbjerg." This alleged 'knowledge' of outsiders and the resulting rejection of both the area and the residents themselves is in turn mainly mediated through dominant (media) representations and the general 'ghetto' discourse and hence does not reflect outsiders' own experiences.

However, the socio-spatial imaginaries evoked by the 'ghetto' discourse do not only have an external but also an internal effect:

"But also this media circus about Tingbjerg and about Islam have started a hate between people, also in Tingbjerg. If you read the [facebook] group [...] you will see a problem is 'oh, they haven't cut the grass'. Ok, booh. But before you know that 'It's also because with those brown people they just throw their garbage anywhere'. So it develops into something negative and it develops around to people who have not the same skin colour. So I'm afraid that the development is going the wrong way." (Interviewee N)

Again, responsibility is attributed to the media and politics, which challenge the cohesion of residents by projecting national discourses onto the neighbourhood scale and thereby potentially contribute to a distancing between ethnic Danes and ethnic minority groups:

"I feel it's the media which ruins a lot of things for people around here by giving them names or putting their religion in it. Or politics or something like that. But otherwise, I see a lot of people who get so good along with each other" (Interviewee N)

'But I'm in really close contact with my neighbours'

Even though such positive accounts of neighbourly relations predominate among the interviewees, I cannot elaborate on them further in the context of this thesis⁴¹. Instead, I will only briefly discuss here the emphasis that the participants put on the neighbourly contacts beyond their own ethnic group. Interviewee M accentuates⁴²:

“But I am in really close contact with my neighbours. I have a woman living in the apartment below me, who is Danish. Then I also have my neighbour living above me who is Turkish. And on the other side is living someone from Somalia. And we are actually doing pretty well, I think.”

These and other similar accounts, which were all formulated by residents with ethnic minority backgrounds, challenge the dominant narrative about Tingbjerg and more generally 'ghettos' in two respects. On the one hand, the construction of the residents as a homogeneous group from the outside is contested. Interviewee M states: “I've always said that Tingbjerg is many minorities within a minority. Because the society sees Tingbjerg only as one minority. But if you live here, you see that here are many different minorities.” On the other hand, these descriptions negate the imaginary that parallel societies that have no contact to the Danish majority society are evolving in the 'ghetto' areas⁴³.

⁴¹ Likewise, I cannot go further into detail on strategies to address the territorial stigmatisation other than the ones identified so far (mainly the formulation of counter-narratives). To just shortly mention these, the residents I interviewed also engage in the pronunciation of micro-differences and the projection of the stigmatisation on deviant others.

⁴² A majority of the residents I talked to made similar statements, pronouncing the ethnicity of their neighbours and the positively perceived interactions among those.

⁴³ At the same time, however, both ethnic minority members and White Danes criticise that the groups tend to keep to themselves beyond their immediate neighbours. These differences between the groups are described by Interviewee O and Interviewee P, both White Danes, as a division, because in their opinion Danes are not taken into account and welcome in many neighbourhood activities: “You don't take Danes with you to that kind of activities in the community. There are maybe some of the activities that happen over in the garden, where there also come foreigners and so on. I've also talked with Interviewee P, they don't want to spend time with us, I think. They rather want their own.” (Interviewee O)

5. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

While the 'ghetto' is thus constructed and symbolically charged in the political field, the socio-spatial imaginaries and (discursive) hierarchisations it evokes are concretely negotiated at the local level. The aim of this thesis was hence not to assess the appropriateness of the application of the 'ghetto' label in the Danish context (such an assessment is made in Schultz Larsen, 2014), but to focus on its effects.

As 'ghetto' is not an innocent or neutral term, the spatial and social chains of association it evokes are instrumentalised in the Danish context to justify anti-immigration policies and biopolitical interventions. Moreover, through the institutionalisation of the 'ghetto', discursive spaces of exclusion are established and societal problems are increasingly spatialised and ethnicised. Even though the meaning of space is thus potentially open, the prevailing discursive representations of the 'ghetto' space anticipate externals' attribution of meaning of the targeted space and hence potentially pre-determine experiences-in-space. The example of the Danish 'ghetto' thus illustrates that "place is deeply linked to power, in terms of whose accounts gain legitimacy, and the way these accounts authorise forms of inequality and exclusion" (Cairns, 2018, p. 1225).

The 'ghetto' constitutes an "urban categor[y] of classification" (Tissot, 2018, p. 152) under which diverse urban realities are subsumed and hence recede, so that the 'ghetto' evolves as a decontextualised container term for various problem constellations. The label is thus central to the reproduction and fixation of the hegemonic discourse in specific neighbourhoods. Accordingly, the residents identify the abolition of the 'ghetto' label as a prerequisite for the symbolic resignification of the respective area.

The findings support that the 'ghetto' spawns both a spatial and social dimension, while the perceived consequences are mainly attributed to the social stratification and hence the discrimination it evokes. These are also traced to the chains of association that are discursively linked to the 'ghetto' and further instrumentalised by politicians to justify interventions. The findings hence point to the significance of the representation of space for processes of socio-spatial Othering and the production of territorial stigmatisation⁴⁴. The strategies employed by residents confirm those identified in the

⁴⁴ Due to the increasing ethnicisation of the 'ghetto' discourse, spatial and social stigmas are closely interwoven. Contrary to what Wacquant et al. (2014, p. 1273) state, it thus cannot be assumed that the territorial stigma in the context of the Danish 'ghetto' is autonomised from other stigmas. Instead, the "links between the stigma attached to the negative branding of a place and the stigmata of poverty, class, ethnicity, crime etc. are very strong indeed, to the point of being interchangeable" (Slater, 2017b, p. 245).

literature, mainly the pronunciation of micro-difference and thus the rejection of the validity of the stigma for oneself, and the formulation of counter-narratives.

The findings also confirm the role of the state and the media in the construction of territorial stigmatisation, mainly based on the classification inherent to labelling and the circulation of the socio-spatial imaginaries conveyed in the discourse. Following Bourdieu, through labelling the state exerts a “symbolic power”, which is “the power to make things with words” (Bourdieu, 1989, p. 23). The discourse thus does not represent an objective reality but reproduces the categorisations and social and spatial entities it deals with (Wellgraf, 2014, p. 208)⁴⁵. As such, the representation of the ‘ghetto’ space is potentially detached from the actual lived experiences of the residents.

Owing to the dominance of these external representations, residents have to engage with the ‘ghetto’ discourse and position themselves. The findings suggest that even those accounts that were not explicitly linked to the ‘ghetto’ often reflected a connection or demarcation to the dominant representations of both the neighbourhood and the residents. However, while the hegemonic discourse structures the situational context, it does not overdetermine it (Sandbjerg Hansen, 2021, p. 193). Residents’ experiences of place are thus at once “constructed, and especially communicated, through social negotiation, including conflict and difference” (Pierce et al., 2011, p. 60).

Residents exhibit an agentic orientation through which they formulate deliberative responses informed by the perceived contrast of external representations and their own experiences-in-space (Garbin & Millington, 2012, p. 2075). Engaging in (symbolic) struggles for representation, residents are active in the appropriation of space and its attribution of meaning and thereby “subvert the rationality of powerful institutions” (Scott & Sohn, 2019, p. 5). While these are sometimes articulated as overt (collective) resistance against the ‘ghetto’ initiatives, the findings show that the power relations inherent to the ‘ghetto’ discourse are mainly “interpreted, transformed, even subverted at the level of everyday life” (Scott & Sohn, 2019, p. 6).

The discrepancy between the external and internal representation of the researched neighbourhood is attributed to its labelling as a ‘ghetto’ and the according chains of associations solidified in the discourse. Due to lived experiences, the residents (and professionals) have a more nuanced perception in contrast to outsiders, whose perception is predetermined by the simplified and stigmatised dominant representation. These are thus an expression of the power relations that the production of space is embedded in and the hegemonic position of the ‘ghetto’ discourse, against which the public communication of alternative representations as formulated by residents is restricted. Hence, the

⁴⁵ Within the discourse, however, this representation is constructed and communicated as an objective reality. Hence, a certain essentialism is employed in the discourse, whereby problem constellations are attributed as inherent to the corresponding neighbourhood. The actors and the processes involved are thereby obfuscated.

prevailing “problem image creates barriers to the spread of knowledge and change” (Hastings & Dean, 2003, p. 171), while at the same time residents cannot significantly challenge the hegemonic narrative due to their “lack of active or controlled access to [the] discourse” (van Dijk, 1993, p. 256). This in turn influences the role of the residents in the production of space. The findings of Garbin & Millington (2012, p. 2071, emphasis in original) for French banlieues may thus be transferred to the context of the Danish ‘ghetto’:

“Simply put, some individuals or groups have more influence over the production of cityspaces than others. In the banlieues, the deprived status of most residents means that their productive activities are usually (although not exclusively) limited to the *perceived* or *lived* realms that in technocratic, advanced capitalist societies are dominated.”

Referring to Lefebvre's conceptualisation, however, the potential for the disruption of dominance is always already implied in the production of space (Vogelpohl, 2014, p. 27). Residents' formulations of counter-narratives are primarily located in the realm of spaces of representation, which thus also becomes the realm of symbolic struggles over representation and the resignification of space (Cuny, 2018, p. 890). According to Garbin & Millington (2012, p. 2074), the negotiation of the ‘ghetto’ as an ideologically informed representation of space in the lived realm is to be understood as a reaction to the territorial stigma which “incites residents to enter a representational space, or field, where they encounter dominant technocratic and media representations of space and, critically, envisage a transformed space”. These are thus in tension with the construction of the ‘ghetto’ through essentialisation and (statistical) representations in the realm of the conceived space, which hence intervenes in the lived space. At the same time, the lived space of the ‘ghetto’ is not only imbued by residents, but also negotiated in the media, artistic accounts and even in the political sphere. It thus points to the simultaneity of different, contested and even contradicting imaginaries whose public communication, however, is affected by the different power positions of individuals and institutions.

To conclude, the findings emphasise that the construction and the representation of the ‘ghetto’ space in Denmark have consequences for both spatial practices⁴⁶ and spaces of representation. This thesis contributed to the de-naturalisation and de-construction of the ‘ghetto’ and thereby points to the underlying processes and socio-spatial imaginaries that inform the intentional employment of the term in the Danish context as a justification for political interventions. The inclusion of the residents' experiences highlights how the negotiation and challenging of dominance is inherent to the production of space, so that while the ‘ghetto’ discourse and the socio-spatial imaginaries it conveys intersect with residents' lived experiences, the discourse does not overdetermine these.

⁴⁶ However, due to the limited scope of this thesis I was not able to go into detail about the bodily experience of the material space and the concrete spatial practices of the residents. The influences are thus assumed according to the reviewed literature.

6. OUTLOOK

While the accounts of the residents also highlight the importance of media in consolidating external representations and thus mediating territorial stigma, within the framework of this thesis I was not able to further elaborate on how the discourse of the political field is reproduced and adapted in media representations. Furthermore, the inclusion of residents who do not volunteer in the neighbourhood and who embody several stigmas associated with the 'ghetto' would be insightful for follow-up studies to address the negotiation of the external representations in a more nuanced way.

For Tingbjerg in particular, attention should be drawn to the effects of the current restructuring and the concomitant resignification of the neighbourhood. With the redevelopment primarily informed by market logics, the 'ghetto' discourse provides the political justification for interventions. Yet, the redevelopment threatens the very elements that the participants of this study identified as most valuable in the area, namely the green spaces and the low-threshold neighbourly interactions. Hence, overt protest is formulated against both the concrete building projects and more fundamentally the 'ghetto' policies that inform these. While the development is still in process, the current dynamics point to the ongoing negotiation of who can and may represent the neighbourhood and thus also who may formatively intervene.

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The word "APPENDIX" is centered in a bold, black, sans-serif font. It is enclosed within a thick, olive-green rectangular border. This inner border is offset slightly to the left and bottom from a larger, thin, light-grey rectangular border. A thin black horizontal line extends from the left edge of the page, passing through the center of the word "APPENDIX".

APPENDIX

APPENDIX A – TINGBJERG

Tingbjerg is located in the Northwest of Copenhagen, about eight kilometres from the city centre and adjacent to the green areas of *Utterslev Mose*, *Gyngemose* and *Vestvolden*. The settlement was planned in the 1950s by the architect and urban planner Steen Eiler Rasmussen in collaboration with the landscape architect C. Th. Sørensen as a model town in response to housing shortage and deteriorating living conditions in inner Copenhagen in the 1940s (Trafik-, Bygge- og Boligstyrelsen, 2019). The intention was to establish an independent urban unit with own institutions and common green spaces around which the buildings are arranged and neighbourhood life was to be organised. However, due to this envisioned seclusion – which in spatial terms is emphasised by the street layout with a ring road that encloses the entire settlement and allows vehicle access through one street only – Tingbjerg appears both physically and in terms of (social) institutions delimited from its surroundings.

Tingbjerg's main housing stock was completed in two stages of development between 1955 and 1972 and today comprises about 2.200 non-profit housing units administered in equal shares by the non-profit housing associations SAB/KAB and fsb (Landsbyggefonden, 2020). With more than half of the housing units being three-bedroom apartments, the neighbourhood was primarily designed for working-class families who moved away from the congested city centre. Due to the city's housing allocation policies, more migrant families moved to Tingbjerg, especially since the 1990s, while at the same time, many of the working-class families who had previously lived in the area relocated. Today, immigrants and descendants of non-Western backgrounds make up 73% of Tingbjerg's population (Transport- og Boligministeriet, 2020). Against the backdrop of the intensifying national discourse on migration and integration, the image of Tingbjerg thus gradually changed from a green city-within-a-city for 'Danish' working-class families to a neighbourhood associated with immigrants, (gang) crime and supposedly 'failed' integration and as such become renowned beyond the locale. The resulting relative isolation and stigmatisation of Tingbjerg were further reinforced by the introduction of the 'ghettolist' in 2010, on which Tingbjerg⁴⁷ has been listed. With a share of 72,4% of the residents having completed primary education only and an income level of 53,4% of the average in the region⁴⁸, two

⁴⁷ On the 'ghettolist', Tingbjerg is listed as 'Tingbjerg/Utterslevhuse' according to the area's official name. However, to account for the common denomination of the neighbourhood used by both residents and officials in everyday use, I will continue to refer to it as 'Tingbjerg'.

⁴⁸ As mentioned above, these figures cannot be considered 'neutral' numbers reflecting an objective reality. In terms of educational attainment, a 2019 KAB analysis based on figures from Statistics Denmark shows that the proportion of 24-26-year-olds in Tingbjerg who have completed upper secondary education has increased from 47% in 2008/09 to 64% in 2016/17. The same analysis also shows that the proportion of 27-28-year-olds who

out of four criteria of the 'ghettolist' besides ethnicity were met in Tingbjerg in 2020. Since the neighbourhood is listed for more than four consecutive years, it is now categorised as a 'severe ghetto' (Transport- og Boligministeriet, 2020).

While deprived neighbourhoods in other countries are often characterised by structural decay and state withdrawal, Tingbjerg is characterised by an architecture considered of 'high preservation value' and significant presence of the welfare state. Since the beginning of the 2000s, the housing associations in Tingbjerg have carried out extensive modernisation measures, which were complemented by several 'boligsociale helhedsplaner'⁴⁹ (comprehensive social housing plans) (Morgen et al., 2020, p. 216). However, these efforts neither contributed to improving the prevailing urban imaginaries of Tingbjerg nor lifted the area out of the 'ghetto' criteria.

In accordance with the 2018 adopted 'ghettopakken', the non-profit housing stock of Tingbjerg as a 'severe ghetto' is thus to be reduced to a share of 40% by 2030 (Regeringen, 2018). With a current 96% share of non-profit housing, the officials in Tingbjerg decided to meet these requirements by densifying the open green spaces with private housing estates⁵⁰ and converting some of the existing flats to elderly and youth housing. On completion, the number of residents is expected to increase from the current 6.300 to about 10.000 in 2030 (Trafik-, Bygge- og Boligstyrelsen, 2019). The employed regeneration narrative is informed by promoting Tingbjerg as an attractive place for families with a high architectural value in the vicinity of both nature and the Copenhagen city centre. Intending to address more resourceful residents with higher income and education levels (Landsbyggefonden, 2020), the introduction of mixed ownership forms in the neighbourhood is hence envisioned as a means for Tingbjerg to drop out of the 'ghetto' criteria by 2025 (Trafik-, Bygge- og Boligstyrelsen, 2019).

have completed vocational education has increased from 34% in 2008/09 to 52% in 2016/17. However, the positive trend in educational attainment of young people under 30 in Tingbjerg is not considered in the overall assessment of the area with regard to the 'ghetto' criteria, as only the educational attainment of 30-59-year-olds is considered here. In the context of the below-average income level, it has to be noted that Tingbjerg is located in and thus compared to the average income level of the capital region, which is higher than in the rest of the country. The example of Tingbjerg thus underlines that if the criteria were defined only slightly differently, Tingbjerg might not be designated as a 'ghetto' (Morgen et al., 2020, p. 222).

⁴⁹ A comprehensive social housing plan aims to initiate social and preventive initiatives that can contribute to a positive development in vulnerable housing areas (fsb, n.d.). In the context of Tingbjerg, the areas of focus are security and well-being, crime prevention efforts, education and employment, and prevention and parental responsibility. At the same time, the comprehensive social housing plan aims to support the vision that the area is opened up and made attractive for both new residents and investors (Landsbyggefonden, 2016).

⁵⁰ In collaboration with the private real estate developer NREP, an additional 1500 private housing units are going to be built in Tingbjerg until 2030 (Trafik-, Bygge- og Boligstyrelsen, 2019).

APPENDIX B – PRIORITY AREAS OF THE 'GHETTO' INITIATIVES

Priority areas and proposed initiatives within the framework of the respective 'ghetto strategies'

'The government's strategy against ghettoisation' (2004)

The strategy must therefore be based on the following three steps:

- Immediate aid for the most affected ghetto areas to address the present problems.
- Over the next two to three years, this will help create a more balanced mix of residents and promote integration in ghetto areas.
- Long-term initiatives to prevent the formation of new ghetto areas. (Regeringen, 2004)

'Return of the ghetto to society. Taking action against parallel societies in Denmark' (2010)

1. More attractive residential areas that break isolation
 - Strategic cooperation with municipalities that have ghetto areas
 - Strategic demolitions of apartment blocks, etc.
 - From a ghetto to an attractive district (financed by 'Landsbyggefonden' (National Building Fund), to make areas more attractive)
 - Renovations
 - Area-based social actions that address the challenges of vulnerable public housing areas (social comprehensive plans for the area)
2. Better balance in the composition of residents
 - Stop of allocating refugees to ghettos and vulnerable housing areas
 - Stop of allocating people from non-EEA countries to ghetto areas
 - Requirement for adequate housing for family reunification tightened
 - Easier access to housing in ghetto areas for wealthy residents
 - Strengthened opportunities to reject unemployed housing applicants

- Efforts to ensure that former prison inmates are not assigned housing in the ghetto areas
 - All housing organisations should contribute to a balanced composition of residents in the municipality
 - Mixed form of ownership and mixed composition of residents
 - Eviction of tenants who severely violate house rules
 - Right of challenge for municipalities and housing organisations (the government will propose an amendment to the general housing act to give municipalities and housing organisations the right to challenge existing regulations that may hinder measures to combat or prevent ghettoisation)
 - Relocation grants for residents moving from a ghetto area
3. Strengthened action for children and young people
- Mandatory day care for bilingual children outside day care
 - Strengthened parental responsibility - more parental duties
 - Possibility of creating school districts that are not geographically contiguous
 - Full-day schools in or near deprived residential areas
 - Strengthened supervision of independent primary schools and increased focus in primary school on students with language support needs
 - Reservation of "integration spots" in schools
 - Targeting of traineeship grants to vocational schools with high numbers of pupils from, for instance, ghetto areas
4. Away from passive subsistence on public benefits
- Job centres in ghetto areas
 - Tightening of the 450-hour rule for spouses on cash benefits
 - Reduction of housing benefit as a sanction for lack of parental responsibility and failure to meet the affordability obligation
5. Tackling social fraud and crime
- National plan for police intervention in ghetto areas

- Rapid processing of legal actions against juvenile troublemakers
- Increased coordinated action against abuse of e.g. unemployment benefits, cash benefits and pensions
- Extended access to TV surveillance
- Conditional notation on young people's criminal records
- Targeted crime prevention advice. (Regeringen, 2010)

'A Denmark without parallel societies – No ghettos by 2030' (2018)

Physical demolition and conversion of deprived housing areas

1. Physically transformed residential areas
2. New possibilities for full settlement of the most deprived ghetto areas
3. Access to terminate tenancies in case of sale of housing in deprived areas

More robust control over who can live in deprived housing areas

4. Stop municipal allocation of social welfare recipients to deprived housing areas
5. Mandatory flexible renting in vulnerable housing areas
6. Lower grants for new residents in ghetto areas
7. Stop relocation of integration benefit recipients
8. Cash reward for municipalities that succeed in integration efforts

More police intervention and higher penalties to fight crime and create more security

9. More police intervention in particularly deprived residential areas
10. Higher penalties in certain areas (increased penalty zone)
11. Criminals out of the ghettos

A good start in life for all children and young people

12. Mandatory day care to ensure better knowledge of the language before starting school
13. Better distribution in day-care centres
14. Targeted language tests in 0. grade
15. Sanctions for low-performing primary schools
16. Strengthened parental responsibility for the forfeiture of the child benefit and the parents' responsibility
17. Better distribution of pupils in 'gymnasiums'

18. Criminalisation of re-education trips
19. Tougher approach to domestic violence
20. Early detection of vulnerable children
21. Stricter sanctions for violation of the special extended reporting obligation

Government follows up on action against parallel societies

22. Three special ghetto representatives with the necessary competences. (Regeringen, 2018)

APPENDIX C – 'GHETTOLIST' CRITERIA

In the following, the criteria of the respective ghetto lists are listed (English translation of the original Danish documents).

2004

[The 'ghetto list' was not officially used yet, nonetheless the following criteria were already established]

However, the following typical characteristics of ghettos in Denmark can already be identified:

1. High proportion of working-age adults on social benefits: ghetto areas are characterised by a clear predominance of people on social benefits, while people with a permanent link to the labour market are under-represented.
2. Low level of education: people with either no education or a low level of education are clearly over-represented in ghetto areas
3. Social housing: the majority of deprived areas are to be found in the social housing sector. These are often large general areas with more than 1,500 - 2,000 residents.
4. Distorted migration patterns: a typical feature of ghettos is that the wealthier people move away from these areas, while the poorer people often stay there or, if they move, settle in other ghettos
5. Lack of private business and private investment: Finally, ghetto areas are characterised by a lack of private business and private capital. This can be explained both by the fact that ghetto areas are typically public housing areas where it is not possible to establish businesses and by the fact that the areas are generally not attractive for private investment. (Regeringen, 2004)

2010

The ghetto list includes general housing areas (with at least 1,000 residents) that meet two of the following criteria:

- The share of immigrants and descendants from non-Western countries exceeds 50%
- The share of 18–64-year-olds not in employment or education exceeds 40% (average of the last 4 years)
- Number of convictions for criminal, weapons or narcotics offences per 10,000 residents aged 18 and over exceeds 270 (average for the last 4 years). (Ministeriet for By, Bolig og Landdistrikter, 2010)

2014

[The changes to the criteria noted in the policy paper were only adopted in 2014]

The list includes general housing areas with at least 1,000 residents that meet 3 out of 5 criteria. The 5 criteria are:

1. The share of 18–64-year-olds not in employment or education exceeds 40% (average of the last 2 years)
2. The share of immigrants and descendants from non-Western countries exceeds 50%
3. Number of convictions for criminal, weapons or narcotics offences exceeds 2.70% of residents aged 18 and over (average for last 2 years)
4. The share of residents aged 30-59 with only basic education (including undeclared education) exceeds 50% of all residents in the same age group
5. The average gross income of taxpayers aged 15-64 in the area, excluding education seekers, is less than 55% of the average gross income of the same group in the region. (Ministeriet for By, Bolig og Landdistrikter, 2014)

2018

A ghetto area is a general residential area with at least 1,000 inhabitants, where the share of immigrants and descendants from non-Western countries exceeds 50% and where at least two of the following four criteria are met:

1. The share of residents aged 18-64 who are not in employment or education exceeds 40%, averaged over the last 2 years
2. The proportion of residents convicted of criminal, weapons or narcotics offences is at least 3 times the national average averaged over the last 2 years
3. The share of residents aged 30-59 who have only basic education exceeds 60% of all residents in the same age group
4. The average gross income of taxpayers aged 15-64 in the area (excluding education seekers) is less than 55% of the average gross income of the same group in the region. (Transport-, Bygnings- og Boligministeriet, 2018)

Residential areas that are listed for 4 consecutive years on the ghetto list are classified as 'severe ghettos'

APPENDIX D – OVERVIEW INTERVIEWEES

Interviews conducted with local professionals

	Role	Language	Length of recording	Setting
Interviewee A (m)	social worker in Tingbjerg	English	00:52:20	zoom, interviewed together with Interviewee B
Interviewee B (f)	professional working in Tingbjerg concerned with its external presentation	English	00:52:20	zoom, interviewed together with Interviewee A
Interviewee C (f)	professional at one of the housing associations in Tingbjerg	English	00:55:00	zoom, interviewed together with Interviewee D and Interviewee E
Interviewee D (m)	professional at the City of Copenhagen, concerned with vulnerable housing areas	English	00:55:00	zoom, interviewed together with Interviewee C and Interviewee E
Interviewee E (m)	researcher working on and in Tingbjerg	English	00:55:00	zoom, interviewed together with Interviewee C and Interviewee D
Interviewee F (f)	professional at one of the housing associations in Tingbjerg	English	00:42:22	zoom
Interviewee G (f)	professional at an NGO working with people from Tingbjerg	English	00:31:10	zoom
Interviewee H (f)	professional at an NGO working with people from Tingbjerg	English	00:15:21	zoom

Interviews conducted with residents

	Role	Language	Length of recording	Setting
Interviewee J (f)	resident; volunteer at a youth organisation in Tingbjerg	English	00:56:27	phone
<p>Her mother moved to Tingbjerg with her when she was two years old. She is now in her early twenties and calls Tingbjerg her home. She has been active in a youth organisation in Tingbjerg since 2017, which actively fights for the abolition of the ghetto list.</p>				
Interviewee K (f)	resident; vice-chairperson of a youth organisation in Tingbjerg	English	00:42:14	phone
<p>Moved to Tingbjerg with her family 11 years ago from another Danish town. She is now in her early twenties and is involved in a youth organisation in Tingbjerg and runs her own branch there.</p>				
Interviewee L (f)	founder of a youth organisation in Tingbjerg	Danish	00:33:34	in person
<p>She is in her early 20s and the founder of a youth organisation in Tingbjerg but lives herself in a neighbouring district of Tingbjerg. She moved there with her family a few years ago. As she had already been involved in voluntary work before, she also wanted to get involved in her new place of residence.</p>				
Interviewee M (f)	resident; volunteer at café in Tingbjerg	Danish	00:37:25	in person
<p>She is the head of the volunteer café in Tingbjerg and moved to the neighbourhood 2 years ago with her teenage son and younger daughter. She already knew Tingbjerg from previous volunteering in the area, but initially refused to move to Tingbjerg. Due to the tight housing market, she eventually moved there.</p>				
Interviewee N (f)	resident; volunteer in Tingbjerg	English	00:49:47	in person
<p>Moved to tingbjerg in the early 2000s when she just had a child. She is now volunteering at the café. Apart from that, she also tries to get involved in the community in Tingbjerg and strengthen it, for example by organising a flea market or keeping the area clean.</p>				
Interviewee O (m)	resident; former member of residents' committee	Danish	1:31:20	in person, interviewed together with Interviewee P
<p>In 1976, he moved to Tingbjerg with his parents and two siblings as a 5-year-old. He has moved several times within Tingbjerg. He takes advantage of various offers for exchange between residents within the neighbourhood and was once a member of the reseidents' committee.</p>				

	Role	Language	Length of recording	Setting
Interviewee P (f)	resident; member of residents' committee	Danish	1:31:20	in person, interviewed together with Interviewee O
<p>She moved to Tingbjerg in 1969, her children grew up there. She has moved within Tingbjerg and is a member of the residents' committee.</p>				
Interviewee R (f)	resident; former social worker in Tingbjerg; founder of a women organisation in Tingbjerg	Danish	00:36:42	phone
<p>She moved to Tingbjerg in 1996 and her children grew up there. As a result of her voluntary work in Tingbjerg, she was offered a job as a social worker, which she now does in another neighbourhood. In Tingbjerg she has founded an association for women and is active in 'Almen Modstand'.</p>				
Interviewee S (f)	resident; volunteer at a café in Tingbjerg	Danish / English	00:48:15	phone
<p>She is in her late 20s and moved to Tingbjerg three years ago. She previously lived in the neighbouring district, which meant she knew Tingbjerg before she moved. Besides her work, she is also involved in the café.</p>				

APPENDIX E – TRANSCRIPTS

Interviewee A & Interviewee B

Wednesday, 9. June 2021

interview conducted through zoom

[The interview was conducted both in the context of my thesis and as a part of another research project. Hence, another 4CITIES student was present]

I1: Levke

I2: Kriti

Interviewee A

Interviewee B

[Introduction to the project and the aim of the interview, oral consent to start the recording]

I1: As we are such a small group, and basically as the two of us, we want to invite you to speak most. We would ask you to just interact, maybe add something on what the other was saying, ask follow up questions, so we perceive ourselves more being the moderator today, asking maybe some follow up questions, or asking a bit more - going into detail on things we kind of identified beforehand, but apart from that it's very much you we would invite to just share as much as you like. Yeah ... So Interviewee B was already introducing her work, and the different hats she is wearing in Tingbjerg, so maybe Interviewee A, you might just continue and also tell a bit about what you do in Tingbjerg, how it relates maybe also to the redevelopment.

Interviewee A: Yes, sure. So I work for Socialservices in the municipality, and we are an outgoing team within the bigger framework of the administration of the social work. We work in different kinds of neighbourhoods, and I primarily work in Tingbjerg together with my colleague F. We mostly work with young teenage boys, our project is focused on crime prevention. The way that we do that mostly is by employing the kids in different tasks, we have two workshops in our basement, and otherwise we will go into Tingbjerg, and maybe do work at the garden there, or do some paintings somewhere else, or work with the youth, and stuff like that. And apart from that we have a lot of, like individual counseling about jobs or school, family problems, we have group activities where we go to the cinema, we go playing hardball, or stuff like that with the kids. And I have been doing this for about 4 years. And my project has been working in Tingbjerg for 10 years.

I1: Thanks. As a kind of start, we wanted to share a collage or a picture with you, you are probably very familiar with. I hope you can see it. And we just wanted to ask you, like what you associate with this picture, maybe you can just share some things you associate with it, but also how you relate, and how your work relates to what is happening there.

Interviewee A: Yeah, so Interviewee B, I don't know, I am sure you had most to do with this picture, I've had this picture from Interviewee B at some point, and we put it up on the ... the swimming facility in Tingbjerg on the facade of that, so everyone can see what kind of ... yeah ... development is planned for the area.

Interviewee B: Yes, the housing organisation and I hired a local artist from a nearby neighborhood, who have made these kind of illustrations from other parts of the city. The large picture is hanging on the wall near the culture house, so the residents can see the development which Tingbjerg has undergone and the new buildings to come. The "hidden agenda" was to show the residents that the development and change has been ongoing from the late 50s. It was a way to show the bigger picture in a visual and positive way. And it's working pretty well, I think. Often when I go by, I see people standing there and looking and talking together and pointing on the different buildings. Then it's easy for me to have a small chat with them about the changes to come and hear their opinions. So it's been a nice way and more easy to talk about the development.

I1: When you just said 'we hired', who was the 'we', or who includes the 'we', and who decided what will be depicted on this collage?

Interviewee B: Yeah, it was a long process with a lot of cooks or chefs involved. NREP who is building, was a part of it, and KAB, all the housing associations, also fsb, and the architects, and ... I can't remember all of them, I think that's it. And I can't even remember who got the idea, it was a process for so long. But yeah, everybody who has a stake or a part of the development was, part of it.

I1: As we are talking about this change that is going to happen in the area, we wanted to ask how do you perceive the dynamics at the moment, like before, I mean yes, it's in a process at the moment, but still it's quite in the beginning. So maybe you could share a bit of how you perceive the social dynamics in the area among residents but also residents and then the outside.

Interviewee A: I think one of the interesting things now we are in, say, part two of a many-part building process, so there has been building going on on what they call the 'small square', now they are building 'big square', and when we had the building project on the small square there was a lot of ... worrying from the building company about stealing from the work site, or vandalism against the work site, and stuff like that. And also because they were worried that there was resistance in the community against their building projects. But when they finished they could conclude that this had been one of the best processes that they had at all, and that there had been none of the things that they had been worried about in the beginning. But then again I think there is a lot of - there are a lot of different kinds of resistance against the process, and Interviewee B knows a lot about that from the facebook groups and stuff where she interacts with the inhabitants. I think we had some shared experiences the last couple of weeks when talking to some of the young kids, well we've been there painting the fence around the building site, and what we see from them is that they are saying 'oh yeah, but they are gonna build, and they are gonna build like expensive apartments for people not like us, mainly for white Danes'. So at least at teenage-level, there is this feeling that this is a development project which .. with the sole goal of changing the buildup of the inhabitants of the area.

I2: If I may ask, when you say there are different types of resistances, are there broader themes as to the kinds of resistances that there are?

Interviewee A: I think Interviewee B would be better to answer this, but obviously there will be a resistance for the reasons that I just mentioned with the younger boys. There will also be people who have the building project very near to their front door, and therefore their kids can't sleep, or noise related problems. Also there are infrastructural problems when building and when having so many big trucks driving through the neighbourhood which also creates anxiety for people with smaller kids.

Interviewee B: Yeah, and then there is a whole group of elderly residents who remember how it was back in the days when they moved in, when everything was better. They also have a dislike towards people who has moved here over the last 10 years or so. Some of these elderly residents are racist towards these people. They have a lot of resistance for change and for people who don't look like them. This group of residents of course don't want anybody to change the building environment and certainly not build new townhouses in their backyard. This combined with all the follow effects of the building procedure or development, like Interviewee A says with the noise and the dust and the infrastructural problems, and their bus stop is suddenly somewhere else when they wake up is of course affecting them and their feelings towards the development to come. So yeah, there is this group of elderly people, and then there is, of course just as ... in general, a lot of people who are sad that their backyard is gonna be smaller and other people are gonna move in there, just outside their windows. There is also another group, which is, I don't know whether you have heard about it, but there is a lot of apartments which houses people with disabilities, and they are going to be replaced or resettled in other apartments, so they can build new apartments. The residents will be offered to move back in the new apartments, but as it looks now it will be at a higher rent and maybe in a smaller apartment than before. There is a lot of problems with that. But so they are group who fight for the right to stay in their apartments, and a lot of people from other parts of the city are supporting them, for example the unification Almen Modstand, so there is a lot going on about especially that part of Tingbjerg.

Interviewee A: Of course Almen Modstand also connects this to a racist discourse in Danish [inaudible] and the ghetto laws and stuff like that, so they tried [inaudible] the things which are quite small and happening in Tingbjerg into a broader national perspective.

Interviewee B: Yeah, exactly.

I1: This 'bigger' discourse is then also taken up by the residents, or is it more giving a frame to what they claimed before already. Like what was there before: was it Almen Modstand that came in, or was it the residents and then Almen Modstand kind of, took on their claims and supported it, framing it differently.

Interviewee B: It took a while before Almen Modstand took on the case. The residents had already made comments in the local newspaper and complained to the housing organisation and municipality before

Interviewee A: I think Almen Modstand developed first, and of course ... like looked into where they could organise people, and Tingbjerg was of course one of the main things, but then of course it takes a local turn when you have this local ... event which is the disabled houses which are going to be torn down. And then a lot of their focus was shifted in that direction.

Interviewee B: Yeah.

I2: Do they formally contact initiatives like Ny Start?

Interviewee A: No. No no. Also because we do social work with the teenagers much more than we do anything which is really housing related.

I1: Now talking about - also Interviewee A what you mentioned that there is this perception among the youngsters that it's like there may be a dynamic in the end that is a 'we' against 'them' or, 'we, the old inhabitants' against the ... or in contrast to the ones moving in now, is this something you are concerned with in your work already at this stage, or is it something that is going to change your work in the foreseen future?

Interviewee A: Well, as it talks into the broader political narrative, that's the thing that we worry about. That you - we get created this ... it's a double sided dynamic between Danish people on the one side and immigrants on the other side. Almost doesn't matter where people are from when they are immigrants, they ... or maybe Muslims on the one side, it doesn't matter whether these people are Muslim or not, they are immigrants so they are Muslim, and you have Danes on the other side. So of course the question is ok, we got Danish people moving in, and for us that's a major thing that we work with, trying to dissolve this whole narrative and framing the kids in another identity than just 'I'm a Muslim, and I'm something else than the majority population in Copenhagen'. And ... So for us I think it's a lot about clearing up myths with what is actually the focus of this project, because of course you can't deny that this is also an aspect that ... the politicians want richer, more employed, Whiter ... no one would say that, but it's implied, residents to move in. But also there are a lot of myths going around about how - well then if you are brown it's impossible for you to move in. And that kind of discrimination is impossible within the current jurisdiction ... or the judicial framework, so it is also about saying 'no, that can't be true, it is impossible that your sister isn't allowed to move in here'. And trying to clear up those things, and trying to distinguish between what is said from politicians on one side, and what is the reality that you are going to live in. And it's also a lot for the people that I work with, for the kids that I work with, it's very much a question about timeframe: How long are they going to build? Will I be able to move in to any of these houses? Where am I going to live when I am twenty-somewhat? And I think for them it's also a question about not yet understanding how long is this actually going to take, because also you have these, of course the different numbers in the year 2023 these things are going to be finished, everybody knows that it's probably not true, and it's gonna be delayed because major infrastructure projects always are.

Interviewee B: I am concerned that it is going to be a A- and a B-Team out here, when the new people move in, and I hear that the residents already talk about it as 'them' and 'us'. There was an example from the facebook group, which is called 'Us in Tingbjerg', where residents were discussing parking spaces, which is highly charged issue here in Tingbjerg, and they said that 'of course, I'm not gonna say hi and welcome to a person who moves in and steals my parking space' So is already discussions about how to welcome the new residents .. yeah ... and that was just like a small example, but I can hear when I talk to residents, that they are very much clear ... or like - how do you say 'bevidst'?

Interviewee A: Conscious

Interviewee B: Conscious about ... yeah ... the people who are going to move in here and the fact that they most likely are more resourceful or have more money or a longer education compared to the people who live here now. So I think it's going to be difficult to try and prevent this A- and B-Team problem, because it's already in people's minds that there are a big difference between them and the new people who are stealing their gardens, and their view and stealing their parking spaces. But it's difficult to predict how it's going to be. Of course we and the people in the development team hired by the housing organisation KAB t are trying to avoid this from happening, but it's difficult to control I think.

Interviewee A: It is very difficult to control as the new apartments cannot be almene boliger. So it's gonna be substantially higher and a lot of people living in Tingbjerg now will not be able to afford living in the new apartments. And that's just a fact and they know it.

Interviewee B: Yeah. And the new residents have newer cars and maybe two cars, there is going to be a lot of problems there I think, because it's going to be so visual, so that difference between the new and the old is going to be very obvious. We had some incidents with the new residents over at Small Square where the first new apartments which was not social housing apartments, where the big expensive cars, or the new cars, they got scratched with keys, and the older shitty cars were left alone, and then there was a whole discussion about 'is it because they don't like us?' one the new residents said. But I don't know if there was any relation or if it was random ... Small example, not a general picture as far as I know.

I1: Was there then any initiative from your side to kind of prevent this 'we' 'them' rhetoric, but more kind of involving the residents also at these early stages of development?

Interviewee B: Me and a resident was about to organise a big dinner for the new and the old residents near and in Small Square. We were making the invitations when all the corona-related restrictions started. So we had to postpone the plans. We are probably going to organise a picnic by the lake instead here in the late summer time. That's kind of the only initiative, I can think of, which could prevent the 'we'/them' rhetoric. Let them meet each other as often as possible, so maybe they will start talking and then relate to each other and get an understanding of each other.

Interviewee A: But in a bit broader picture, the reason why we're painting the fences outside of the building site is also to try to engage people more, especially the young people, in feeling that this is also their project, that they contributed something to it.

Interviewee B: Yeah, exactly. And to show all the other residents different picture of the boys doing something for the community.

I1: Would you say it has been 'successful' so far in engaging residents?

Interviewee B: Again the greater picture? All development? No [laughs]. As I hear from a lot of residents is that they didn't have any say from the start. And they can't see themselves or their opinions being a part of the whole development, because everything is already planned and on a high political level. And the only thing I can say to them is that there is an opportunity

for participation - or they can participate or give their opinions, when they do the small shared gardens in-between the houses where they build, they can have a say in how the garden is gonna be. But that's like a small spot for engagement. As it looks like now, that's the only thing I can see where the residents have a say in how it's going to be.

I1: And do people use these forums that are provided for them to participate, or do they say 'ok, it's just such a small part that I can participate that I don't want to participate at all'? Do you feel like there is a certain dynamic in this?

Interviewee B: I don't know yet, because they didn't start it yet. I can't remember when it is, but it's not now. But they had some small meetings in the gardens some weeks ago, where development team invited people to come down and hear more about it. And there were a lot of interested residents who wanted to be a part of it, but some of them to say that they were against the project in the first place.

I1: Interviewee A, you mentioned that you also do a lot of projects with the youngsters in the community garden. And yesterday we learned that the community garden is also a place of redevelopment. Is there therefore also something that you as a social worker kind of ... not feed into the resistance, but maybe try to formulate your claims also for having this space, or a certain space in general for youngsters in the area?

Interviewee A: Mh ... Good question ... Yeah, I don't know, it was one of the ... of course there are also different young groups, and we have one group of young adults who might not sometimes - maybe be selling some hash or doing other stuff which is not on the right side of the law ... and they used to hang out outside of the local kiosk. And that's been torn down, so ... there was a lot of talking about where are they going to be. And the kiosk is in a container, and they are just hanging out outside, I don't think ... it's not optimal, not that the situation before that was optimal with their place of hanging out, but that's the way it has become, and I think it is very difficult to move them anywhere. And then on the other hand we have more of the kids that we work with, who have different locations where they shift around and they hang out there. But none of these areas are ... yeah ... are affected by the building sites. At least not right at the moment.

I1: We now talked a bit more about what is the dynamics in the neighbourhood, but we were also interested about the outreach beyond the neighbourhood, so the image of Tingbjerg, how this influences your work, but also how this influences people working in or with Tingbjerg, maybe even those considering moving there. So as a - just a small introduction question, is your work also concerned to bridge Tingbjerg to other areas of the city, to other residents, to other people in general?

Interviewee B: Yeah, for me it is a big part of my job. Mostly because the culture house and the things we do, the concerts and the activities for kids and stuff, we try to invite other people to come and see Tingbjerg, because it's a part of the strategy to get people to come here and see Tingbjerg, because a lot of people have prejudices towards this place, as a result of many years of bad media coverage and sadly also gang activity such as shooting episodes but, yeah, so it's a part of the whole strategy to get people to come here, to see it and also to ... to tell all the good stories from this neighbourhood in the local newspaper and also the bigger newspapers, to try and push a bit to people's prejudices. And of course with this development there is going to be a lot of other stories you can tell from this area, and hopefully all of them are not about shootings and other problematic stories like that, but it can also be about the development, or the new square, or an interview with a new resident - which is in another and more positive frame ... But mostly we try to get people to come here. We conducted a survey, it was a big questionnaire where around 2.000 Copenhageners answered, and it was clear that a lot of them, a majority of them, like 90 % of them, think that Tingbjerg has issues with crime, crime-related problems, and people who live here, or visit can't feel safe walking around. And all of them had never been here before. That's like a typical picture. And none of them wanted to move here. We had a question about that, and none of them wanted to. And their reasoning for that was Tingbjerg's bad reputation. It is definitely a vicious circle that keeps on going and going. And I think maybe that a good thing that could come out of the whole development, is that we can maybe break that vicious circle. And not only because different people move here, with maybe less social problems, but also just because we can change the stories to more positive ones, maybe. I hope that some of the new residents will take active part in changing the bad reputation and that they have resources to participate and create new positive stories from Tingbjerg. Maybe, we will have to wait and see. The bad reputation will not change over night.

Interviewee A: Yeah, from my chair I work very much in the opposite direction, so we're trying to take the kids out of Tingbjerg, and take them other places. And that of course also has a double effect, both showing the kids other parts of the city, other activities that they might not see naturally near Tingbjerg, and also introducing other people to kids from Tingbjerg, and letting them see that these kids are not any different from all the other kids that go to different kinds of activities. But when ... when the kids I work with ... a lot of time when they are applying for a job, they will not .. they will say they are not from Tingbjerg, because they know there is a prejudice against the area and they will say Brønshøj instead, because that's not lying, but it gives a much better introduction to yourself. [inaudible]. And I think, so we are, like when I started two years ago TV2 Lorry made a ... small clips about some of the inhabitants in Tingbjerg, and one of the things that there was a lot of talk about at the meeting that there was, the showing of these small film clips, was people saying 'well yeah, but every time something happens in the vicinity of Tingbjerg, they will use a clip of Tingbjerg, they will say it is in Tingbjerg, even though all of us living in the area know that it's not. It's in Husum, or it's in Brønshøj, it's actually in Gladsaxe, but because the people living in the other parts of the country don't know these places, they will always just say it's here at our place, even though it's, it isn't.' And also another story I have- we are doing anecdotes - at one point there had been a shooting and there was a lot of police on the streets, and police which was drafted from all around the country, and a bit from the countryside, and these people of course had a lot of ... images about Tingbjerg, because they see it on TV, and they were quite worried because

there was no one on the streets and there wasn't really happening anything, and we were telling 'well yeah, this is normal, this is how it is every day, like people just walking with their kids, walking their dogs, and it's not an area where you have troubles, like maybe once every second month, or something like that, but it's just an ordinary neighbourhood like anything else', which took a while for the police to get their guards down and be 'ok, well maybe we could just have a kebab there'.

I1: Does this outside perception also influence how you do your work?

Interviewee B: I didn't hear the last bit, what did you say?

I1: Does this outsider's perspective or perception also influence how you do your work, like in which way you interact with people, who you talk to?

Interviewee B: Yeah, I think, I try to choose my words and .. and I always emphasise all the good stuff that is happening out here it's kind of - I think after like one year of working out here I got like very defensive if people talked bad about Tingbjerg, even though it was outside work. I'm stand up and defend the area, because you know everybody has negative thoughts about it, perceptions about it, and of course it has also influenced my work with colleagues from outside Tingbjerg, if they say some stupid joke or something about Tingbjerg, I'm always like 'no, that wasn't funny, stop doing that, because you are just reproducing all these bad stories and perceptions about the place'. So yeah, I think a lot about it. And also of course in my daily work, what I do, like I always, think about the outside perception and how we can change it, or how we can push a bit to people's prejudices.

Interviewee A: I think, yeah, I use a lot of time praising Tingbjerg as well. And also when people ask me 'oh where do you work?' and I say 'Tingbjerg', and then like 'oh, that must be very hard, that must be very tough', like 'nah, it's not that bad at all'. But it's also a positive side, I found that it's very easy to get funding for different kinds of projects. Write down that you work in Tingbjerg and everybody will be like 'wow, this is the most hardcore area in all of Denmark, you will get all the money'. That is a positive side as well.

I1: Well, there must be something positive about it I guess. Is there then a certain image you want to kind of transport, or is it more a positive image in general? Or are there some attributes you kind of, constantly repeat in order to counter the image the area has at this very moment.

Interviewee A: Well I think first of all, it's emphasising how quiet it is. Like how little things are happening and that ... well, young kids riding a scooter without a helmet is also not a normal sight, that is something which is an *[inaudible]* because it's not ... something you see all the time. But when ... when we have done, or the municipality has done different surveys on the area, what people themselves think is really good, they all always emphasise how green Tingbjerg is, how close it is to ... to the local park, if you can call it that, so that's also one of the things that I emphasise with people when talking about Tingbjerg, it's like a really nice place to live, because you have green fields everywhere, you have a lot of space and a lot of air, and that's very nice.

Interviewee B: Yeah, the same here. The location.

I1: Is this also something that is valued by the residents? Or would they say something very different to the same question?

Interviewee A: Yeah that's what we see on the questionnaires. When people are asked what do they like most about living in Tingbjerg, they'll answer that the green spaces, and also the people. They like their neighbours, they like living in a mixed community.

Interviewee B: Yeah, and they like that everybody says 'hi' and is very low-key, like a small village kind of atmosphere.

Interviewee A: And I think that's also .. when talking about what the people fear with new people coming in, that it is a really ... yeah, kind of relaxed working-class area, and people can just take on their sweatpants and go to the local supermarket and buy whatever they want, and no one is gonna judge them. And everybody knows the local alcoholics, and they just are a part of the picture of the ... of the area. And people worry that ... maybe that could change, that people would be more uptight, that you would need to put on your make-up before going to the supermarket, or something like that.

I1: Yeah, that's interesting indeed.

I2: And also if I may ask, are there particular points that children bring up when they go and see different areas as part of the programme, when they are taken outside?

Interviewee A: Yeah, well ... If we go to very affluent neighbourhoods, they are very impressed by how big houses can be. And ... yeah, and be thinking about how many people could live anywhere like that. And you will also go to other areas where you have the almene boliger, and they will say 'ok, these are people like us, people living there like us', because you know from the kind of houses that there are, from the kind of people, you know when you go to an area that you might have friends who also 'yeah, I know a guy who lives here', whereas you will have other areas of the city where none of the boys that we work with have any ... they don't know anyone who lives there. And that, it's quite strange for them to go to these kind of areas.

I1: For us I think it's like quite interesting to see how much of a closed-community feeling there is, also ... kind of supported by also the architecture or the general outline of Tingbjerg . . . So yeah, I think for us it is really interesting to see how this then is also mirrored in how people perceive their area as a small village, maybe a bit outside of the city but still part of, being part of Copenhagen. But then again, Interviewee A what you said is interesting, if young people then apply for a job because of these prejudices, they still don't refer to it as being Tingbjerg, but as being Brønshøj, so I think for us it is super interesting to see how these different scales interact and what is associated with these different scales.

Interviewee A: And of course it's a lot of pride in being from Tingbjerg, but it's the underdog's pride. It's about 'we are poor, and we are everything than all the others. But we are also more tough, and no one should come to our neighbourhood and try to stir up a fight, because we are more than them, we will be out to get them. Nobody should step on us, even though my mom is just a cleaner and my dad just drives the bus'.

I1: Are you also working a bit with this identification, that is obviously there in the area, also when now communicating to the outside what Tingbjerg is about?

Interviewee B: Can you rephrase the question? If we ... use the identification or talk into it, or?

I1: Like what I understood now from your statements is that people do identify with Tingbjerg and that there is something to be proud of, of being from Tingbjerg, is this also something that you then use for ... sounds a bit harsh, but 'marketing' reasons not, but something that is positive about Tingbjerg?

Interviewee B: Yeah, we always try to use the name Tingbjerg in a lot of things we do. When I write articles, I try to interview a resident here, and get their perceptions into the article. I also do voxpops where I ask people where their favorite spot in Tingbjerg and use this in smaller articles

Interviewee A: It's difficult to switch that underdog's pride into something which anyone else can use for anything. Because if you are trying to 'marketing' - market Tingbjerg for a place to live, it's not a good marketing point to say 'well, the people here are really proud of living here and they don't like outsiders'. And I don't think - that's also a bit of the history of Tingbjerg, because the residents to come here as the first wave of people were being displaced from the center of the city and being moved out to Tingbjerg. And they came from the same areas. And as far as I understand the history, a lot of the people who come to Tingbjerg came from like one street and a lot of the other people who live on the other side of the water in Husum, they came from another street. And they have been hating each others since the 50s, because they were fighting when they were kids and living somewhere in Vesterbro and they ... they have taken these grievances with them and even though most of the population has been changed and these people are now living in elderly care homes, you still have this feeling which has been a part of Tingbjerg forever. And the same thing goes on with ... with the ... because for the young kids a lot of the identity also in some sort of way connects with some of the gangs, and they have ... a number or a tag which you can use, and the kids will use these tags to identify themselves as being with Tingbjerg. But all of this existed before any immigrants moved in to Tingbjerg, before it came - was an immigrant community at all, and was just later adopted by the people who came to live in Tingbjerg.

I1: Kriti, you look like you wanted to say something?

I2: No, I was just saying that's very interesting, that's very interesting that it translates through generations.

I1: Maybe just as a small like, last question, topic, in your work, who are the people who participate but also who are the residents who don't participate at all, like who you don't reach with your projects or your initiatives, and also the communication you do at the Kulturhus. Is there a general trend or something you observed?

Interviewee B: Our biggest group of people who come here are young people and school kids, because we are also a school library. They use the house primarily. And then we have a bit of difficulties to attract the older generations, especially people with another ethnic background than Danish. But actually when we have concerts and other cultural activities, then it's primarily also people from outside Tingbjerg who come, even though we were convinced that it's something that the majority of people who live here would wanted to come to, then they don't. In order to get more people to participate in our activities, we invite the local associations to join us in planning of the activity e.g. the local café makes the food before a concert/dinner evening in the culturehouse.

I1: Is this something your work is also then concerned with, how to maybe provide for a more mix of these two groups, or is it ok as it is at the moment?

Interviewee B: We have it as a part of our strategy to attract different kind of groups to the house. And we talked a lot about how we can be a house or a spot where the new residents and the old residents can meet. We are planning dinner evenings where they can sit down with their neighbours and build relations. And we also talked about how we could arrange guided tours in the area, where the residents who live now can show the new residents around, and so they can also have a relation to them and maybe start talking together afterwards. We haven't done it yet, but we are talking a lot about how we can do it, and how we can be a house where everybody can come and meet each other across differences. Of course our goal is to be a house for everybody.

I1: And Interviewee A, I assume you have a kind of set target group with your project, but is there still the idea to also include other parts of society?

Interviewee A: Yeah, as I said we are trying to integrate the kids that we work with in different aspects of society. So it's ... if it's a nerdish LARP-culture, we try to integrate some of the kids into that culture, or if they are really into roller skating, try to integrate them into that. But that's trying to move them in some sort of way out of our project and in to something else, because what we do a lot with them is also trying to - we are not trying to mix groups too much, because we know from theory that it might be very plausible that if you put some kids that were - that are functioning really well with some kids who are functioning less well, then maybe the more well-functioning kids will pull the others up, and this is not what's happening ever, it's almost always the other way around. So we're mostly trying just to work with ... with groups who know each other already and trying to work with group dynamics inside of these groups. Yeah ... and that isn't that much about trying to ... integrate them with a lot of the other things. Also I think that's - we try to keep them in school and then the school does the mixing part with all other kinds of the city. Or we try to get them to start football or do some other kinds of hobby-stuff, and they will meet other people there.

I1: Ok, keeping an eye on the time, is there anything else you want to add that we didn't touch upon yet but what you feel like is super important to tell us, to share about Tingbjerg? [silence] Otherwise ... Doesn't have to be. I think you already shared so much with us, and we once again want to thank you very much for taking the time today, for being with us, for sharing your stories and anecdotes, but also your expertise with us.

[Farewell, end of recording]

Interviewee C & Interviewee D & Interviewee E

Tuesday, 8. June 2021

interview conducted through zoom

[The interview was conducted both in the context of my thesis and as a part of another research project. Hence, another 4CITIES student was present]

I1: Levke

I2: Kriti

Interviewee C

Interviewee D

Interviewee E

[Introduction to the project and the aim of the interview, oral consent to start the recording]

I1: So thank you already for this... So today, we wanted to focus more on - well, I'll start differently. We wanted to follow a more explorative approach, so we have some topics we would like to discuss with you, but we are also very much open for your input. And as we are such a small group today, we would also like you to ask, to - or invite to interact with each other and ask each other follow up questions and discuss with each other. So we perceive our role more as being a moderator, whereas you are the main focus of today, because you have way more experience and I hope a lot to share about Tingbjerg. Yeah, to get started, as we sometimes come into these discussions with a lot of different hats, we just wanted to ask you whether you could shortly introduce yourself, what you're doing, how you would describe your job, how it is connected to Tingbjerg. Just as a starter, maybe you also if you worked with each other before, that would be very interesting for us. So yeah, I invite Interviewee C, may you start? ... Okay, I'm sorry, I somehow can't hear you.

Interviewee C: Is it better now?

I1: It's perfect. Thank you.

Interviewee C: Okay. I'll start by apologising that my working English in this area is not really that developed. I work in one of the housing companies that are active in Tingbjerg, and I work - I'm a head of the social actions we have in the area. But I don't work myself in the area, but I work in the housing company.

I1: Okay, thanks.

Interviewee D: Should I continue?

I1: Yes, please, that would be great.

Interviewee D: Yeah. I think I represent the municipality, the City of Copenhagen ... So my task is more administrative in the sense that I don't do like social work in the areas, I sit in the office and, you know, write up administrative documents to politicians and CEOs, etc. So ... so my main role with Tingbjerg is that I kind of ... I am supposed to be a coordinated entrance for the housing companies and the social work done there, and kind of connect that to the rest of the municipal departments, because there's a lot of things going on, obviously, in a city as big as Copenhagen. So there's a lot of different initiatives going on. So coordination is kind of an important word here. So I'm also working closely together with Interviewee C also in social comprehensive plans in other parts of Copenhagen. So we know one another, and I also know Interviewee E in the sense that also I have a past as a researcher also in disadvantaged neighbourhoods. And I guess Interviewee E is also a researcher still [laughs] we haven't been talking a lot these days. But yeah, so we also quite, you know, we also know each other well, I guess.

Interviewee E: Right. Yeah. So I'm - I guess I'm here because I'm doing a PhD study on ... on redevelopment, this event, social housing estates, and I have a particular focus on social sustainability and co-creation, so - and co creation and this sense is - I'm mainly in my work focusing on how different professionals work together to co-create opportunities for inviting residents and resident perspectives into the redevelopment process. And as Interviewee D said, we know each other from before and actually Interviewee C and I have an interview date set next week, I think. So ... in terms of kind of working with the residents in the area, I'm not - I don't really do that much. So I'm basically knowledgeable about the different professional agents working in the estate. Yeah.

I1: Great. Thanks so much. We have a short thing we would like to share with you ... Which I somehow can't open now ... Do you see this picture? [shows collage 'Tingbjerg under development'] I guess you all know it also. So just as a starter for the conversation maybe, we wanted to invite you to share what you associate with it, but also what the slogan means to you, what the pictures maybe means to you just whatever comes to your mind, maybe just as a short introduction to what we are going to talk about today. Whoever wants to start?

Interviewee D: Yeah, I could start. I think I focus mainly on the ... I mean, the letters and the symbol in the upper right corner. Because it's kind of - yeah, because it kind of symbolises that the development of Tingbjerg has been going on for quite quite a while. And there's actually some quite well developed ... cooperative ties between the housing organisations in the area and the strategic objectives of these housing organisations, and also a kind of ... mutual strategic consent between these housing organisations and the city of Copenhagen. So, and I think that's pretty much a precondition for doing a kind of development that's supposed to, you know, happen in Tingbjerg. That's kind of the ... the strategic consensus about the future of Tingbjerg overall. And that has been going on for quite a while, I guess. I mean, it's - Interviewee C knows more about the history, but at least, you know, seven, eight or so years. So that's what I associate with this picture.

I1: Just a very short follow up question. If you speak about strategic consensus, may I ask consensus between whom, like who was included in this?

Interviewee D: I think mainly the housing organisations, in my terms, and also the City of Copenhagen. So that's, ... I mean, that's a strategic consensus, that's what I mean by that, that's kind of the organisations and their objectives. And of course, the housing organisation in Denmark cannot do much unless they have a local democratic legitimacy in the area. So, in that sense, I also think there's a quite strong mandate for this development going on. Obviously, there will always be people who would like development to go in different directions, etc. That's also kind of the main - I mean, that's also a facet about democracy that there's disagreement and strife and perhaps conflict about this and that, but I think it's an overall that's, that's what I think about that, you know, strategic consensus amongst organisations.

I1: Thank you for the clarification.

Interviewee C: Yeah. I would say that the picture for me, it also symbolises what Interviewee D said, and then it's also about how you want to brand this area in the future, the whole branding of a green area with a lot of space, not as ... more like a suburb than a part of the city. So it's green, and there's a lot of space, the air is clean. And so I think it symbolises that a lot. And it also, of course, when you look closer, it symbolises all the different initiatives in the area, the different buildings and ... the church, the nursing home, all the things that are going to be established in the area.

Interviewee E: Well, I think I agree very much what Interviewee C and Interviewee D said, but I think also to me it kind of symbolises the ... the diversity, the kind of harmonious diversity that is kind of ... the narrative that the development is trying to put forward. That Tingbjerg is kind of changing from this more monofunctionalistic, mono-tenure enclave to a diverse ... neighbourhood with so many different functions, so many different typologies, so many different kinds of people living together, and, as depicted here in a very kind of harmonious way. So I think that's also a kind of story that this picture is trying to tell.

Interviewee C: I agree. And I also think it's quite interesting, because when you walk around in Tingbjerg, you don't see the diversity of the houses, as you see on this picture. In real life, when you walk around in the area now, most buildings look alike. And in this picture, it looks like all the buildings are different in like in any other way. It's so it's not - it's a vision, I think, not description of the area, it's a vision, also to attract new citizens to the area, about this is going to be a village in itself, a whole village, but very close to Copenhagen. And to see that as an attraction of the area.

I1: As we speak - or this picture, also, as you mentioned, was more referring to the build aspect of Tingbjerg. How would you nowadays describe the social dynamics in the area, maybe, as it is today, but also, because you spoke about perspectives and how it's going to be framed in the future. So maybe you can introduce us to your perception of social dynamics in the area today, but also how it is envisioned in the future.

Interviewee E: I think it's really difficult to say a lot about it. I'm not really deep into the social dynamics, but from what I - from what I experience working there and also talking to people, it's ... there are basically different fractions that kind of ... organise around different approaches to the redevelopment as it is now. So there are different - there's definitely a very active fraction of people who are against the whole redevelopment. And also there are groups of residents that approve and think that it's a good idea that .. that something new needs to happen. And I think the most ... the point of view that I've been meeting, most times, is kind of people being sad that the green qualities that they experience, that these big green spaces outside of the windows, that they are going to be - that they will disappear, that there'll be, first of all, a lot of construction work going on right outside the windows, but also that the view that they have is going to disappear, and people are going to be able to look into their apartments. So this kind of, I think ... a great deal of sadness about some of the changes that are going to happen and not so ... not so much generally focus on what's ... what this is going to bring, what qualities it's going to bring to our neighbourhood.

Interviewee C: I think in the housing companies, there's worry that there will be a division between the new citizens and the citizens who live there already. And we're trying to ... make an organisational structure so that people will meet and have the, what is it called?, joint ownership of some of the local areas and some of the communal houses, so that people will come together more in a 'this is our area'. So more than it's 'this is our buildings or houses'. And I think that's a big worry. For those people who live there today, and also for people who are moving - going to move in ... how we're going to - because now it's a no sort of, it's an equal city, everybody's on an equal terms. And it's - that's going to change and there's a very - especially in our housing companies about how that division is going to play out in the future.

Interviewee D: Yep. Social dynamics, I mean, Interviewee C you may correct me if I'm wrong, but there's also a kind of - there's a network, it's perhaps a bit different for what you're talking about, but there's a network, some - how do you say it? - networks of safety, what you would say. We have four or five of those in Copenhagen, I guess, in which, you know, the police, specialised social workers and housing representatives, for the social comprehensive units, etc, are represented, and I think it's in ... in terms of safety, of feeling secure, I think Tingbjerg is in a pretty good development. I mean, that's up enjoying these networks meeting for the last one, one and a half year. And it's, it's pretty much a steady picture in terms of crime and insecurity. Of course, I mean, there are places that people don't feel safe. But in general terms, I think Tingbjerg is actually in a - it's pretty much perceived as a ... fairly quiet and fairly safe neighbourhood. There are other parts of the Copenhagen where feeling of insecurities is small, kind of exaggerated, or what you would say. So just in terms of that, I think it's a it's a quite, it's a decent neighbourhood and that term. In the second terms, I think, also, that's also something I've been talking to Interviewee C and G. K. about, and also Interviewee E, about these different type of homeowners. And I think it's a - I think those running the development process in Tingbjerg has been ... I mean, I think the housing organisations are dealing with this issue of different homeowner associations and the limit between different norms and different positions quite at depth. I think, I mean, the - Interviewee C correct me if I'm wrong, but I think you have, if not already established, but you have plans of establishing a kind of a joint homeowner association, so you don't have these different types of ownership conflict in between each other because otherwise you could have, you know, new homeowners joining with other interests than the already living residents and that could lead to conflicts, how to use the green spaces, what are the norms, what could you do, this and that. So you need to have some kind of overall organisation to deal with these conflicts. And I think it's ... I think the housing associations have pretty much focused on, on solving that potential problem in the future.

Interviewee C: We hope [laughs].

Interviewee E: I think seeing - seeing this from a resident perspective, a lot of things that have been going on in Tingbjerg up until now have been mainly been going on on a strategic level. So I think for - for many residents it's still ... it's still not really evident how they are going to be involved or integrated into this process, how are they going to be - have their voices heard. And so I think a lot of ... this kind of feeling of not being really included, leads to some of the negativity that we experience. And some of the strong symbols of, of this involves, of course, the green spaces outside people's homes, also, particularly the communal garden, that is kind of a really important green urban meeting space and a kind of hub for, for many different social activities, also different kind of NGO projects and other types of projects, particularly the social comprehensive plan of the estate. Right? So - and this communal garden is going to be a building site in about a year from now. So all the activities there are - a main share of those activities is going to have to move elsewhere. And that's something that really generates ... a lot of turmoil, I think we can say, and for now, there's a hearing process going on. So the plan, the building plan for the state hasn't really been passed yet politically. So there's still mobilisation going on, for people who are for the plan as it is, and for people who are kind of against it, and particularly trying to preserve this particular area where this garden is. So there is still kind of I think, a sense of inclusiveness, it hasn't really been decided what's going to happen with some of these spaces that people are feeling affiliated to, or feeling that they are socially kind of involved in.

I1: Was there then any initiative, like whenever there was - like first of all, was there participation so far from the residents? And if there was from whom was it initiated? Was it the housing organisations or the people who asked for it? Could you maybe say something about that?

Interviewee C: Well, the housing organisations are democratically organised. So it's local citizens who are in the board of the housing organisations. So in that sense, they have been part of it from the start. But on the other hand, the whole plan is ... partly local initiative and partly from the housing organisations and partly legislation because of the whole ghetto legislation. So it's - it's a bit of both I think. But of course, there has been local citizens in the housing board that have been in on the plans from the start and has been followed - following the plans. But it's not been sort of 'you can decide anything', there's been a lot of limits to what you can decide locally. Now we're trying to - with the social actions we have in the area, we're trying to develop - what you call them - networks that can work if we move them and which can be sustainable during the move, so that we involve people in, for example, the garden, where are we going to move to, what do we need in the new garden? Where can we replace it? Can we make it better? So that is a process that is starting now. On the same time, people are afraid that things are closing. So the whole new ideal is not there yet, but people know that they're going to lose something that they have now and that is, of course, frustrating people.

Interviewee E: I think in terms of involving residents so far, also, I know that developers or the investors have had - I don't know if you could call it involvement, but at least they have interviewed a lot of residents. And they've also had some different meetings where people could come and share their point of view. So and this is something that housing organisations were very keen on, kind of ... on making the investors do these things, and they have actually complied with that. So there's knowledge about what resident preferences are in different ... in different questions. And that has kind of been integrated into the path. And also there's been hearings. But mainly, this is more like, information style, what - at least what I've seen, so it's not so involving, I think.

Interviewee C: There is a team, the housing - what you call - byudviklings team, which is supposed to work a lot with the citizens and involvement in the process. But they are still in early days, I think.

I1: Was there any initiative also coming from the Copenhagen municipality, or was it all kind of set within Tingbjerg and the housing organisations? Interviewee D, maybe?

Interviewee D: I'm not that familiar with the process, because as I said earlier, I mean, it's ... well, it becomes a bit, you know, anecdotic or what do you say? But I mean, it - I mean, we had the ghetto legislation in 2018. But prior to that, there was also strategic plans of developments, where ... that have been going on at least since two thousand and I don't know like -ten, -eleven, -twelve, something like that, in which the housing organisations also had kind of made strategic plans of developing Tingbjerg. So it's - it has been a quite long process. And I think, I don't know the internal or the history of this dynamic, but I think it has been a recurrent kind of theme between the housing organisations developing this area and well ... so it's pretty much I mean, it's - the housing organisations pretty much own the land, etc. So I mean, it's not it's not the city of Copenhagen's kind of developments projects. I mean, it's a private part. It is the housing organisation that owns some lands, obviously, with some regulations and restrictions. They are kind of the project owners. And we have to, of course, as the city of Copenhagen, make sure that it lives up to certain planning legislations and stuff like that, and public hearings and all the official stuff. But I mean it's ... in terms of project development, it's not really the responsibility of the city to kind of mobilise citizens in that respect, I think it's - of course, there's a local plan that should kind of sanction the building rights and stuff like that, and the city of Copenhagen has a general communicative and legislative, and democratically responsibility for kind of making sure that people have a possibility of making their voice heard. I mean, so - but that's not different from this project than from any other development projects going on in the city, that's pretty much, you know, same where you have urban planners sitting and looking at the development process and, you know, hearing schedules and stuff like, 'have the people been heard?', and 'what are the affected parties?', etc, etc. That's kind of, you know, the standard in doing these kind of development projects. So, and obviously the city has been doing that as well.

I1: As you also already brought up on one hand the social aspect, but then also the physical redevelopment. And we were wondering how the boligsocial helhedsplan is kind of connected to this physical redevelopment in order - you mentioned yourself the ghetto discourse and the ghetto legislation which also informs the redevelopment, but which also then informs the boligsocial helhedsplan. So we wanted to know how these two are connected, whether they supplement each other or whether they are completely unconnected. Maybe you can share a bit about that as well.

Interviewee C: I think the idea is that they supplement each other. But the the boligsocial helhedsplan is not supposed to make the citizens involvement in the physical development. For that we have another team called byudviklings team, which consists of four people I think, that are also situated locally and have that discussion. So the boligsocial helhedsplan is working together with them, of course. And we also sometimes set up relations between - if we have citizens that are generally not heard as much, look normally in public hearings, then maybe we can set something up, a meeting or a relationship so that people get to know each other or they can get a way in with these people. But the boligsocial helhedsplan is not supposed to ... do anything. Of course we are supporting the physical changes, but we're not supposed to interact in it.

I1: When you say supporting the development, like, how? I'm sorry, this is a very broad question.

Interviewee C: Yes, but for instance, we have this area called the garden or the community garden as Interviewee E referred to, in which we have a lot of projects, and a lot of NGOs work there. Some people from the municipalities - a lot of people are working there together, and that is going to change. So what we do is, we want to support the change and the establishment of that community feeling in another place. And we're not trying to encourage people to be against that change which

will come, but we'll try to make people see the opportunities in different areas or different possibilities. So in that way, we sort of support it, but yeah.

Interviewee E: There are also different other examples of, kind of, practical synergies between the social work and the redevelopment. So for instance, the redevelopment team wanted to have some hearings in some of the different courtyard areas, and they have difficulties recruiting people to come in and join these hearings. So social plan, they have a project for ... people who are out of labour, kind of a job training project. And what they do is they go around informing people how to get a COVID test etc, and they give out kits for, you know, disinfecting your hands and stuff like that. Alright, so they kind of said, 'okay, we can provide this team of unemployed people from here in Tingbjerg and they can help you go around from door to door to invite people to come to these meetings'. So this is kind of - so we're both at the same time kind of fulfilling a job training programme, but also kind of engaging people into the redevelopment. Another example is, youngsters who have kind of this leisure time job project, and they have been engaged in terms of painting all of the fences that are now around all the building sites. So there were these like big wooden board fences. And now they're - they've been painted green. And I think this is kind of on a really low practical scale. But still, it's kind of the redevelopment team and also the social workers, kind of both going out of their way to kind of join forces. This is - I mean for the redevelopment it would have been definitely both cheaper and faster to just hire some painter to do this work. And so - but this is kind of a - they see this as a way of kind of trying to engage different groups of residents. But I think there are many - sorry, now I'm just [inaudible] away here - but there are so many barriers between these different plans in terms of what are the main objectives, what is the time frame that we're working on, etc. So the social workers, they have their kind of projects that have been predefined, when they got their funding for the project. And it's difficult for them to just kind of change the whole scope of their work in order to accommodate the redevelopment. And the opportunities for combining these efforts, they kind of happen on the go, they're not really anticipated. It's kind of ideas, possibilities kind of emerge, and someone has to be very agile in terms of seizing these opportunities. And that's not always a possibility. And so - and another thing, I think, is the idea that social workers tend to work from bottom-up, they kind of see what tenants are interested in, and how can we kind of mobilise interest and resources from residents, and that's not entirely kind of easy to combine with top-down strategic urban planning where the goals are kind of set beforehand. There are some different logics also that kind of challenge these ... things that possibly could have happened, I think.

Interviewee D: I also think, I mean ... I don't know, in a more practical level, I mean, there's a lot of coordination going on. Like, for instance, the social comprehensive plan is working together with you know, kindergartens, etc. and there's some playgrounds, green spaces that are going to be, you know, building sites. So, obviously, I mean, it's also a kind of communication between the social comprehensive plan and these welfare institutions - I mean, what are we going to do when the people don't have anywhere to go and do the picnics or when the kids don't have a playground, they kind of, say, perhaps we could make some activities and other, you know, somewhere else. I mean, so it's, as Interviewee E said, it's on a practical level, but there's also some - I mean we tried when the social comprehensive plan was developed one and a half years ago, we also made this ambition, this project that young people or unemployed people from Tingbjerg, local residents, preferably, should be employed in the in construction work going on. So that it would also gain some positive social economic effects in terms of employment. So that's kind of where the social comprehensive plan - that job was kind of to, to recruit and find these young people or these unemployed people who could benefit from a job as a, you know, a handyman or craftsmen or whatever construction worker in the forthcoming kind of redevelopment process and the constructions work. So that's kind of - where there is an, you know, kind of tangible results. And on a more strategic level, I mean, probably, I don't know, legislators have kind of tried to make these two physical plans, the social plans kind of make them coherent in terms of strategic objectives. I mean ... the ghetto legislation has some strategic objectives in terms of wanting to create a social mix in the disadvantaged areas. And there's a one to one connection between the strategic objectives of the social comprehensive plan. I mean, the social comprehensive plan has to ensure that more people are employed, that the young people have better kind of verbal skills so that they can perform better in school, so they get a youth education - all kind of, you know, standard socio economic objectives, less crime, etc. So, there's coherence on a ... on a strategic objective level. So that's also kind of, you know, relation at least they work in the same direction.

Interviewee C: And we still hope the whole employment situation will solve itself. But as Interviewee E also said, there is a - there are difficulties and challenges in terms of timing and scale. Because, for instance, if we have - a few months ago, we had a citizen, resident, who really wanted to help at the construction site, he was - had been working at a similar project earlier and he has been sick for a while, and he thought maybe if he could just get a job for a few hours a week, and it was just where he lived. We thought it was a good idea, we tried to call the entrepreneurs, and they didn't write, [inaudible] 'who do we talk to?' 'who is this?'. And I mean, there's a lot of coordination just to get one person in a job. And that will be ... we have to solve it somehow, for it to actually work in the future. Whose responsibility is it, when a person comes? Because the social comprehensive plan can support these people, can find these people, we can support them in how to have a job and how to get up in the morning, what is required, how do we translate the way of - the culture at the working place. We can help with all that, but the whole coordination with the people who are actually going to build the houses and are working there every day and the different companies? That is a big unsolved issue, still how to work.

Interviewee E: I think another challenge is the different target groups that you have, because working in the social sector, the target groups are people who have social challenges, like unemployment or crime or, you know, whatever, language, substance abuse, whatever. So there would be like different programmes for these - not the redevelopment or the urban development team, they're mainly working with the kind of the mainstream target groups.

Interviewee C: Young people, yeah.

Interviewee E: So the whole kind of middle or also upper section of the residents - it's about also attracting people from the outside. So the things that are appealing or kind of relevant for the target groups that the social workers are dealing with, it's not so central, so relevant for the redevelopment crew, necessarily. I think that also kind of speaks to some of the challenges of the social mixing. Because if this - if redevelopment is mainly focused on attracting higher income groups, or more self sufficient target groups, that's also ... that's one of the reasons I think, why some resident groups don't feel so included or so ... that the redevelopment benefits their interests so much.

I1: There was just one phrase I wanted to catch up that Interviewee D just said, he said, when we develop the social comprehensive plan, so the 'we' I wanted to go a bit more deeper on that aspect. So when you ask different organisations to develop this social comprehensive plan, how does it work? Like, what informs your work? What informs what should be in the boligsocial helhedsplan? Could you maybe guide us a bit through this process of also discussion between the different institutions involved?

Interviewee C: Well, we get the primary funding from Landsbyggefonden, which is a sort of an umbrella organisation for all the public housing in Denmark. And they provide most of the funding and they have sort of headlines for what is supposed to be in a boligsocial helhedsplan. And they change every once in a while. Now we have four headlines, which is called education and chances in life, occupation, prevention of crime, what's it called? Yep. And the last one is more like citizenship and democracy. So those are the headlines we work with in the beginning. And then we have talks from the social - the housing companies with the municipality of Copenhagen, the different areas of the municipality of where would they like to contribute, where are they - are they present in the area or would they like to be? - we would very much like them to be present in the area. And some fractions of the municipality are there and they're very willing to work together and some are not. And then we try to set up common goals for where do we want to work with this in the next four years? And what do we - where do we believe we will have the most impact. Yeah ... Do you want to say something Interviewee D?

Interviewee D: I would say, I mean, that's - that was actually part of Interviewee E's I think former employment, but there has actually been a lot evaluation and validation of these social initiatives in disadvantaged neighbourhoods going on in Denmark for the last 20 years and there is a knowledge institutions social centre of social housing initiatives - Interviewee E help me out a little bit - which is basically kind of a Bible where they have kind of evaluated and assessed a lot of different initiatives. So if - I mean, all of these initiatives in a social comprehensive plan should have been assisted or validated as kind of having an impact. So it's not just you know, bottom up redeveloping, not just a new project with no effect. I mean, so there's a lot of, you know, evidence ... kind of mainstream initiatives that the social housing workers can deploy and put forth in such a comprehensive plan. So that's also an important aspect of it.

I1: As we are running a bit short of time, I think we should maybe come to the last topic that we wanted to tackle. If there's more from your side, we are very happy to hear about it later. But it was also brought up by you already, so maybe it fits into what you already talked about. Because you mentioned these different strategic objectives that are informing your work, but also - and one of it then also is, as I now kind of heard from what you said so far, is the ghetto discourse that then influences also your work in one way or the other. Could you maybe specify a bit more in which way this legislation, but also the different objectives that are connected to this new legislation also inform your work, influence what you're doing, how you're doing stuff, with whom you're working together? Maybe just a bit more elaborate on this aspect.

Interviewee D: I think in terms of Tingbjerg, it kind of enforced a development process. I mean, that's - perhaps I mean, correct me if I'm wrong, but there was already prior to this ghetto plan - there were already these, as I mentioned before, strategic plans of developing Tingbjerg in some way or another, but the ghetto legislation kind of ... have these rather strict limits in terms of what percentage of family dwelling should be in the area within a 10 year span of time, right? So I think it's in terms of densification, and etc., in terms of housing units, these kind of, I mean ... there are supposed to be more like - more new construction work going on than what was actually planned before through the ghetto legislation. So that was kind of one of the main things that I kind of experienced when the ghetto legislation, kind of was supposed to be implemented. But Interviewee C, do you have anything?

Interviewee C: I just wanted to say that the headlines I mentioned before, in the social comprehensive plan is directly from the ghetto plan, so it's ... in the legislation, we're defined as a 'ghetto' if a certain percentage does not have an education, or if they're not earning enough or if they're unemployed, or if they're - I don't know the English term for 'efterkommer af en anden etnisk baggrund' it - resident of non-Western ethnic background. So - and of course we can't really change people's ethnic background, but the other criterias we can work with. So, of course, that is the whole outline of our work, is derived from there.

Interviewee E: I think there are also two different aspects to your question. First of all, you talked about the ghetto legislation or the ghetto package, and also the ghetto discourse, and I think for - in terms of the ghetto package, it kind of ... implements a very centralistic and also a market driven development approach that everyone needs to align to. So centralistic in the sense that the government has defined or the parliament has defined the ideal ... mix, the ideal share of different tenure forms, a maximum of 40% social housing family units, etc. And also the time span. So these redevelopments have to kind of be done by 2030. To me, that's a - that's an extremely short span in terms of making sustainable urban redevelopment. So they're kind of - it forces, as Interviewee D also said, it kind of forces through a redevelopment in a very short time span, where you

need to focus a lot on attracting investors from the outside. And also, of course, the investors need to focus on attracting high income resident groups. And that kind of forces the whole redevelopment in ways that are not ... that make it difficult to engage the residents that are already living there. There is simply not enough time to kind of let redevelopment grow from the bottom up. So that's one really challenging condition, I think, to this. So the other thing is that the ghetto discourse which is, I think, to me, really strange that politicians would kind of, first of all, enforce this redevelopment with focus on social mix, and then at the same time, kind of stigmatise the areas as to make them less attractive for newcomers to feel like settling in these areas, to make the challenge that you give to the housing associations and to investors, so much more difficult, because you kind of shame, or stigmatise the areas. And that's just from the resident interviews that I've seen, I haven't made any myself, but that's something that really concerns people - that they feel they have to defend themselves everywhere they go. And the feel - they don't see it as realistic in terms of attracting people to come and live in the estates, because that's just what whatever the residents think, but at least that's ... that's a narrative that's very strong. And a feeling of stigma that is very strong among the residents, I think.

Interviewee C: I agree. And I mean, the goals we have in the social comprehensive plan are also long term goals, because we can't overnight change people's education level. It's a long term process where we have to work with people for a while to get there. And it's small steps. If it has to work, it's baby steps every time and then people will develop themselves. But if they have that sort of gone to the head, it's more difficult.

I1: Yes. In terms of time, I don't know. Kriti? Do you have something now as you were more the observer so far? Do you have a question that is burning for you?

I2: No, in general it was very informative for me to listen in. And thank you for all your contributions.

I1: Is there something from your side that you would like to add that was touched upon yet what you feel like is super important to add about Tingbjerg, which we didn't talk about yet? We still have a few minutes. So if you'd like to ... Yeah, maybe you have something in mind.

Interviewee E: I think obviously, Tingbjerg is very different from many of the other so called ghetto estates in Denmark, because of the - just the quality of the buildings and of the whole area. And also, of course, we're situated close to a really big city where a lot of people are ... are moving every year. So I think the reason why I'm so interested in Tingbjerg is I think if they can't make it, if they can't make it, it's going to be really, really difficult everywhere else. So this is kind of a very promising case, I think, but there are so many obstacles, still.

I1: Obstacles in the sense of... ?

Interviewee E: Well, in the sense of some of the things that we've talked about, in the sense of people - the difficulties of involving people into the redevelopment, the difficulties of combining the social dimensions with the architectural and kind of fiscal redevelopment dimensions, the timeframe and some of these other issues, it's not an easy task, but it's easier here than maybe in any of the other places that are under redevelopment at the moment in Denmark.

Interviewee C: There's challenges, as you said before, to the image as well, come and live here. Of course, I agree with Interviewee E that Tingbjerg has an advantage because the whole number of citizens in Copenhagen is rising rapidly in these years. So there will be demand for extra housing and that perhaps will help the area in filling the houses. But I am curious as to whether we will manage this whole community feeling in the area in the future.

[Thanks and end of recording]

Interviewee F

Monday, 14. June 2021
interview conducted through zoom

[The interview was conducted both in the context of my thesis and as a part of another research project. Hence, another 4CITIES student was present]

[Interviewee F asked us to only use certain passages of the interview]

[Introduction of Interviewee F and her work]: [...] but before that law we already worked with developing Tingbjerg in the same way that we work with it now. In changing the social dynamics in Tingbjerg by changing the [...] housing from only social housing to a combination of social housing and private housing [...] So that has been our strategy from the beginning, to develop Tingbjerg with more housing products, not selling any of the social housing, but develop more housing products [...] So when I started in 2017, we were in dialogue with a lot of different private housing companies, a process where we found our partner that we work with now, NREP, and [...] from then on it's been pretty busy, because then came the new law [...] but that was a push-factor on what we already did. [...] in general our strategy has been the same from the beginning. [...]

[asked about the criteria for choosing NREP as private partner]: [...] One of the criteria was of course that we wanted a partner that showed an understanding and an empathy to both the Tingbjerg architecture as it is today, and the history of Tingbjerg, and the qualities of Tingbjerg, and also to show an empathy on the people who live in Tingbjerg. An empathy and an understanding of that Tingbjerg is a place where people already live, Tingbjerg is a place that people love, and it's a place that people call their home. And that's very much different from developing a new housing in like an empty area [...] it was a very explorative like process where we just [...] talked to developers and we were quite surprised and happy to find that all of them saw a big potential in Tingbjerg. And they weren't actually as [...] engaged in the [...] ghetto way of thinking or describing Tingbjerg as the state, they could see the qualities that it's a green area and it's a beautiful architecture, and it's very close to Copenhagen, and they could see also the qualities in that it is an area where people already live, that has a culture, where you could find neighbours and a school and everything, so [...] you have a starting point to make better instead of a ground zero [...] And also the [...] administrative processes with the municipality is quite heavy when you are going to build new. So there were like different .. very good reasons to engage with NREP, because they both had the economical [inaudible] to actually engage in the whole area and to see [...] the development of Tingbjerg in like a whole instead of in small bits [...]

[asked about the built environment and her perception of it]: [...] when I started working with Tingbjerg, I was quite happy, because I found that Tingbjerg is the most beautiful social housing project in [...] Denmark that is called a 'ghetto'. I have colleagues that work with more like, I would say ... typical ghettos when it comes to architecture, like you know in concrete, and ... and Tingbjerg is just very cute and very beautiful, and from a time before concrete [...] I have been to Tingbjerg with a lot of people that didn't know Tingbjerg before [...] and they were all very surprised by the looks of Tingbjerg, because of the bad reputation, I think they [...] thought that it would be like a concrete kind of area, and they are quite surprised that it's so cozy out there, like a cute small-scale architecture. So I'm happy to find that the people who are visiting and discover Tingbjerg quite fast actually have this new idea of Tingbjerg. It's like it changes the perception - it doesn't fit with what they expect. And that's a good thing. But of course it's still a problem that there is a lot of people who have never visited Tingbjerg and they still have an idea of Tingbjerg to be something that it is not. [...] it's a big advantage that Tingbjerg is actually a very beautiful place .. I think it makes it much easier to change the bad reputation [...] Like when we tell them Tingbjerg is actually very beautiful, Tingbjerg has a lot of potential, Tingbjerg is full of green, maybe people be quite skeptical when you start talking to them about this, but then when we take them out to Tingbjerg, the green, like they say 'well, we see this, I don't understand why it has such a bad reputation'.

[asked about the perceived role of the state]: [...] Of course, the state also played a role before, because it was the state that invented the label ghetto and put it on Tingbjerg. But the ghetto-label is not - we were still aware that Tingbjerg was a place where there were some sorts of problems, and ... in periods we also had difficulties renting out some of our apartments because of the bad reputation [...]

[about 'ghetto'-label] it could push in both directions, like it [...] of course had a negative effect, because the bad reputation has [...] been even 'badder' because of the ghetto label, it's like we already know that this is an area where there is social problems, and now we should all be aware of it and media should talk about all the time, and the people who live there should be aware of it ... I don't think that's a good effect. But - and also the ways that made the law, like one size fits all, [...] I think it should be more flexible regarding to the area, and we already were in - like a lot of these areas that the state calls ghetto were already in .. in a good ... they were already working with developing the areas into the future. So in many ways it has been [...] an obstacle that the state came in, interfered in what we do. Working in Tingbjerg, it hasn't been a big obstacle because we have been very aligned with the municipality on how to [...] react to this, and how to develop Tingbjerg, but in a lot of other so-called ghettos it has been [...] *[about 'positive' effects, taking a second road into Tingbjerg as an example]* the place where we would like to make the other road is state-owned, so we needed the state to participate and engage in this problem. And before the awareness of the ghetto law in 2018, it was very hard for us to get in contact with the state about

this problem. But now it seems like we have their ear and they are working together with us in finding a solution to this one-way-in and one-way-out problem. So that's the upside I would say, [...]

[asked about image change]: [...] basically we are working with changing the image of Tingbjerg from the ghetto label and the ghetto perception into what Tingbjerg actually is [...] it is very green, there is a lot of nature around it, surrounding it. It's quite small-scale architecture, so you get a lot of light and air, and you will still get a lot of light and air although we are - not we, but NREP, the private partner are building some small houses in the big - the green areas between the houses that we have today. It will still be a very open and very spacious green area. So basically we now engage together with NREP in changing the perception into, into what Tingbjerg is. And we will talk a lot about the nature surrounding it, the green qualities in Tingbjerg and architectural qualities in Tingbjerg, both historical like the buildings that are built now, and also the changes that we are making, they will also have an architectural quality [...] it's not like we are making up a new story of Tingbjerg, it's more like we try to tell the good stories for Tingbjerg, and to say them more out loud. In the years when Tingbjerg was called a ghetto, there hasn't been much focus on, you know standing up against that label [...] So now we are using the development of Tingbjerg [...] to gain the interest from the media and to hold the interest from the media on that perspective, and we feed into that perspective in the media, and we also try to feed in to the change of like normal people, how they look into Tingbjerg and of course [...] we have people's ear because they now get the possibility to actually buy quite cheap, private housing in Tingbjerg.

[asked about reference to Rasmussen's visions for Tingbjerg in the new developments]: [...] as part of the, like rebranding of Tingbjerg, we are looking very much into the original idea of Tingbjerg as should be [...] from the beginning when we talked to NREP [...] NREP said 'we see a great possibility of making good private housing for families in Tingbjerg'. And that was part of why we chose them, because that was the original idea, that Tingbjerg should be not a - like an urban area [...] we were aware that we would like to develop Tingbjerg [...] regarding to its original priorities. And that would still be - it's actually some timeless qualities, it's cheap, it's way of being a family, having everything that you need in your everyday life close by, and having the nature close by, and also having the city close by, that's probably the modern kind of angle to it. [...] before, Tingbjerg was developed as an escape from the city, but [...] the city has developed into something that people also like very much, and a lot of people work in the city. So now we have a focus on, like, this ... this nearness to the city [...]

[what has changed since Tingbjerg's development and how the new development adapts to it]: Family-structures have changed, work life has changed, before it was developed with these very very big green yards because it was developed to an everyday life where most of the women were home with the children, so they needed [...] a lot of space where they could send the children out during the day, playing outside. But today, the children are at school or they are at kindergarten [...]. So most of the day these very big green areas are quite empty. [...] and now we know [...] that we work better in smaller scale outdoors [...] and the big scale outdoor planning of Tingbjerg's green areas is .. is not very human in scale, like it's too big. [...] so from a [...] planner kind of view [...] it makes a lot of sense to downscale these areas with small buildings that will make people group maybe into smaller groups in the good way, you know, to group into smaller groups to be able to absorb like a bigger community also in Tingbjerg. So we are working from the same idea to make the best [...] possibilities for families to engage in everyday life. So that's been a shift from mothers working from home and children being [...] at home a lot during the day [...] to a focus on, like, smaller .. communities, smaller - to engage with your neighbours in a different kind of way. [...] it's still focusing families and to make it safe and fun for children to have an everyday life with lots of possibilities and make it maybe easy for families and children to ... to have a, yeah, a nice everyday life where they have a lot of possibilities [...] so it's the same values basically, but into ... modern times or modern family life. Yeah, to translate it into that, has been the focus

[about positive aspects of redevelopment and resistance against it by some residents] [...] you get the municipality engaging in building new kindergartens, you get the state engaging in building this new road, you get the municipality engaging in making the school better, you attract a lot of positive attention that we could use to ... to change Tingbjerg into the better. But of course for the people who live in Tingbjerg, it's been more difficult to just jump on to this vision and this strategy, because they already find that Tingbjerg is a nice place to live. So they of course have the angle that 'why should we change? It's not Tingbjerg that's wrong, it's the perception and the ghetto label that's wrong'. [...] But [...] we still find that most of the tenants and the people who live in Tingbjerg [...] that are in the age group of having small children, they are very positive towards the change of Tingbjerg, because [...] they see that we need a positive change of the school and the kindergartens, and there's some places in Tingbjerg where it [...] doesn't meet the potential yet. And we find that a lot of people who have lived in Tingbjerg their whole life [...] they find it [...] difficult that we are to change the Tingbjerg they know. Maybe also because they have a bit of nostalgic feelings about how it was, they don't have small children so they don't really see how it's not that great anymore. So of course we try to have empathy towards this [...] feeling as well, and we try to make sure to inform them and keep them close to the development, so they can feel safe about knowing, what will happen, and trust what we tell them is going to happen is what's actually happening, so they don't get surprised.

Interviewee G

Friday, 25. June 2021

interview conducted through zoom

[The interview was conducted both in the context of my thesis and as a part of another research project. Hence, another 4CITIES student was present]

I1: Levke

I2: Kriti

Interviewee G

[Introduction to research, asking about oral consent, clarification about how anonymity will be granted]

[Interviewee G introduces her work]

I1: If you say you tackle political issues together with the youth, could you describe a bit more in which way they are political and what they refer to?

Interviewee G: Well, we work a lot with the 'ghetto' issue and also, like being this - like having a different ethnic background, like specifically in Tingbjerg they wrote a letter to the minister of housing in Denmark about the consequences of the 'ghetto' for young people living there. And right now we are also involved in the city development plan, and we are having meetings and conversations about how we can involve the young people in the changes that are going to be there in Tingbjerg.

I1: Thanks for the introduction. If you say you have meetings, with whom do you have the meetings, like who do you approach in order to get the youth voices heard in the process?

Interviewee G: Like how we recruit them? Or who they are? Or ...

I1: Who they are, and also, like, how do you represent them, or try to represent them.

Interviewee G: Ok, I'm not sure if I understand your question, but usually when we start, we choose communities that is in close collaboration with local actors. So usually the boligsociale helhedsplan, the social ... yeah, you know, or the school or the clubs in the areas. So we collaborate with them, and then with the help of them we recruit the young people there, and it's very different, like depending on the area, I think Tingbjerg - in Tingbjerg they are a bit older, they are between 20 and 25, and they are also, like, quite resourceful as we call. And we also work with, like, young people who are more marginalised in other areas.

I1: And ... speaking about projects you also initiate together with them, how do you try to address people who are not yet part of the youth organisations, so how do you reach out to also other residents?

Interviewee G: Like usually the local actors that we collaborate with have relations with them, and we recruit them that way. And else we recruit them like through their own friends, so they invite friends into the community, and also through events, like when we do events, people get to know what it's about and so on.

I1: Ok, great. Maybe just a short - like on Sunday, I talked to Interviewee K from *[Youth organisation B]* and she mentioned that you are at the moment preparing a talk or a statement about the communal garden.

Interviewee G: Yeah.

I1: So, could you maybe express a bit then also how your work is related to the current redevelopment of Tingbjerg?

Interviewee G: Yeah. Like it was not ... like, planned, that we do that, it's just, have you been on the common garden?

I1: Yes.

Interviewee G: Ok, yeah. So it's just a - it's a place that the people I work with, they really like, and so when they found out that it's going to be teared down, they wanted to do something about it. And then we as the NGO and political organisation helped them with that. So we have contacted some local politicians and had like, like shown them around Tingbjerg and talked about like what we could do to keep it.

I1: If you say you invite politicians, how do they normally react when they also come to the area?

Interviewee G: It's different [*laughs*]. Like we know which politicians we need to contact, you know. Who ... we sometimes have a contact with, and like, agree with the ... yeah, what we work with and how we work and so on, so they are of course really nice and open and so on, but not everyone agrees with us keeping the common garden ... yeah, we have a dialogue with them about it.

I1: Yeah, I can imagine ... Is there then also discussion among the youngsters or the people you work with in Tingbjerg of - not only that some of the gardens will disappear, but also that new residents will move in. Is there also something that they claim or express?

Interviewee G: It's something we have talked a bit about it. Like mostly, like they - like they don't like the plan, they don't ... they really like Tingbjerg the way that it is. But I think mostly what we talk about is that, like they are afraid that there will be like an A and B team ... like both because I think there's a lack of focus on how - like the existing communities and how you can strengthen them and use them to integrate new and old people who live there. But also you can just see that - there has already been some new buildings, and they had like their own playground. But ... like the other people can't access. So we are just afraid of more closed things happening in Tingbjerg.

I1: And are these fears and concerns, are they taken seriously? Or who are they addressed to and then how do these people respond to it?

Interviewee G: Well, we talk with the politicians about it and they agree with us, and they agree that it's an issue that needs to be addressed. But what's going to happen based on that, I'm not sure.

I1: Yeah. That's very much in the process still ...

Interviewee G: Yeah, it is. I think it's also - like it's also very different what the politicians - like how the politicians and architects think that you will create a community, and how the people who live there believe so. I think like, for example, the ... the library, the cultural house, I think it's maybe a good example of that, because it's a super pretty building, but like no one uses it, because it's like a space when you go in you want to be quiet, you know, because it's a library. Yeah.

I1: Yeah. Was there then any aims by officials, by architects, by planners, by politicians, to involve the people currently living in Tingbjerg in the development process?

Interviewee G: Well ... yeah. And of course there's also some things that they had to do, like they had to have several meetings with citizens and so on. Yeah ... But most of the people - I don't know, like yeah... Like how to explain? But I don't know, like they are involving people, but I'm not sure if they are actually listening, are actually acting on it. Yeah ... But they have had a bunch of meetings and also that they have to have meetings with who they do local plans.

I1: Yeah. And do you feel that there is a different dynamic amongst the youngsters in the area then among older residents of the area? Do they have different fears or different approaches also on how to formulate their claims?

Interviewee G: Well I don't really have a feeling with the older generation, but as a general thing in Tingbjerg, I feel like people don't know about the changes that are going to happen. yeah ...

I1: Don't know in what sense? Like what concrete changes or that changes as such will happen?

Interviewee G: Like both.

I1: Ok, wow.

Interviewee G: I think this is something about the communication - it's just weird - it's something about the communication, because when they communicate about the new projects that are going to be, they are trying to sell it. You know. So they are not really honest about the concrete consequences and so on, because they are only focussing on the positive. I think it's also - it's complex, because then you get like a folder, and then this picture of Tingbjerg, and then there's these black squares where there is going to be new buildings, but I think it's still like super difficult to comprehend like how this is actually going to change Tingbjerg based on that picture. So ... yeah, there has been communication, but I think there is just a mismatch there.

I1: Is it then also that the youngsters like kind of step by step realised what is going to happen, or is it now that with the concrete example of the communal garden going to disappear, that this was a sudden moment of realisation 'ok, now we have to do something because it gets real' - how was this process of ..?

Interviewee G: I think it's definitely the thing about common garden. And then, you know, when you have to have to know what is going to happen in the common garden, you have to know what is the entire process, which action is going on in Tingbjerg. So it's from there they like also with myself, I get to know actually what is going to happen in Tingbjerg.

I1: Ok. Like - very general, like from our perspectives it's very much that - well, not very much, but basically there's the issue that the external perception influences now how the internal development is kind of supposed to evolve and that this whole

so-called 'ghetto' discourse is actually informing the redevelopment and the people that are supposed to live there in the future. So we were wondering how you then perceive the external image of Tingbjerg as it is now and the image of Tingbjerg that the developers and architects kind of try to communicate with their, as you said, plans and drawings and ideals.

Interviewee G: Can you repeat that?

I1: So basically it's about how ... how you feel Tingbjerg is perceived now from the outside and how it is marketed in the future.

Interviewee G: Well ... I feel that ... of course there are a lot of prejudices against Tingbjerg, I think I'm probably pretty coloured by the ... the people that I hang out with, and by working there so much, so it's not something that I'm confronted with very often. But you see in the media there is of course prejudices about, I don't know, crime and ... like of integration and all of that. But I'm not sure about how they - which image they are trying to create of Tingbjerg - they are trying to create an image right now that it's, it's like a great family place, which it already is [laughs]. Yeah, but I'm not really sure about the - how they communicate that exactly.

I1: And from the inside, so from the residents' perspective, how do they - how would they describe Tingbjerg? It's a bit strange to ask someone to speak for them ...

Interviewee G: From the people I have talked with, all of them are really happy about living in Tingbjerg. It's a great place, it's close to the city but also there is a lot of green areas which they like ... I think it's also my perception that the newcomers who live there, they like the place, but it's just a place where you live, but with many of the young people who have always grown up there, it's ... it's - they call it a village. They just know everyone. You know, it's a home different than when you live in a city, when they walk around they just say hi to everyone, so ...

I1: Yeah ... Kriti, do you have anything more, or I think you were very interested in this interview today, so ...

I2: Yeah, I was very interested in knowing about your perception, about the redevelopment that is happening there, about the evictions that are to happen, and also - but, before - in general, if you could tell us a bit about what you think would really make a difference in the current situation overall in the whole discourse. What would be the area that you think would have the most impact?

Interviewee G: In the discourse?

I2: Yeah. Like what would really make a difference at this point.

Interviewee G: Well ... That's a lot of things. Like first of all, there are challenges in these areas, but I think the problem is that they are having - there is one discourse and there is one solution to all of it. So the thing that needs to be nuanced, like a lot. And there is also, like, the racist discourse in the entire integration discourse which I don't agree with. And which I think legitimises many of these policies.

I2: Because also you focus on youth and on women empowerment in general, what would you - how would you say that from the bottom-up there could be sort of ... a way forward in general, you know, from the bottom?

Interviewee G: Well, I think it's super important to include people and I think that it's super important to empower people, and I think you can really just see a lack of all that, and like of inclusion in all these plans. And then also - but also the discourse you know, I think the continuous racist discourse that exists, also we experience like it demotivates people to participate.

I2: Yeah. Because also when I talked to a few people in Mjølnerparken, there was this one lady who said that 'I know that it will not make a difference overall, I know that I'm going to be evicted in a few months time', but she said that 'I'm going to protest until I go. Because I think someone needs to share me. Someone needs to - you know, know about what's going on'. And so ... Yeah I just felt curious about what ... in general in Mjølnerparken, how people perceive this. If you could tell me a bit about people perceive this situation, about being forced out of their place. Because ...

Interviewee G: Yeah. Well ... Well, again I think it's .. it's different. You know, I think some people are motivated by it and some people are demotivated about it, but I think like it's your job as an NGO to motivate and empower people. So actually it's a protest and so on.

I1: How do you then try to empower people, like what are the concrete steps you can take as an NGO from the outside?

Interviewee G: Well ... Like first of all, we pick an issue that is important to them, like for example in Tingbjerg it's the common garden, it's a point that is their issue and they agree with that. And then it's both about helping them know how to talk about it, like which words to use and so on, but also just like understanding the difficult process and helping do that.

I1: Mh. Sorry, I didn't want to interrupt Kriti.

I2: And also does the NGO work with Mjølnerparken?

Interviewee G: No, unfortunately not. No, but we work in Nørrebro.

I2: Yes. And do you have any ... any observations that you would want to talk about Mjølnerparken which [...]

Interviewee G: [...] *[laughs]* we experience that people don't really internalize these, like this stigma and the prejudices that are there, but that is also very different, like depending on both your ethnicity but also like how long you've lived there ... And that when you have lived there, you are just a part of a big different community ... yeah.

I2: And how would you interact with other NGOs, like for example, I mean with Almen Modstand, what would your - how do you coordinate with them, what is your interaction?

Interviewee G: Well, it depends very much on the issue. Like on a campaign and policy level, we collaborate a lot with them, because, yeah, we mobilise for the same issues. Yeah, and also like, with - in Tingbjerg, also I'm talking with one person from Almen Modstand called *[name]*, where we just share knowledge, but also we have very different roles. Like I work with *[name of organisation]*, and they work more with like protest and like everybody who lives there. So mostly we just share knowledge and collaborate whenever it makes sense.

[...]

I2: Yeah. I just have one tiny little last question. When you work with, also in the political sense, like, would you say that over the years there has been a shift in power in between the decision-makers in general, or is it completely always been ...

Interviewee G: Like between the decision-makers and citizens, or within like parliament? Well, I think if there has been any shift, it's just that they have more power. You know, I don't see, unfortunately, any difference, like I think, quite the contrary, I think you can see that with the new preventive areas, what they are trying to create is just an example of how they are expanding this logic even more. And also like with - yeah, they also just had this new thing about education where they want to split them up based on income, but actually that also stems from an idea of wanting to split up people with different ethnic background. Like I know they also - like wanted to do it, in first instance based on names, and else they wanted to do it based like whether you speak a second language and they couldn't do any of that, so now they have done this. So, yeah ... they are just continuing with that.

I2: And is it also that with the private non-profit housing associations, the almene boliger, and the ... and the municipality, the Copenhagen Commune, is there like a - also a struggle between who gets to have a say in decision.

G: Who was the first actor you mentioned?

I2: The almene boliger ... The public housing sector.

Interviewee G: Like the social housing projects?

I2: Yes.

Interviewee G: Ok, and the municipalities?

I2: Yes.

Interviewee G: Mh ... I don't think I can answer that. No, like I think in general, like social housing projects do not have a lot of power, like it is the municipalities who decide whether or not they are gonna exist. And the housing sector and so on. So ...

I2: Yes.

Interviewee G: And also because they are not allowed to have any political man. They are not allowed to have any political opinions. Which, yeah ...

[Thanks and farewell; end of recording]

Interviewee H

Wednesday, 25. November 2020
interview conducted through zoom

[Introduction to the research, asking about consent to start the recording]

I: If I understood it correctly, you are both working at *[Danish non-profit organisation]* and at the - not working, but volunteering at *[youth organisation A]*?

Interviewee H: It's a part of my work actually *[inaudible]*.

I: So you are employed at *[Danish non-profit organisation]*?

Interviewee H: Yes, I am.

I: Ok. Could you maybe describe a bit of your - what your work is?

Interviewee H: Yes. I work for a project called 'Youth and Local Democracy' that focuses on the empowering of youth in so-called ghettos. And we do this in a variety of ways, we have like these youth communities in different 'ghettos' where we do both social and political activities. And then we also have activities across areas, for example we have a youtube channel at the moment where we have gathered like a group of young people from different areas to make videos about what is on their mind. And we also go to something called *[festival-like meeting of young volunteers]* where we also have some workshops and then go to *[festival-like meeting of young volunteers]* together.

I: When did you start the work in so-called 'ghettos', like the organisation?

Interviewee H: I think 6 years ago. I have been here for 1,5 years, yeah.

I: Do you know why they decided to also become active within Denmark? Because as I understood it, they normally work all around the world.

Interviewee H: Ok, this is a ... *[laughs]* ... I'm not sure, but this is like what I think - I think that at some point *[Danish non-profit organisation]* realised that ... what can you say - there's also things that need ... things that you need to do in Denmark, and sometimes it's also more sustainable to do it in your local society. Yeah, I think that's the short version of it, and that's how the programme started, I think.

I: Yeah, don't worry, just curiosity. So, and within the projects, are you kind of coming from the outside and working with local people, or are you also supporting local organisations for example?

Interviewee H: We are mostly collaborating. So ... like it's very different depending on the area, like we do research beforehand to see who are the local actors, but we always collaborate with local partners. So, it can be a club, it can be something called *boligsociale helhedsplan* - I assume you know what it is - or schools and so on. So we never do it alone.

I: Why?

Interviewee H: Because ... because we come from the outside, like as you said, because the ... we do not know the area and we do not know the people and it gives you a lot more legitimacy when you work with local - I don't know, it's - I think it's a foundation of it, like ... because, yeah.

I: And how do you choose your local partners?

Interviewee H: Well ... as I said before, we do a lot of research about who are the local partners, and then we have different meetings and there we see how do they work, what are their values, how do they talk about the young people and so on. And then we try to find the best match.

I: Could you maybe describe a bit like how the collaboration works? Like what is your task in it, what is the task of the local partner?

Interviewee H: Yes. That's also very different. But.. I think the *[inaudible]* in Tingbjerg ... I think that ... that - what you can call someone as a part of the *boligsociale helhedsplan*, who actually, I think, had some hours located to *[youth organisation A]*. And then we just like run the meetings and we support the activities that they want to do in Tingbjerg. So it's very different depending on like what they want to do, but I think it's actually quite equal what I do and what our partners do, if that makes sense.

I: Yeah. So if you say you support them, do you also support them financially or more with your network?

Interviewee H: We support them - and I think that's mainly [*Danish non-profit organisation*] that supports them financially, but also it's a part of the ... what do you call ... the funds that we seek, we also seek money - we also try to have - give money to the youth [*inaudible*].

I: Mh, ok. Maybe this is not a question for you, but maybe you still have an idea, like why did you choose to become active in Tingbjerg and not somewhere else?

Interviewee H: Many reasons. I think first of all, because we are located at Nørrebro, so it is closer by than other areas, but also because it's a 'hard ghetto', it's .. it's mentioned in many different contexts, and there is many consequences in the area because it's the 'hard ghetto'.

I: Did you feel like something was missing before you entered the game and before you became engaged there?

Interviewee H: That's a good question ... [*laughs*] I don't know, I feel like it's kind of like 'White saviour' to say - if you know that, like to say that something is missing until, you know, we came ... But I still believe that we can do something and do something unique, you know, because I think that it is important that people from Tingbjerg, young people are engaged in politics, but I think that the ways through which it's done is super boring, you have to sit at meetings where you have to raise your hand before somebody talks, which can be frustrating, so long and so on, so I think it's really important to first of all have a social community and then from there on find ways to engage in politics, so that we have something unique, but I wouldn't say like it's, I don't know, super revolutionary for Tingbjerg.

I: And is it like ... are you more working together with the organisers of the organisation, or also with the people they address in their daily work?

Interviewee H: Who is the organisers?

I: Like the volunteers, or the ones you do the actions - or the activities for, sorry.

Interviewee H: Ok, can you ask the question again?

I: If - in your work, are you .. more working for the volunteers so that they can do their activities, or are you actively involving the community also, like also your activities reach out to the community, or is it more like you are a mediator - or you 'use' the volunteers as a mediator between you and the community?

Interviewee H: We do both. Like the volunteers are also from the community. But we do both. For example, they planned Tingbjerg festival, which is a festival there with music and so on, where we also involve other local actors. So there it's both about the empowerment of the volunteers who does it, but also doing something for Tingbjerg.

I: Another kind of curiosity-question, like how does the labelling of Tingbjerg as a so-called 'hard ghetto' influence your work both in the organisation but also on site in Tingbjerg itself? ... Or does it influence your work?

Interviewee H: Mh ... Well ... That's a good question. I think it affects the life of the people that we work with, they have a lot of stories about finding it more difficult to find work, for example, or meeting prejudices from friends and so on outside Tingbjerg, so ... in that way, yes. I don't know if there is something specific you were thinking about ...

I: So, I'm doing a bit - my research is basically how the territorial stigmatisation influences youth activities and also youth engagement in and for the community. So, yeah, that's what I was aiming at, but ..

Interviewee H: Are you writing about Wacquart?

I: Yeah, exactly. [*both laugh*] Ok I see you are very informed.

Interviewee H: Yeah [*elaborates on why she knows about it*].

I: Ah, ok. So it's not too far from what you are used to [*laughs*] ... I just have to take a short look at what I wanted to ask ... Are you only working with [*youth organisation A*] or also with other actors - or do you try to connect also maybe different actors from different so-called 'ghettos' in your work?

Interviewee H: Yes, in the ... in the project - we have some projects to kind of [*inaudible*], or when we go to [*festival-like meeting of young volunteers*], which is also a really really important part of our work. Because we experience sometimes that the kids that we work with do not ... move a lot - like outside their own areas, and we think it's really important to create a community where they meet people from different areas in Denmark.

I: So from different areas means also from ... from not so-called 'ghettos', or more that they connect with each other and maybe support each other in their experiences.

Interviewee H: Yeah, more they connect and support each other. But always from 'ghettos', because that's our area.

I: Ok. And is there something like coming out of this process, of this connectedness, like new projects, or ... is it that it's like temporary?

Interviewee H: With each other? I think that's very different. I think for some people it's temporary, but also we are starting to see that like they wanted to put up [*inaudible*] with specific youth communities, not Tingbjerg, but we have one in Brønshøj and one in Høje Taastrup, and they just love each other, and I think they have like a [*inaudible*], or whatever, so they started to collaborate and doing great things together.

I: And you are responsible for all these initiatives, or only for Tingbjerg?

Interviewee H: I'm responsible for Tingbjerg but then also sometimes we have projects together, and then of course I meet like the young kids from everywhere. I think we have four people in the project and one intern.

I: Ok. Could you describe like how often do you exchange with the people from Tingbjerg, and how often do you stay in your office and the administration stuff - like how involved are you in the community, basically?

Interviewee H: I would say I'm not super involved in the community, I'm more involved with the youth community, but also because we are partners who are very involved, the partner have a boligsociale helhedsplan. So we have a monthly meeting, so at least once a month, but sometimes more often - I don't know, I have ... there is a volunteer over there who wants to start his own firm at the moment, so I'm meeting up a lot with him, I'm trying to prepare him to make it for him. So very depends on the projects.

I: I feel like from my side that's already it. Is there anything you feel like you want to add that you didn't speak about yet and want to share?

Interviewee H: No, nothing. I don't think so.

[Thanks and farewell, end of recording]

Interviewee J

Thursday, 1. July 2021

interview conducted on the phone

[Introduction to the research, asking about consent to start the recording]

I: Maybe just one to start and explain a bit how you ended up being part of [*Youth organisation A*] since when you're part of it, a bit about that maybe.

Interviewee J: Yes, so [*Youth organisation A*] started in 2017, I guess. Yes, 2017, 2018. And one of my closest friends, they were already in that organisation, if you could say it like that. So, I was just asking them: What are you guys doing there? What is this? How is this? And all that. And they were like: Oh, we are actually trying to sort of party in Tingbjerg. If you want to join us?! And I was like: Yeah, why not?! So, when I went to this party, there was more local party, so, everyone who lives in Tingbjerg could come. And then when I saw that, I was like: I really want to start there. Because I've felt that everybody wants to, kind of ... how can you say that? It's a very very good way, like... In Denmark we are not accepted as Danish people. We are more like... Danish people looking at us like kind of some... Some people who just wants... just have to go back to their country and that we are not accepted in this country. We will never be like their original Danish people. So... When we were there, I really felt like I was one of them. After that we had this same characters. So yeah, that was... a bit why I really wanted to be a part of it. And there were so many stigmatisations about that young people, and most of it young boys, that are just loud, they want to foul everybody and that Tingbjerg is one of the places that you have to be afraid of, if you want to go there and you just have to be careful. So, then I just, I was like, I felt really sorry because I live there and I also saw that every time I only wanted to apply for a job, the boss who is looking through my application, sees my address and it's like Tingbjerg of course, and then they will be like: 'Ok, we will call you.' But I never get the call. So that was also a bit weird because one of the part is, that I'm a girl, I never do the same kind of things that the guys do, but in the end I live in a place where everybody is like the same.

I: Thanks for sharing like.. May I ask if you also grew up in Tingbjerg?

Interviewee J: Sorry what?

I: Did you also grew up in Tingbjerg?

Interviewee J: Yes, I grew up in Tingbjerg. Basically, my whole life... My mom moved to Tingbjerg when I was 2. So... Tingbjerg is my home basically. I know every person in Tingbjerg. I know everybody. And I also went to school there when I was a kid, so... The feeling that you know everybody there, even though that you don't know their name, but you know them by their face is quite comfortable. So, like, you will feel home in some kind of way.

I: It's actually fascinating. Whoever I'm talking to from Tingbjerg, they basically just say exactly the same as you just did. So, it's great to hear like what of a community feeling there is also within the neighborhood. So, you've said a friend of you introduced you to [*Youth organisation A*]. In which year was that? Like how long have you been part of it now?

Interviewee J: I have been a part of it since 2018. Yes, 2018. I think in that year. Quite a long time. And... We started to - like debate with the politicians and we... I also went up on the stage talking about the integration and how we have to accept each other as who we are. Actually, we also wrote a letter to one of the ministers... And that letter is used now in some high school as an eksampensum [*the letter is analysed in exams*]. I don't know how we say that in English. Like, they are using it for the exam now. So that is quite nice. But we know that everybody is looking,.. seeing what we see and what we have to say, because at the same part ... First when I started there, I always thought that nobody is listening to us. But then, when I saw that the politicians and ministers are asking us the questions and 'How do you think about Tingbjerg?' and 'What do you want to talk about Tingbjerg?' I really felt that they are listening to us.

I: Yes, maybe as you've just mentioned the letter. I wanted to come to that later, but as you've just mentioned it, I actually do have some questions about that, because it's... I think this is how I got to know your organisation, because it was so outstanding and so big actually.

Interviewee J: Yeah, exactly.

I: How did people actually react to it? Like both from inside Tingbjerg but also from the outside. I think you've already started a bit on that.

Interviewee J: Yes, so... There is like a little bubble. So, when you are in Tingbjerg as a kid, you will only see the positive side. But when you are about to grow up and you have to go to school out of Tingbjerg, you will see the negativity. I can give you examples. I started in 10th grade and then some of my... some of my friends that I knew in in that grade, they were like: 'Oh, so you live in Tingbjerg? Aren't you afraid to live there? I heard that they stab each other, the guys over there. I heard that the police is always there. How do you feel safe?' So, the questions there let me think how do they see it. But when I actually try to tell them that it's not bad, they got a problem. And the problems that they hear about are only television, on the media. They will be like: 'Yes, but the media shows us something else what you're telling us is something else.' So, if you know somebody who lives in Tingbjerg, they will always tell you that it's a nice place. Of course, there are some problems in Tingbjerg. But at the same time there is problems everywhere in Copenhagen, everywhere in Denmark and everywhere in every country.

I: Were there also negative reactions to it? That's a strange question, I'm sorry, but...

Interviewee J: Yeah, there is quite a lot of negative reactions about Tingbjerg. It could be 'you will never be like somebody else who lives in ...' for example. It's about the high status. If you live in a quite good place, you always have the quite good people around you who will help you. And the resources that you have, it's not that big but when you live in Tingbjerg, because you will see ... We all, kind of every people who live in Tingbjerg and with another ethnicity ... they are not originally Danish people - there are some but like, that are not as many as for example in Frederiksberg or some other places. And we also have children, and the politicians are one of the reasons why there are so many stigmatisations about Tingbjerg and about the people who live there.

I: Thanks. Coming a bit back to the relation between [*Youth organisation A*] and Tingbjerg as such - I don't know how much you've maybe also internally talk about it, but why was it founded back in 2017? Do you know about that? Like why did you decide to... or why was it decided to start [*Youth organisation A*]? What was missing before?

Interviewee J: So, before [*Youth organisation A*], there was something called 'Butterfly' and it was only for girls. So, all the girls who live in Tingbjerg they could be a part of it and they will take you out shopping, some places that you've never been before. They will take you to [*inaudible*], they will take you to all these quite good places and maybe sometimes they will travel. But when *Butterfly* couldn't be there anymore because Tingbjerg didn't have that much of money, they had to stop that. And then [*Youth organisation A*] came. It was not only for girls. It was for boys and girls. So, the quality or the resources could be much more bigger. We also have to remember that [*Youth organisation A*] is under [*Danish non-profit organisation*]. So, it's quite big. I think it's one of the biggest things that has helped us to like promote ourselves. If we have to think about Butterfly, so...

I: If you say 'promote ourselves' what do you mean by that specifically?

Interviewee J: When I say 'promote ourselves' I mean.. like.. [*Youth organisation A*] we are talking about the political things, the problems that are there in this country. And if you got these big resources like [*Danish non-profit organisation*] they would help you out. They will help you to come in contact with these for example political – the ministers. They will give you the

help that you can go over and debate about the problems that you think is a big problem. And also they will [*inaudible*] and you could then [*inaudible*]. But I don't know, when you saw... At that day you came you saw it on [*Danish non-profit organisation*], right?

I: Yes.

Interviewee J: Yeah, exactly. So, when [*Danish non-profit organisation*] started helping us to promote, it is also helping us to get people to listen to us, knew what we have.

I: Yeah, I think for me from the outside it's super interesting to see this dynamic between the different scales. So, on the one hand you are very much connected to Tingbjerg but then also you address national discourses and political agendas. So, I think it's really interesting for me to see how you move between these different scales. How does this feel within your organisation, like, is it more that you focus on Tingbjerg or is it more that you focus on the national discourses that are then also seen in Tingbjerg? Or is it maybe something very different that I don't see from the outside?

Interviewee J: So, I... I want to be to mix it together. So, the problems that we have in Tingbjerg is also one of the problems that we have in whole Denmark and all other countries, like racism. We also have that in Tingbjerg or in Denmark basically. So, when I'm talking about the stigmatisation there in Tingbjerg, I'm also talking about the more global. So, like, take it really out, so that other places can see it. And if... I see it this way basically: So, if I'm not talking about Tingbjerg or about some places that is in Denmark, I think nobody else would do it. So, we have to like start in some places. But as you've said. I'm... I think I'm mixed. I'm one of these who's mixing it together.

I: How important is it then that you are located in Tingbjerg specifically?

Interviewee J: It is very important for me because I live there, I was born there, I grew up there. So that fact that somebody is like talking about the place I live in, in a negative way makes me mad and sad at the same time. It's like nobody else can say something about my place. Nobody. I'm not about it.

I: Maybe this is a bit of a too general question, but... As you are like young people organising: what does... like the role of young people for the development of Tingbjerg and for the... yes communicating this image, as you said 'sharing your stories', and giving these insider perspectives of this place. Where do you there see the role of young people especially in the process?

Interviewee J: So, the young people are the next... We are the next organisations, so... So, we have to be there for each other. And I know if my mom should - wanted to talk about these things, they wouldn't like listen to her as much as they would listen to me, because I'm younger than her and I'm the person who has to live in Denmark. I'm the person who's gonna live, hopefully, more. And if we don't start as young people to talk about the problems that there are, when should we do that then? Should we still wait until my little sister who is 10 years old, should start? Or should we just wait until the old men in the age of 90 should start to talk about the problems. So... I've been... If we start from... we are like 16, 17. It's the perfect time. Because we are the people who are going to grow old in this country.

I: Yes, for sure. I feel like it's super impressive what you did. Not although you are young but because you are young. I think there's a difference with saying like it's not... Although we are young, we managed to do it but it's just because of that that you've managed to achieve what you've already achieved. I think that's... yeah that's...

Interviewee J: Yeah, I'm like: If nobody does it, then who is going to do it? So, if I'm not gonna do it then who's gonna do it.

I: So, I'll jump back to the very start because you've just said something very interesting. You said you first came into contact at a party, that was organised by [*Youth organisation A*]. So, did you actually plan to become active and to volunteer or did it just happen kind of?

Interviewee J: Fun fact: it just happened. So I was just there just to help them at the party. And then they were like: 'Oh, we actually have a meeting next month, do you want to come?' And I was like: 'Ok, I can come.' And I was like sitting in quiet that day. Then they were like: 'Oh, do you have some ideas of what we could do next?' And I was like: 'Yeah, I do actually have... I really want to talk about this, I really want to talk about this problem that we are having in Tingbjerg' And they were like: 'Oh, yeah, ok, let's do it!' And then I just - it was fine. I wanted to talk about more. I wanted to talk about other problems. So yeah.

I: Sometimes the best things start by coincidence, I guess.

Interviewee J: Yeah, I love parties.

I: So, when you said you had ideas what you really wanted to talk about - how are then these ideas discussed within the organisation or within the volunteer-group?

Interviewee J: So, at that time we were asking in what the year when we had to find out who's the next political person is going to be. Like the politician who is going to be next and who we want to, how do you say that... So, at that time when some people were promoting the politicians and we had to find out who is going to be our politician, the state's minister. And at that time all of these state ministers here they came to Tingbjerg and they wanted us to promote them. They wanted us to

listen to them. So, we had some questions for them. And the questions would be: When are you going to stop calling a place like Tingbjerg for a ghetto? Because it is not a ghetto. We don't live in Canada, we don't live in America, like why are we calling this a ghetto? And they didn't answer our questions. We had some questions about, what can you guys do for us who live in Tingbjerg? What can you guys do? How could you help us? And they didn't even try to answer our question. So... At that time, so the idea that I had, I was like 'yes, try to debate. Let's try to find one of the state's ministers that we really wanted to have.' And... We had Martin Henriksen, who is a DF, from DF [*Danish People's Party*]. We had Mia, I don't remember her last name, oh sorry. So many people were there. So, when we took all this together, we were the ones wanted to ask them the same question. And every single person had some answer that doesn't even make any sense. I can remember when I asked Martin Henriksen: 'So you say that these people who looks like me are not Danish enough. How do you see a Danish person?' And he was like: 'Ok, I see a Danish person as with no hijab, that is the scarf on your head, I see them dance around the Christmas tree, I see them eat pork.' And then I was like: 'Ok, so that's how you see a Danish person.' And he was like: 'Yeah, I actually do.' And I was like: 'Ok, but... So you would never accept a person like me?' And he was like, he was answering me: 'Yeah, I would never do that, because you are not a Danish person.' I was like: 'But I live here, I'm born here in Denmark.' And then I asked him: 'So, but what about the Christians, the women who are Christians who live in ... ?' Oh, I forgot what they are called...

I: Monasteries, or..?

Interviewee J: Yeah, they also have scarfs on their head. Yeah. I told him, 'they also have scarfs, so don't you see them as Danish people?' And he was like: 'I do actually see them as some people who are Danish.' And I was like: 'How? I also have scarfs on. And actually, the quite Dane scarf kind of.' And he was like: 'Yeah, but it's because they came before you guys came.' So, he wanted to accept some people who were before... before us. But he doesn't, he would never accept the Islam community, if you can call it that, a kind of community. And that hit me very very very good, that hit me very good. And there were so many people there. Everybody was listening. At the end they were like: 'Ok, but how could you accept me then if I don't live in Tingbjerg? How could you accept if I go out and I actually study? I do work. I do go and do all these things that you want me to do. But at the same time, you will never accept me.' And one of the guys was like: 'How could you accept me for ... all these - you would never accept me for all these things, but you are the ones who told me that I will never be anything. I will never be someone Danish.' And he was like: 'Ja, I don't see you, I don't see you as a Danish person, because I know that you are gonna do something wrong and you will end up in jail. And then, that's how your son is gonna be, too. And that's how your grandson is gonna be, too.' So, things like these hit me. And then I just ... I got off then there and just thought it to debate and talk and add some question.

I: Thanks for sharing. I think it's a... Yeah, I don't even know what to say about it, to be honest.

Interviewee J: I think I still have that video when I asked them about that. Maybe I could send it to you. If you want to see it.

I: I honestly would love to see his facial expression because it's...

Interviewee J: He was just like...

I: I can't say that I can understand it because obviously I don't, I'm not facing the same issues as you do. But I definitely hear you and I, ...

Interviewee J: In Denmark we are saying it's a free country. You have this free right to say, to take any religion you want. In Denmark we are saying that you can... free right to say whatever you want to. And there is no racism in Denmark. But at the same time there is. On the other side there is racism in Denmark. There is no free right to... from your own will to take the religion, or the religion that you want to take because you are afraid of the answers or how other people will see you. So...

I: How much of a topic is that then also within your organisation? Like, are you all, do you all have a Muslim background and how much does this influence also how you support each other in this situation especially?

Interviewee J: So, we are... I think we are only, there is only one, her name is Interviewee H you saw her last time, she is from [*Danish non-profit organisation*], she is only helping us. She is also with the [*Youth organisation A*]. But the - us who are younger than her, we are all Muslim from what I remember. We are all [*inaudible*]. So, it hits us every time we hear something about that.

I: How much does it then in some way also help to be part of this community and to support each other? Or is it actually a topic to provide this kind of support then?

Interviewee J: Like we... We are supporting each other, yeah. And our community in Tingbjerg is also supporting us. And I know also... The most of Copenhagen is supporting us, from what I know. But at the same time... I don't think that... I don't think if we didn't have all this support from the people around us, we could end this [*inaudible*]. So yes.

I: Maybe this is a bit of a strange question, but is it maybe... Or in which way does this outside perception, I mean it's obviously not a perception but it's just pure racism, but in which way does this then also inform your work within [*Youth organisation A*]?

Interviewee J: So, how could ... All of the girls who are a part of [Youth organisation A] are from different backgrounds. And I think most of the people who live in Tingbjerg are all from different background. I see it like this: If we didn't have each other to lean back on, we wouldn't be there where we are right now actually. We - I actually do have some examples. So, one of my friends, closest friend, she had some homework she had to do from her school, and it was like a report or something, I don't remember. She did that with her friend and her friend is originally Danish. Her background is Danish. They did it together, but they didn't put each other's names on the paper. So, when this girl, who is originally Danish, she gave it to her teacher. She gave her 10 or 12. And when my friend gave it to her teacher, he only gave her 7. Could you see it? Could you see what I mean?

I: Yes, truly yes. I just don't know what to say, I'm sorry.

Interviewee J: Yeah, it's fine, it's fine. And I also saw it when I applied for a job back then. I used my, one of my Danish friend's application. I only put my name on it. And then they were like: 'Oh sorry for you. We are not looking for any.' And when she sent hers, and her name was like, her name is [common 'Danish' name], and they were like: 'Ja, ok, when can you start?' So, again. If I didn't have my friend who is with me in this organisation, we don't have the support that we give each other, I don't think that we will go this far as we are right now.

I: In which ways do you then support each other?

Interviewee J: We support each other by telling each other that we can do this. That we don't need anybody to... That we are strong enough. We are young independent women. We tell each other that just because we have another background or we don't look the same, we can still do it. Even though it's hard sometimes. But anyway, anyhow, anywho, we will always be there for each other.

I: That's great to hear that despite the circumstances that you are kind of forced to have there. You are all from Tingbjerg?

Interviewee J: Yes, we are all from Tingbjerg, we all live in Tingbjerg.

I: And did you all know each other before or were there some kind of new faces also when you joined?

Interviewee J: No, actually, I only knew 3 of them, I think. The other girls I knew them by their face, but I didn't know them by their name or who they were or something. I just knew them by their face because as I've said before - I... we know each other by our face, by their faces but not by their names. What is also quite funny.

I: Just shortly coming back to what you've just shared. I am sorry but I forgot to ask about it. So how do these different experiences that you've mentioned influence on the one hand that you do volunteer work but also that you do this specific kind of volunteer work?

Interviewee J: So, what do you mean specifically? Like...

I: Yes, I can make it a bit more small pieces, I think that's easier, I'm sorry. So, the experiences you've just shared, do they play a role in that you volunteer for [Youth organisation A] Do they motivate you to be there, to be part of it?

Interviewee J: Yes, it does. Very, very much. Because all of the things that I have went through, is one of the things that keep me activated in this organisation. It keeps me in the [inaudible] way, that I have this feeling that 'ok, some day or some time there will be something that doesn't - that nobody will call Tingbjerg for a ghetto'. Or this racism that there are wouldn't be here soon I hope. So, all these things that I went through, is helping me and motivating me, to like keep focusing on all this.

I: I think that's what I wanted to aim at with that question so thanks for answering. I'm sorry, you've mentioned so many so interesting and very valuable things that I'm like jumping a bit back and forth between my notes and what you've just said. So sorry, if you're kind of missing a red thread, but I'm... Yes, I think what I would also be super interested in, is when you've just said that it has an influence the so called "ghetto-label" of Tingbjerg, is this also a topic within your organisation, even after you've issued the letter to the housing minister? I mean there you specifically addressed this specific label, but is it also apart from there a topic of your work?

Interviewee J: Yes, I think it is still a topic of work, in work, when I'm out with my friends and when I'm home. Because you see it everywhere, you see it on the media, social media, you see, ... you hear it in some other places. Like, if you go out, some people will just say it out loud 'just go back to the ghetto'. Or, yeah... So, this topic is, would never like 'close'. I think it will only like close when the politicians are stopping using the word "ghetto".

I: Yeah. If you say, it never stops and it kind of... maybe this is... maybe this is accurate: It hunts you to whatever you're doing. If you're applying for a job or if you're going to school. How does -

Interviewee J: It is like quite hard to apply for a job or something, because they know about Tingbjerg. They know how... how people are there, by the social media. Like - fun fact - they can show some video, is so fun to use some time that ... if they, they could sometimes put a picture from another city and they, and then they will write about Tingbjerg. So, all the things that like they see and hear about Tingbjerg, they could be true but at the same time it couldn't be true. Sometimes it's just

things that happen for some years ago and then, they don't have anything to do or anything to talk about and then they are just trying to share it again. So yes...

I: So, what is then... What is [*Youth organisation A*] then doing against this?

Interviewee J: We are trying to tell by... I don't know if you know this, but we were on the [*big festival in Denmark*] ... Yes, we were there. And we also went on the [*festival-like meeting of young volunteers*] And we also went at the [*big meeting of volunteer organisations in a different Danish city*]. We are talking about sharing our history that we have, sharing some problems that there are. And - fun fact - most of these young kids, boys, girls or in their older age, they will come back to us and be like: 'Oh, we didn't know that, we just know that you were feeling this way.' Or: 'Oh, we didn't know that it's not that hard to live in Tingbjerg, or that it's actually, that there is actually no problem. So, it's only the social media who's trying to talk about Tingbjerg.' So yes. I think that we are trying our best to promote Tingbjerg in the most positive way that it can be. But it's, at the same time, also hard because we have the social media. So yes...

I: May I ask what your specific role in the organisation is?

Interviewee J: My role... I don't think we have a role.

I: Ah, ok.

Interviewee J: But I can say it in this way: I'm one of these who really likes to stand on the scene [stage]. I really like to talk about the problems. Like, I would never hold back. And if somebody just called me and is just like 'Hey, can we just meet and talk about the problems?' I'll be 'Yeah, I'll be there in 10 minutes'. So, but yes, as I've said before. We don't have a role. We stand at the same... Yeah.

I: Or, as me just calling you randomly and asking to talk to you.

Interviewee J: Or they would just call me randomly.

I: I think I have one more observation that I wanted to ask you about. Like, whenever I scroll through Facebook or Instagram and see what you are doing, I mainly see young women working, or being volunteers in your organisation. Do you have an explanation for that? Or is it ... Are there boys also and I just don't see them?

Interviewee J: Actually, we are only girls. But I think it's because we are one of those who really want to talk about the issue that we have in Tingbjerg. But we do have some boys. I think we have 2 boys in Tingbjerg. But... As I've said before, [*Danish non-profit organisation*] has some other, have some other organisations. They have in Ishøj, Taastrup and all that. And there are many boys. I don't know... if I have put on my Instagram. But we also went on the, on the social media where we were on the [*festival-like meeting of young volunteers*]. There were so many boys and so many girls. So, I just think some boys from Tingbjerg are like 'We don't want to talk about the issue that we have in Tingbjerg because it's never going to stop'.

I: Ok, so I mean it was just out of curiosity. I was wondering...

Interviewee J: Yeah, it's fine.

I: Yes, let me just have a brief look at what I wrote down. I don't know, I have those question of ... What is your motivation? And I guess it's way too broad and you also kind of mentioned it in-between. But maybe state it in like a few more sentences. Like, why did you decide to volunteer for [*Youth organisation A*] and not for any other organisation? What motivates you?

Interviewee J: Because I, the motivation is that I live in Tingbjerg. And I also have 2 younger sisters who only see the good things about Tingbjerg because they are still in high school ... but yes. So, I don't want my sisters to face the same problems as I did or as my friends did. As soon as they go out of their high school and then have to start in the 10th grade or 11th grade or something. I don't want them to face the same problems as me. And when they want to apply for a job, I don't want them to see, how some ... people can be, how mean they can be, when they [*inaudible*]. So, it's much about my sisters and also about the place that I live in, because [*inaudible*] the place that I live in and, I know this is weird, but I feel Tingbjerg is my home. Not, not only because in the place that I live in, but I feel the whole Tingbjerg is my home. And all these people who live in Tingbjerg is quite a family for me, because I know them all.

I: To be honest, that doesn't sound weird at all, it just sounds very very nice actually.

Interviewee J: Oh, thank you.

I: So, I already took so much from your time but I have one small question still. Are you also working together with other organisations? So, I know about [*Danish non-profit organisation*], I always pronounce it wrong. I've talked to Interviewee H already. But are you also collaborating with other organisations or groups?

Interviewee J: Do you mean about the [*Danish non-profit organisation*]?

I: Yes, through that or also beyond for certain projects for example.

Interviewee J: Yes, so when they have some projects, they... and they want to collaborate with me or chat with me about it. And they ask me if I want to be... with them... I would never say no. Of course, I would say yes. And that could be in so many things. But at the same time... Before the pandemic came, I was a model for the - for a clothing line where only girls with a scarf are on. And I used that as... to promote, to tell the girls in some way that they can be as stylish as they want and they can be themselves, even though they have the scarfs on. So, every time [*Danish non-profit organisation*] has something about scarfs or racism or something, I will always be there, and I will always talk about it.

I: Is it... I don't know how to say it. But is it tiring for you to repeat the same issue again and again, also talking with me now.

Interviewee J: No, it's not. It's actually, it's not fun, it's not tiring, it's just... some people just have to face the problem. And I am one of them. I really want to face these problems. I really want to face these issues that there are. So, if I'm not going to do it, who is going to do it? As I said before. I can repeat myself all over again. Just the last, until everyone knows that there are some problems that we have to face. And we have to see what we can do about it.

I: Yes, thank you so so much for taking your time and even more for sharing so much today. I really really appreciate it. Is there anything more that you feel like I didn't ask you that you really want to share about either Tingbjerg or [*Youth organisation A*] or about yourself, your message that you want to...

Interviewee J: Yes, there is actually one question. The question is: When are you going to come to Tingbjerg so that I can show you around?

I: I am in Copenhagen, and I live very close, so I would be super happy -

Interviewee J: Oh, you are in Copenhagen!

I: Yes, I am.

[Small talk, *Farewell*]

Interviewee K

Sunday, 20. June 2021

Interview conducted on phone

[*Introduction to the research, asking about oral consent to record the interview*]

I: So yeah, maybe let's just start then. So my first question would be, do you actually also live in Tingbjerg?

Interviewee K: Yes, I do. I have been living here for 11 years now.

I: 11 years ... And you have lived in Copenhagen before, or was this also when you moved here?

Interviewee K: I moved from another city called Odense, where I lived 12 years, and then we moved to Tingbjerg in 2010.

I: May I ask how old you are now.

Interviewee K: Yes. I'm 22, I will be 23 in a month.

I: Ah ok, so almost half of your life.

Interviewee K: Yeah.

I: So what is your role then at [*youth organisation B*]? What are you doing specifically?

Interviewee K: So I am what you would call a ... sorry, I need a translation for this, I don't know exactly what the English word is ... it's called vice-chairman I think. So we have a chairman and then I am the vice-chairman. And also I'm leading a traveling team, where we have ... 12 younger kids that are ... what is the word [*tilgangsmedlem?*] ... that are associated with us, that we work with within our team. And then also we have - I have five other volunteers in my team. So what we do is ... I'm the, what you call the leader, and then the other volunteers, we help each other and organise and plan for the upcoming weeks and what we are going to do.

I: Could you tell a bit more what you specifically do within this travel part?

Interviewee K: So the goal was to travel to Turkey actually to do volunteer work, and also to give them a cultural understanding of the country and its history and all of that. But that was the goal 2 years ago. But because of Corona, we are not able to travel, so instead we will be travelling within Denmark ... I don't know the city yet, we haven't really found a location, but where we - our main focus will be on other things instead. So we are going to have a ... what is it that it's called ... there is a volunteering organisation called [*Danish non-profit organisation*] that will help us facilitate some of the workshops. So we are still in the planning phase, so we haven't really found what our main goal will be. But, yeah ... but we know that we will be traveling, and there will be some learning and ... yeah, incorporated in this - on this trip.

I: Learning in what regard? Like what are you aiming at?

Interviewee K: Yeah, learning - so at [*youth organisation B*], we have 5 core values, and that ... let me see, it's hard to translate it immediately to English ... I don't know if this makes sense in English, but when I translate it's 'formation', it's called 'dan-nelse' in Danish, it makes more sense in Danish - typical activity, education, traveling, and the last one I forgot - yeah, that's some of our core values in [*youth organisation B*], that is very important for us to have within this trip. Yeah. But other than that, not only do we have the traveling team, we do actually also have two other active teams, the other one is called the initiative for boys and the third one is called 'pige-fællesskabet' ... fællesskab, what is the word ..?

I: Community?

Interviewee K: Yeah. But I do not have much insight in that, because there are other volunteers who work with them.

I: Ok, thank you. And why did you choose to join the travel part of the initiative, or did you have another before.

Interviewee K: This actually has something to do with the history of [*youth organisation B*]. When I first started, it was actually only the traveling team that was active. We did not have any other team, but it got - [*youth organisation B*] got way more popular and wanted to do something more for kids, but we knew that we won't be able to travel with that many kids. So what we did was, there were many boys and girls who contacted us, and that way the pige-fællesskabet and the drengen initiativet got established. So when I first started it was only the traveling team, and that's why I volunteered for that ... for that team.

I: Yeah, that makes sense. And why did you choose to join [*youth organisation B*] in the first place?

Interviewee K: So it started with - I have always had a passion for volunteering work, and I've always wanted to do things that really wasn't - where there wasn't available in my childhood. So when I was younger, I would go to a club, but it wasn't ... for me it was just like a place that you could play, that wasn't really ... many facilities and things like ... [*inaudible Danish word*], I don't know how to say it in English, do you understand what's it?

I: Could you repeat it please, sorry

Interviewee K: Mh ... Excursion? Is that what it's called? Like trips outside and things like that, education also. So ... And I've always had a passion for serving my community, and so - it obviously first started in Tingbjerg, and I thought this is perfect for me, and I knew it was new, like we had a great impact on it also. Yeah.

I: So, the club you visited earlier when you yourself were younger, was it also within Tingbjerg?

Interviewee K: No, it was not in Tingbjerg. This was in Odense.

I: Ok. And when you came to Tingbjerg, were there any kind of similar activities that you could have joined there?

Interviewee K: There were, probably, but because I was so new and I really didn't have ... I mean, the only friends I had was from school and that was not in Tingbjerg, so I really didn't have a connection to the community in Tingbjerg other than that. Yeah.

I: And ... Like how did you get to know about [*youth organisation B*], are you kind of connected to the other volunteers before? Or how did it happen that you ended up there?

Interviewee K: It just popped up on my Instagram actually, I did not know anyone, it just popped up like in ... the announce ... yeah, I just clicked, then I could recognise some of the children that were on the pictures. And so I thought 'why is this girl on the picture?' kind of. And then I just contacted them.

I: And how would you nowadays describe the community among the volunteers?

Interviewee K: I mean, I think it's great. We have a [*inaudible*] the others, because we have been active now for two years, so what we do now is that every summer we do trips and stuff like that, but all groups of volunteers also - some of the volunteers who are available also ... oh my god, my English is so bad ... they catch a debate... or some of the volunteers who [*inaudible*] the debate, are also there, and yeah, I think it's a great place for volunteers and my ... my impression is that people are very happy, I guess, to be volunteering at [*youth organisation B*], yeah ...

I: Do you have any idea why they are happy?

Interviewee K: I haven't asked directly, so no. But our plan is to do a ... anonymous questionnaire I guess where people can fill out the environment and all of that. So yeah ... we haven't done that yet. But now - for now I cannot give you a specific answer, no. Specifically just my subjective ... point of view, yeah.

I: Yeah, sure. *Interviewee L* back then also mentioned that the volunteers actually are not only from Tingbjerg, but also from surrounding areas and even other cities in Sjælland. Is there - like how would you describe the dynamic between the different volunteers, like from Tingbjerg but also from the outside.

Interviewee K: I don't understand your question.

I: Ok, let me rephrase it ... Do you -

Interviewee K: The dynamics between other volunteers who are not, who are not from Tingbjerg?

I: Yeah. Do you feel there is a difference in how people work in Tingbjerg, whether they are from Tingbjerg or from the outside? If that makes sense ...

Interviewee K: No, I don't think. Actually, there aren't that many - most of our volunteers are actually not from Tingbjerg. If I can think about it, I can actually only mention two others from Tingbjerg, so we have ... many many volunteers, so ... I don't think I can - no, I mean we have a volunteer who work in Tingbjerg school who was inside in many children's ... many children's life, who are living in Tingbjerg, but no, I cannot really see a dynamic between those, no.

I: A bit back, you mentioned that you actually really enjoy working or volunteering within [*youth organisation B*]. Could you maybe elaborate a bit more on that, like what you specifically enjoy about this kind of volunteer work?

Interviewee K: Yeah. So I feel like just if I look at my ... the children that are connected to my team, I mean I can see a huge difference between when they first started and now. [*short interruption*] So ... I can see a huge difference between when I first started and how the young kids that are connected to my team were and how they [*inaudible*] now. And so, one of the things is that we have really been working on their ability to only - to actually speak in a public forum and we did ... we had an arrangement called 'too cool for school' where when we first introduced them to the ideal where they would talk about the school - not problems, but some of the ... some of the challenges they have within the school, they wouldn't really talk loud about it, but after the, our arrangement, some of them would actually publicly go on stage and talk to a whole publikum. So that's one of the small things that I do enjoy, where I can see ok, you know these young kids actually have so much potential and they're grown so much, yeah. And that's some of the things - and also we have a ... how can I say it - we did a car wash ... what do you call - a car wash thing in Tingbjerg where cars could come and get their cars cleaned, and in the beginning they were like 'no we are not going to do it', but they actually did it. So that's one of the things. What else? And also just when they contact us and ask like 'when can we meet again? when can we do something again?' and, you know, that is also a sign for me that they actually do love being part of [*youth organisation B*]. And especially in Corona, we couldn't really gather and do stuff like we did, because we used to actually meet every single Monday and have a meeting, and sometimes it would be for purpose, and sometimes it would just be for fun and where you could do ... challenges and play boards ... different types of, yeah, different types of games and ... yeah, so - also when they just ask about us and ask 'when can we gather again?', that also is a sign for me that they actually love being a part of [*youth organisation B*]. And they were so bumped up also that we couldn't travel to Turkey, so ... I hope this other trip to ... elsewhere in Denmark will be a ... how do you call? ... comfort, yeah, comfort for them.

I: It sounds really rewarding, yeah, I can imagine. So who are the participants then? Are they mixed gender?

Interviewee K: Yes, they are. So rejseholdet is actually the only - not actually, rejseholdet and we have also something ... yeah, rejseholdet is mixed-gender, drengens initiativet is for the boys, and pigefølleskabet is for the girls. Yeah. And we also do have a thing called 'Globus' where children can come and get help with their homework and stuff, but that started - but that idea started in Corona, so we haven't really been able to - we have done it maybe two or three times, so children could come and where our volunteers were ... help them with homework and stuff. But yeah. Corona has been very ... distracting, so ... yeah. And that's also for everybody ... in Tingbjerg actually, or just elsewhere, it should be like an open ... option, yeah.

I: Mh, I can imagine, yeah. And how old are they in general, the participants?

Interviewee K: So ... my team was ... a range between 15 to 17 years of age. Yeah. The others are a bit younger, drengensinitiativet are between ... or it's estimated to be between 13 to 15, 13 to 14, and same with the girls.

I: Let me just have a brief look at what I wanted to ask, because you already mentioned so much ... Yeah, maybe coming back to the other volunteers and you as well. Is it ... Do you also have connections to other organisations working in or with Tingbjerg, you mentioned already [*Danish non-profit organisation*].

Interviewee K: So, I volunteer - I might be actually still, but I'm not that active, in [*youth organisation A*], yeah ... I do have a great, actually, samarbejde - cooperation with them. So they are actually going to help us with - not specifically [*youth organisation B*], but of [*youth organisation B*]... nej, [*youth organisation A*] and [*Danish non-profit organisation*] are really close and

connected, so they are going to help us with our ... trip we are having, and some of the workshops. Yeah. So, and I also had a lot of meetings with them, and stuff like that.

I: That's super interesting. I - so I assume you work together with *Interviewee H* from [Danish non-profit organisation]?

Interviewee K: Yes. *Interviewee H* I know very very well, she is actually the one that I'm mostly in contact with.

I: And who initiated this contact? Came it from your side or from the others?

Interviewee K: It depends on what ... what the agenda is, I guess. So if I have something that I want to plan, I contact *Interviewee H* and if she has something that she is planning and thinking of, she contacts me, so I think it's a very mutual thing, that we both contact each other. So right now with our trip, because it's from our side, and I was thinking that we could cooperate *Interviewee H* and our trip, so that she and [Danish non-profit organisation] could facilitate some workshops, could help us ... that's why I contacted her, yeah.

I: So from the very beginning you were already in contact with the other organisations then as well? Or did it just happen recently?

Interviewee K: No. So I first actually started as a volunteer in [youth organisation A], before [youth organisation B] started. And then [youth organisation B] came about, and then I was more ... not more interested, but I was really really passionate their - the type of work they are doing, because [youth organisation A] is ... they are very political in their work, whereas [youth organisation B], they are more ... how can you explain - on the ground and really, we have children in our hands, if that makes sense. Yeah.

I: Makes totally sense, yeah. Maybe this is a good connection then also - how would you describe the role of [youth organisation B] for Tingbjerg as a community?

Interviewee K: I would say ... we play a big role, because we do ... we are very well known in Tingbjerg, and we ... I think I have to think about this question, if you just give me two seconds.

I: Yeah, sure.

Interviewee K: Yeah, I think that ... not only ... just in Copenhagen, but also that we are - we have so many children connected to us and ... which means that also many parents are ... are ... what is the word? ... yeah, many parents are involved. And most of our children are from Tingbjerg, and that makes a lot of conversation between parents and stuff like that, and we also have a great ... cooperation with Tingbjerg bibliotek, if you know that, and so we have access to their rooms, and their media rooms, actually whenever we want to, and we know we have a great cooperation with Fælleshaven, I don't know if you have heard of that?

I: I'm not sure, no

Interviewee K: It's like a community-based ... [inaudible] where there is [short interruption] Tingbjerg Fælleshaven is like a community-based place where they have a restaurant every single Wednesday where people can come and eat very cheap dinner, and they have like an outdoor gardening where if I want to I can go and plant my own fruit and vegetables and stuff like that, so it's a place that we in Tingbjerg are very very happy with. We have also had cooperations with that place, and they're actually talking about shutting it down, I don't know really why, but I will be participating in a meeting where me and *Interviewee H* actually are going to talk about what we can do to not shut this place down. Yeah. And so I think we have, we have like a voice or something to say, because we have so many children and young people involved here, connected to us, and not only in Tingbjerg but actually in Copenhagen. We have had so many different types of cooperations with ... yeah, with other organisations and stuff like that, so I think we - I don't want to claim that we are, you know, super super well-known, but I think we are uprising. People are mentioning us in ... in different places and stuff like that. Yeah.

I: Yeah, I mean that's obviously great. When you said, you feel like your voice is heard now, by whom is it heard and by whom wasn't it heard before?

Interviewee K: By what?

I: By whom is it heard and who didn't listen to you before you organized in this big way?

Interviewee K: So, I think first and ... firstly the parents. I think that ... many parents are ... or we can think that many parents are trusting us, that's very very important for our work, because if we don't have the consent of the parents, we can't really do the work that we are doing. So I would - yeah, I would say they are so - they are firstly the most important. But other than that ... I would say ... I would ... Can you, can you repeat the question again, sorry.

I: Sure. When you said that you will have the presentation together with *Interviewee H*, you said 'ok, our voices are heard now', so I was wondering who didn't listen to you before you organised in such a big way?

Interviewee K: No, ok, sorry, I think I was - that was maybe wrongly said. But we haven't had the meeting yet, but I think that ... that my presence and we representing [*youth organisation B*], I think - or I hope that it would have a great impact. So that was what I was aiming for.

I: Ok, great. How do you feel then as a young person from Tingbjerg? Is it something ... Yeah, maybe ... I don't know how to phrase it. Because there is so many debates also happening now with the redevelopment in Tingbjerg, like how is it then to be a young person in Tingbjerg, and even being engaged in the community?

Interviewee K: I don't really ... so ... I don't really know how to answer that question, because Tingbjerg is the only thing that I know of in 10 years, so I don't know any other reality, I don't know any other ... I only know my life and this is how it is. And so yeah, in - I don't really think that it has some challenges that I live in Tingbjerg, or I don't really feel it, but ... yeah, I just - I really don't know any other ways to ... answer that question to be honest with you.

I: Yeah, it's totally fine. Is it then that Tingbjerg as a place and as a place which has also ... yeah, certain perspective from the outside, does this perspective from the outside also influence how you do your work at [*youth organisation B*] - or not work, but volunteer work?

Interviewee K: No, not actually. I think we just look at our participants and look at ... you know, what kind of challenges they are facing, and how we can - what we can do to improve it. And, you know, we do have so many participants, so obviously we can't really look individually, but there are some, there are some things that are common - that are more common within some of the cultures than others, if that makes sense. And that's also, be something like ... them not liking to ... talk in a huge forum or in front of many people, and that's what we like to - that's just an example now, but some of the things that we would like to improve on. Yeah.

I: So also when you plan your trip now, is it something that you openly communicate, that you are a volunteer organisation from Tingbjerg, or is it more that you are a volunteer organisation working with youth in general - like how prominent is Tingbjerg in your work?

Interviewee K: It's very prominent. So our goal - our main goal is actually to become national, if that makes sense. So ... we actually don't exclude us with space that we only work in Tingbjerg, because we have also [*inaudible*] some of our partners are not from Tingbjerg. We are very open to ... opening other ... or, you know, becoming more ... yeah, oh my god, my English is so bad, I'm so sorry ...

I: No, please, please don't!

Interviewee K: Yeah, but we will ... we will like to become more, how would I say, more huge, or more national. But as of now, Tingbjerg is very very prominent, because we are mostly in Tingbjerg, and most of our children - or most of our participants are from Tingbjerg, so yeah.

I: Maybe you can answer this as a vice-chairperson. Why do you want to become bigger and kind of ... broaden your outreach to other areas?

Interviewee K: So, the most important thing for us is obviously to make a change. So it really doesn't matter if we have 15 or 50 participants, but because of our ... there are many many people who ask about us, and, you know, come to participate, but we don't really have the resources to take in other participants right now, so that is actually why we would like to open up other - or, just more nationally in our work. But we - and also we have to include more in our own work, and within our volunteering and other stuff. There are so many things that could be more improved before we can ... yeah, before we can open more, if that makes sense.

I: Yeah, for sure.

Interviewee K: But we are definitely open to it. Yeah, we are definitely open to it and that's also one of our main goals. But I don't know if that will be in one year, two years, three years, yeah.

I: Yeah, I guess it's a process that has just started really. Maybe as a kind of last question. Is there - like ... Ok, let me rephrase it. So you have a lot of youngsters already within your organisation, do you feel like there is need to include more? Like are there more people who would like to participate but just can't because you don't have the capacities yet?

Interviewee K: Yeah. So we do actually have had several people asking for their sister or asking for their younger brother, if they could participate in especially the traveling team, there is so many who would love to participate in that one, but we just really don't have the capacity to it. And also we want to start this as a pilot project, so we just want to see how it goes, and if it is successful maybe we could include other volunteers, than make maybe two traveling teams or stuff like that, but that is really not ... possible as of for now.

I: And what are the youngsters looking for when they come to you?

Interviewee K: What they are looking for?

I: Yeah, are they looking for having a community, or are they specifically looking for to get help with their homework or ...

Interviewee K: Yeah, so that ... I think is very very different from children to children, but what is very repetitive and common is definitely the feeling of community and just having a place where you can meet your friends, because many of them are friends and know each other and go to the same school. So yes, they ... yeah, definitely community. And others only come for homework and that's all, and yeah ...

I: Ok, great.

[Small conversation, end of recording]

Interviewee L

Sunday, 22. November 2020

interview conducted in person at her workplace

[Translated from Danish]

[Introduction to the research, asking about oral consent to start recording]

I: Have you been part of the founding process *[of youth organisation B]*?

Interviewee L: Yes, it was me who started it. I am the founder. It started as a pilot project, so it should have been just a project, and then it evolved and became an association where we now have seven projects, right? So I was involved in starting it. And the reason for actually starting it that time was more because I had some free time and I've been volunteering for many years so I thought now I can try and do something nearby because I moved from Nørrebro to Husum, so Tingbjerg was close by, so you could maybe do something now.

[Interviewee L talks about how the project got bigger and bigger and how more and more people joined. I ask when they started. Interviewee L answers that it was in February 2019. I ask what kind of projects they are doing. Interviewee L answers that all their projects are following their five core values (education, community, well-being, movement, and creativity. At the moment around 25 volunteers are supporting the projects.)]

I: And who is volunteering in your initiative? Is it very different or,-

Interviewee L: That are young people at the age of 20-26. The majority,- actually all are from a different ethnic background and have a Muslim background, like myself. And that are just different volunteers we've recruited from Instagram, Facebook or that are your friends' friends and so on. And so we have contact with and work with around 62 young people that we kind of met, right? Who are a part of our organisation.

[I ask how many people are reached with the initiative's projects. Interviewee L answers that there are around 62 people active in the projects at an age of 11-20 years. I ask why Interviewee L started the initiative in Tingbjerg and not in Husum, where she's living. Interviewee L explains that she chose Tingbjerg because she wanted to separate her work life from her private life. And Tingbjerg was a good place to start then because it's close to Husum while at the same time far enough away to have this separation. Also the other volunteers are not only coming from Tingbjerg but from all over Copenhagen and some even from other parts of Sjælland. Interviewee L thinks that the community within the group of volunteers is pretty good and that this is one of the main reasons why the other volunteers joined her initiative. The initiative is working together with other associations and local stakeholders in Tingbjerg and Copenhagen. Interviewee L normally initiates meetings for the volunteers as well, but because of Corona that was cut short. She talks also about some of the volunteers working for other projects as well, while others only participate in this one project. Interviewee L continues talking about how she found the initiative and how she was volunteering for another organisation in Tingbjerg before.]

I: And why did you decide to make an own organisation and not leave it within the structures that are already there?

Interviewee L: Because there were different people, who reached out to us and asked whether we could do something. And it was easier to structure that ourselves, and then we also have some goals in the hope that one day we ourselves will be bigger and have our own room where we can continue to work with young people, because we work in a different way. We are not a normal club where you just come and have fun, but we also are not a school that like our efforts focus on other things, it's a bit of a mixture of having fun but also learning something because you are here for a reason, you are here to learn something while having fun. And it felt better to do it independently because it has given us a lot of opportunities. So we started as a project and now we are... now we have seven projects, right?

[I ask which was the project they've started with.]

I: And it's also that you reach out to the young ones from Tingbjerg and ask what do you need, and then they kind of try to,-

Interviewee L: Yes, for example, we asked them in relation to some sports, because sports projects have helped to start with, some sports in Tingbjerg. And then they have said that we want dance, or we want boxing, and so that's what we kind of started with in the beginning, right?

[I ask where the ideas to start projects mainly come from. Interviewee L answers that it's both the volunteers and suggestions from the (potential) participants. Interviewee L continues talking about how they organise the projects. The participants know each other from school for example and also meet outside of the organised activities. But they also organise the activities to offer some alternatives to just spending time outside and doing 'nothing'.]

I: And,- Like very broad question, but what motivates you to do all this volunteer work? I assume it's a lot.

Interviewee L: The way young people receive it. Also,- the feeling that, that the young, first,- At first they don't look at you or think 'What are you, what are you for, what's your actual agenda?'. But then when you are received and they accept you, that,- that's really the most motivating thing, because then you have them,- Then you've been accepted, right? But it's definitely the joy you see in young people and parents too. So when parents say thank you for taking our children out, or thank you for doing something with our children, and call us, that's also really motivating.

[I ask whether Interviewee L also gets some recognition from other institutions in Tingbjerg. Interviewee L agrees and speaks about the support they get from other stakeholders.]

I: And how would you describe which role does [youth organisation B] have for Tingbjerg as a neighbourhood?

Interviewee L: *[Talks about how the initial thought isn't just to serve the young in Tingbjerg but also from other areas close by.]* So the goal for us is really to be able to initiate some of the same projects in other areas as well. Because we can kind of feel, ok how, but also to create this,- 'unity' so this community about 'ok, we ... we are actually all from Copenhagen'. Just because you're from Tingbjerg, it doesn't mean you can go to Mjølnerparken, or just because you're from Mjølnerparken doesn't mean you can go to Amager, it, well, should be the same. And it's a bit like that, the spreading the community for us means a lot, that is it. So, at the moment we work with Tingbjerg. But the goal is to grow and work at more places, right? So yes, I don't look at it as an area, so I don't look at the young persons and think, 'you're a young person from Tingbjerg, and because you live in Tingbjerg so be it', but Tingbjerg was just the area I moved closest to, and therefore it just became that, and it's now the young people we focus on, because the young people are much more than just being from Tingbjerg. And that's kind of what I think is forgotten when talking about it overall. It becomes all about 'you are from this and this place', but you're much more than that. And the more we talk about it, the more they feel it too. So, they keep saying, when you, because we are from Tingbjerg, and so on. It's not, there's no one called. So,- So yes, so that's why we have a very big focus on talking about the young people, as young people, and that they just live in a social belastedet area because that's what you've kind of chosen to call it, that's what you've given and that's what it is,- it's a ghetto, well 'ghetto' ghetto, but don't get me wrong, that's what you look at it politically and you know it's families that have socio-economic difficulties, or don't have the same opportunities, have some challenges,- *[Interviewee L continues talking about the young people and how they get in contact with the organisation.]*

I: So it's also that,- if I understood you right, that you try to,- by purpose reach out to other areas to not just focus it on Tingbjerg, but to actually try to get others in, to kind of make this mix of people, kind of get the stigmatisation of the area, that this is not so prominent in your work, but it's more focused on the youngsters themselves?

Interviewee L: Yes, that's correct. That's why,- we are looking for a room for our meetings with young people, but,- but we don't want a room in Tingbjerg, because if we're there, we're also stuck, but if we find a room across Frederikssundsvej, then we're neutral. That means that even when the young people come, they are just young, so there is nothing like that, right? So yes.

[I ask whether there are also participants who have before joining the projects never been to Tingbjerg before. Interviewee L denies first but then tells about a soccer tournament they've organised where also young people came who normally don't spend time in Tingbjerg. She then switches topic and talks about the initiative's plans for the future.]

I: But do you still feel like it influences your work that there is this stigmatisation of Tingbjerg, or is it not relevant for what you do there?

Interviewee L: It has an impact in the way that it motivates you, at least that's true for me. At one point in the beginning when I met some of the young people, they told me that uhm, because they're from Tingbjerg, they can't become anything, they end up being here and, they end up being criminal. And so that was a motivation for me, because I think, that's not right, well there's no such thing, right? *[continues talking about what impact the stigmatization has on the young people]* But now the thing is it's everything, so political comments, Rasmus Paludan who comes to the area and on YouTube, on the phone, Instagram, TikTok, it's everywhere. So a child of 8 years sees it if they have a mobile phone, have a smartphone, then they can read. And if you as a child keep hearing the same thing over and over again, it's certainly,- I was told in high school when I had psychology, if you keep telling a monkey it is stupid, then the monkey will eventually think 'ok, I'm stupid', and that also applies to children. Because they take it too ... they make it part of their identity. And that's something that motivates me a

lot, because we, we shouldn't do that. I know our young people have difficulties, but I would never go over to them and say we're doing our work because they have difficulties. Then I stigmatise them, and they take it on and then they feel,- then they feel different, we have to meet them at their own level, well we just have to go and talk to them. [*continues talking about her approach*] But when the general stigmatisation continues to be said when politicians, or other public people, choose to use negative-charged comments about areas, it motivates me, to kind of remind the kids 'remember, that's not really who you are', and that, that's not something you can do by saying to them, but they know [*inaudible*] and know to treat them like normal other people.

[*Interviewee L continues talking about her approach. I ask whether she understands her work as political work. Interviewee L denies and emphasises that the projects and the participants are not meant to set a political statement. I raise the question whether some former participants of the projects became volunteers in the organisation themselves. Interviewee L explains that this is not the case because the participants are mostly too young to volunteer. Interviewee L talks about the project's plans for the future. I ask then whether Interviewee L thinks that some topics are not covered by the initiative. Interviewee L says that there's always room for improvement and new ideas.*]

Interviewee L: Yes, but that's it. That are our young people. What I think it does is,- we accept them. Well, even though we volunteers work with them and the young people they know it, but when we talk about it we talk as a unit. So, we're united in that. If we're selling soft drinks at a football match, we're also there with them selling. And that gives this, that gives a sense of community.

[*Small talk, end of recording*]

Interviewee M

Monday, 26. July 2021,

Interview conducted in-person in Tingbjerg

[*Translated from Danish*]

[*introduction to the interview and research aim, asking about consent to record the interview*]

I: When did you move to Tingbjerg?

Interviewee M: 2 years ago.

I: And why did you move?

Interviewee M: Yes, why did I move... I've received,- so, we have had a small apartment and the children got bigger. So I was waiting to receive a 4-bedroom apartment and I've been waiting very, very long. And the only place I got offered an apartment was in Tingbjerg. And in the beginning I really was against moving to Tingbjerg, because I've had a son who was 12 years old. But I gave in, because I needed more rooms because it didn't work anymore. He had a room and my daughter had a room, I lived in the living room or she lived in the living room, or I used the bedroom – that was unbearable. So I just said "yes" and thought to move in, but keep an eye on my child. Then nothing happened. That's why.

I: And why were you in the beginning against moving to Tingbjerg?

Interviewee M: That was because you're hearing so much about it. We have been many many times in Tingbjerg voluntarily and have had many activities in Tingbjerg, even though I wasn't living in Tingbjerg. And I know that there is a hard core of criminals who would like to attract more. And that's why it was simply to protect my son.

[*Interviewee M knew Tingbjerg before she moved there, she had worked in the area before, was part of different clubs in Tingbjerg and was working there as a volunteer with women.*]

I: So a very general question, but how would you describe Tingbjerg today?

Interviewee M: Tingbjerg will be described as undergoing a cosmetic surgery. It's in development right now. Tingbjerg, it's under great development. It's not that what you think it is... like Vanløse or Valby. It is what it is. But Tingbjerg is under development. I think just since I moved here a lot has happened. They're building bike lanes, there's going to be new nursing homes, there's going to be new shops, there's going to be condos, and condo townhouses, condo- all possible. So, it's under development a lot.

I: And what do you think about the development?

Interviewee M: I think it's good. I think it's really really good that something is happening, because it's been listed as a 'belasted ghetto' for many, many years. There's been different forces towards like moving parts, but it maybe... it's maybe some new types of people coming in, you have more 'ressourcestærk' family coming in and maybe lifting the area.

I: So what do you like the most about Tingbjerg now?

Interviewee M: What I like most about Tingbjerg is first of all the green surrounding. The location, you are 6 minutes away from other cities but you're still in a nice natural surrounding. The silence in Tingbjerg, it is quite silent in the night. And in addition it is like a small village (lille landsby) where many know each other. And in general you just feel comfortable.

I: And.. since you've said that in the beginning you were a bit against moving to Tingbjerg, because it might be a bit criminal maybe... Is it also something you have experienced since you've moved here? Or is it just something that you've heard before?

Interviewee M: I've heard it, I've seen it but I've also experienced it by myself after we've moved here. Because even though I was paying a lot of attention about what my son is doing and where he is going and who he is meeting, I still couldn't prevent him from getting in contact with this in the bus or on the street. He was being threatened with a knife, or his wallet was stolen. He has experienced some really bad things. He was beaten, because he didn't want to be a part of the whole criminal thing here. And I have fought for us to get out already 3 months after we have moved in. But I couldn't do it.

[Interviewee M is stating that it's difficult to control who the child has contact with and gets influenced by. Her son doesn't go to school in Tingbjerg but her daughter does.]

I: After now that you've said what you like a lot about Tingbjerg, is there also something that could be improved here?

Interviewee M: What there can be improved in Tingbjerg? This is the crime rate for sure. There is a hard core, which is known for attracting young people from the neighborhood. They go after the boys of single moms, they go after the boys who don't have a strong family support, they go after the boys who don't have a big brother or uncle, who can protect them. And... either they attract them with money or ... yes with money and presents or they are going to be threatened with being beaten up. That is what I think is Tingbjerg about.

I: How would you then describe the community here in Tingbjerg?

Interviewee M: The community - I've always said that Tingbjerg is many minorities within a minority. Because the society sees Tingbjerg only as one minority. But if you live here, you see that here are many different minorities. And that also surprised me a lot, that for example Somalian women have their own associations, Pakistani women have their own association, Moroccan women have their own association, Danes have their own association. So it is divided quite a lot in nationalities. We have also a group of Filipinos and Polish workers, I think they have also their own. So, we are quite divided in the district/neighborhood (bydelen).

I: How do you feel about that?

Interviewee M: I don't think it is good. Mainly because of the integration and collaboration (samarbejd). That is my own opinion.

[Interviewee M explains, that she doesn't feel like she belongs to a certain nationality, she thinks nationality is not important and shouldn't be taken into account when getting in contact with other people. That is also what she advocated when she was working as a volunteer with women in Tingbjerg.]

Interviewee M: *[She is talking about her experiences with the women she was teaching and that they tended to group with other women who spoke the same language]* In this community I always said, 'I would like us to speak Danish, so everyone can understand what we say to each other'. But that only helped a little bit. The Somalians continued to speak Somalian with each other. And the Turkish women spoke Turkish with each other. And I always thought 'come on!'. That just isn't right. So they come here because they want to do something, but nonetheless they stay among themselves. It's a lot like this here.

I: So do you have a lot of contact to your neighbours or are you having more contact to people living outside Tingbjerg, since you've just moved here 2 years ago?

Interviewee M: I spend a lot of time on social media, just like everyone else. But I am in really close contact with my neighbors. I have a woman living in the apartment below me, who is Danish. Then I also have my neighbour living above me who is Turkish. And on the other side is living someone from Somalia. And we are actually doing pretty well, I think. We talk to each other, and if we need anything we just ask the others, help each other. I really like that.

[I am asking who is initiating the contact. Interviewee M answers that she was always greeting the others, she also introduced herself to the new neighbours when she moved there.]

I: So would you say that is something that happens in many places in Tingbjerg or is that something special for the house you're living in?

Interviewee M: It happens a lot in Tingbjerg. But again, it depends on the nationalities somehow, that's what I've experienced. Even the young who grew up here stay with 'their own people' (deres egne folk), as far as I've seen it.

[I ask whether there are any initiatives (from the official sites) where they try to 'mix' the different minorities. Interviewee M tells about an initiative where they try it, but also there the people tend to only talk to the people they know. She also speaks about a vegetarian café where women meet and only speak Danish.]

I: You are the chairperson, right? Why did you choose to become that?

Interviewee M: Because I would like to make a difference. I would like to change something, that something happens here in the café where I've been since the beginning.

[Interviewee M speaks about her former business and the stress she had with it and her children.]

I: You've said that you would like to make a difference. Can you talk a bit more about that? What you mean by that?

Interviewee M: Make a difference for the café, because I just think that there was more potential. There was no real advertisement, it wasn't very well known, many didn't know that it exists. There weren't so many volunteers anymore. That is the difference I wanted to make both for the café and for myself. Because Tingbjerg is very multicultural. That's why I think the café in Kulturhuset should be multicultural as well to represent this district. Because of that, all the volunteers here are from different countries and different cultures. I would like the café to be known in whole Copenhagen, in whole Denmark.

[Interviewee M continues speaking about the café. I ask why Interviewee M volunteers in the café and not anywhere else. Interviewee M answers, that that is because she supports the idea of the café and it fits to her professional background. I ask why she became a volunteer. Interviewee M has been doing voluntary work her whole life, it's something "natural" to her. She just loves the work because it gives her some kind of satisfaction, makes her grow and enables her to change something.]

Interviewee M: In our kitchen for example are we not all friends, but when we meet, we have one purpose. That means that we shall make/cook something delicious, that tastes great, that looks great, it is special. And that's what we are here for. That we maybe like, how... what we think or ... that doesn't mean anything when it comes to our purpose.

[I ask how many women are in the café, which Interviewee M thinks is difficult to answer, since some are more active than others. But she thinks that around 6 people are participating on a very regular basis. She has tried to make other people join as well but wasn't really successful yet.]

I: How would you describe the role of this association here in Tingbjerg?

Interviewee M: There are many associations in Tingbjerg. I have a list about that. Again, they are divided by nationalities.

I: As you have women from very different nationalities here in your café, is this something special for Tingbjerg? That there are so many different women working together?

Interviewee M: Yes, because culture is an enrichment. It is like ... They are also learning from each other. They learn about each other's food-culture, they learn about each other's way to eat, they learn about each other's deserts. So from that perspective: We are enriched, we become smarter about other food-cultures.

I: It sounds like the whole topic is really close to your heart. [...] How would you describe Tingbjerg to someone who has never been here before?

Interviewee M: That depends on who I am supposed to describe that to and what the purpose is. I would describe Tingbjerg as a nice district (dejlig bydel). That's what I would do for sure.

I: Why nice?

Interviewee M: Because of the peace around here. I have mentioned that there is a group of hardcore criminals. But they don't represent whole Tingbjerg. We are 7.000 inhabitants and not everyone is criminal, not everyone ... Can you follow me? Of course, there is a group and I don't like them, but I don't believe they dominate the image of the neighborhood. I don't think so. And I think there's a lot of police who are patrol the whole day, they need to create a feeling of security and safety and create awareness. So I hope that it dissolves. If you can also work on, that the next generation is not recruited to become criminals, so can you in the end dissolve that. So they can become stronger or bigger. But... Tingbjerg, that is a listed ghetto under development. That is what I would say. That there are so many different people, you can not categorize them, there are so many different people here. There are some 'resourcestærke', there are some 'social belastede', but multiculturalism from all over the world, so many nationalities. And I think that is just an enrichment.

I: Is this so-called 'ghetto' something you as inhabitants also talk about or is it something that comes from the outside?

Interviewee M: The politicians, there are politicians who have labeled us a ghetto. And that is in relation to how many people from non-western countries live here, how many don't have an education (uddannelse) and how many crimes are committed. So based on these you are categorised as ghetto. And that happened to us (og det blev vi). But... but on the other hand, you

can say "ok, we have a problem, what can we do in order to solve it?" Instead of just sitting in mourning and saying "yes, but we are not a ghetto". We are one. There are social-belastede families, there are criminals, there are families who fail to meet the needs of their children. That's just there. And there are more, different districts - there you can also say in relation to how much they earn their own money or how many are taking an education there and so on. And that's how you get categorised.

I: As you have said that you do something to get out of that - What do the inhabitants do precisely?

Interviewee M: To be honest, I don't think the inhabitants are doing that much. And also not the associations, that's just how it is. They who are doing something active are the boligsocial helhedsplan, who activates/engages the young and give them 'fritidsjob'. They focus very much on the young. And boligsocial helhedsplan are also the ones who activates/engages the women who don't know the language who have lived in the country the last 30 years, but cannot write or read Danish or who,- I don't know how to say it. They really try to make a difference for the inhabitants. But to get completely off the ghetto list and be an ordinary neighborhood requires more than a 'fritidsjob' or a sewing club in a café. It requires more. That doesn't just happen from one day to another, it is a development, right?

I: Yes, for sure.

Interviewee M: There shall come some other strong [in an economical way] persons and live here. But there are not so many who want to live in Tingbjerg, because we have this reputation and that's why I only got offered apartments. You get offered many apartments in Tingbjerg, but not in Vanløse, or Hvidovre or something like that. That's almost impossible and also not in Nørrebro.

[I ask whether that is also a topic they as neighbours talk about. Interviewee M tells that it's not very common, also not in their café, since they are not very political there. She also explains, why they chose to be 'neutral' in the café. I continue asking whether also people from outside Tingbjerg visit the café. Interviewee M confirms that by saying the people from the neighbouring districts visit the café and that they also get orders from universities. And that's mainly because of the food (vegetarian, fresh, homemade, cheap).]

I: So maybe one last question. How is it now to live in Tingbjerg?

Interviewee M: How it is to live in Tingbjerg now? It is nice. I got used to it. But I still haven't got used to the mess. So, there are quite a lot inhabitants who just throw their trash on the street. There are some who pee and leave garbage in our basements, our laundry room. They smoke cigarettes there. They throw cigarette filters. There is so much trash. I don't get used to that. And I will never get used to that. That's the worst part about living here. It's just so dirty!

[Interviewee M speaks about how she can't understand how people can be so careless. She tells how people throw things out of their window or spit out of their window while people walk on the sidewalk.]

Interviewee M: That's what I'm struggling with. Besides that I think it's hyggelig [cozy], I have friends who live here. And getting a good network, some lovely friends, my daughter, she is really happy about going to school and she has found some really really good friends there who live close by. So, she plays with the other kids, it is also safe for me to send her out because Tingbjerg is not so,- how can I say it?- She can go to school by herself, she can go to Lidl by herself and she knows where her friends live and they find each other. That gives them a good childhood in relation to how it would have been if we would have lived in the inner city or Vesterbro. It is a little bit difficult. There is a community here ['sammenhold'], the children can move around way more in Tingbjerg, further away from home in a safe way. And if something would happen, there will always be one who knows who she is. So, they can contact me. That gives me some confidence. I am really happy about our forest, where there are many children during summer vacation. She had everyday someone she could play with. And that means so much to me. To see that my daughter is not just sitting around, looking at a phone screen, but she goes out and play, she slides, she crawls, and she runs, and she laughs, and she is a child. That means so much to me. And I don't think you can grow up like that in other neighborhoods. It is about the children's community ['sammenhold']. There is one school, it is a bit like a village ['landsby'] and we, the parents, know each other. And can always, you can talk, I have also found more friends at my daughter's school, through her friends. So, if you get along with the parents, you become also friends.

I: That sounds really nice.

Interviewee M: It is! But also because she is a girl. I think girls have it a bit easier than boys.

I: How old is she?

Interviewee M: 10 years.

I: So, can you imagine living here a bit longer? Or would you like to move?

Interviewee M: In the beginning I would have done anything to move. I was fighting against the municipality, against 'boligselskab', police, all possible - emergency housing,... I have fought, fought, fought a whole year just to get away. And that was hell, because I could not calm down and settle in my new home, I could not enjoy to be in my new home, I could not enjoy. It was just like being in stand-by. I needed to go. I always had the feeling we shall just go, we shall go, we shall go. Here we cannot settle. But in the end, the things fell into place. I didn't feel so threatend, my son also doesn't feel so threatend. My

daughter,- It would be very rough to remove her from these 2 years of friendship because we've moved one time before from another school where she missed the girls from the first grade, with whom she went to kindergarten, and also the first grade with. [... Interviewee M speaks about her daughter's experiences]. So because of her we've stayed here. And I would like to stay and see the development in Tingbjerg. That's what I want. It's exciting, something happens, it's not boring, always something new is happening.

I: What do you expect from the development?

Interviewee M: I expect that we get off the ghetto list.

I: What does that mean for you personally to get off the ghetto list?

Interviewee M: That means that we no longer have to be embarrassed to be a part of Tingbjerg. That we're not getting denounced so much anymore. That the people who don't want to come to Tingbjerg because they are afraid of going here, and that's seriously how it is. They think they'll get shot if they come to Tingbjerg. All of these prejudices you have. I also thought 'Why don't you just change the name so that everything changes?' Because Tingbjerg belongs to 2700 Brønshøj. It's just called Tingbjerg. And the other is called Brønshøj. And we don't have a 'kulturhus'. But now they want to build a new 'kulturhus' right on the other side in Brønshøjvej. [... Interviewee M talks about the 'kulturhus'-project] We are,- I really feel that the people who belong to Tingbjerg are just, first they think they are 'social belasted', poverty, in education and just criminal and drugs. That's what I wish that Tingbjerg gets out of that.

[I ask whether there's anything else that Interviewee M wants to talk about.]

Interviewee M: One last thing: We see with regard to our young boys who fight hard to get an education, who fight hard to be a part of the society, and would like to provide something, that they are also getting denounced to be something unjust, criminal, because they have dark hair, because they live in Tingbjerg. I also wish that would change for their own sake. Because it has been proven that if the young belong to a group, then they are just there, and they like they are there. They see themselves as what they hear they are generally and they don't deserve that. They didn't choose their parents, they didn't choose to be born here, they didn't choose to live in Tingbjerg, but they can choose their own mistakes, their education and what they can contribute to the community. And I know many who dream about becoming something big, and be a good person but if you always hear about the negative, negative, negative, it becomes difficult. That doesn't contribute to something positive if you always are nonetheless that negative. So you could just be negative. Especially as a young person, they have a hard time. Maybe they can't see how they can get out of that role. Some sing, some write poems, some are doing art, they try to express their frustration. My son also writes poems. If he writes one and I read his poems, I really cry. That makes them realize that they are seen, they feel that they are seen as something different, that they are not a part. It is just hard to grow up here.

[end of recording]
[after the recording stopped, Interviewee M shares some of her experiences of being a Muslim woman living in Tingbjerg and in Denmark more generally. She feels like other people don't perceive her as belonging to Denmark and approach her as a foreigner, often by assuming that she does not speak Danish]

Interviewee N

Thursday, 29. July, 2021

interview conducted in-person in Tingbjerg

[Introduction to the research, asking about consent to start recording]

I: And I contacted you because I saw that you were very active on Facebook and also trying to organise especially now this flea market, and bringing people together, so...

Interviewee N: Yes, we and some other neighbors, we occasionally meet outside in the garden or when we're doing grocery or something like that. And we always have the same subject. "It's a long time ago, oh, how are you? Oh, it's so a long time ago." So, me and one of my neighbors, we had this little chat about it, that we should do something, let's arrange something. And before we knew I just put it on Facebook. What do you think about this backyard market? And I was surprised that there were so many who showed their interest and they wanted to. So now it's going to happen. We are going to do it on the 8th of August. And I think the main reason of this is also because of Corona. People, they have been isolated from their loved ones, their families, their neighbors, everyone. So this is a opportunity for them to come out and just see those same people again. Even though we've talked about how it's going to be with distance and everything. But yes, ... we are just missing that.

I: Was there something like this before Corona?

Interviewee N: Not in backyards. No. I've lived in Tingbjerg for about 20 years now, I have never experienced this in backyards. Normally, before in time we've used to have summer festivals in Tingbjerg. And it used to be in this playground, Tingbjerg skole has. There used to be a small concert, food, or people having there this market and some other activities with children. And then this switched over to, what we called Tingbjerg challenge. It's a kind of sports.

I: Yes, I've seen that.

Interviewee N: It's normally always in this area at Ruten. But it's not the same what we've used to have with the festival. And I kind of miss that. Because this was more fun. And also for the grown-ups. And you don't have to be active in, bicycle, running or all that. Or just have a cup of coffee, sit down, and have a chat with some other. And no other people who live around. So,...

I: Is it that the whole neighborhood comes together or is it special, certain people, groups,...

Interviewee N: No, no special groups. It's for everyone. I read yesterday, some other have also written the same question what you were asking about. If this gathering was only for people who live in Tingbjerg. Which is not. It doesn't matter where you're coming from. We are just holding it here. But it's for everyone, so... Yes, to let people come together.

I: That's nice.

Interviewee N: Yes. You might... now will find out that you have some same interest with other people and maybe get along with them. And there are so so many lonely people. Either they are aged, and their children don't have time for them, or they have lost their job because of this pandemic, or some other reasons.

[Interviewee N talks about that she would like to spend time with some others but that she also doesn't have that much time because of her family and job. Speaks about her family.]

Interviewee N: But I think the main thing is that people do care about each other. I feel it's the media which ruins a lot of things for people around here by giving them names or putting their religion in it. Or politics or something like that. But otherwise, I see a lot of people who get so good along with each other. It doesn't matter if you're wearing a scarf unless the one is old, white dude, sorry the way I'm putting it. But people do really care about each other here.

I: Yes, that's also what I've realised. Like once you walk around the street and you smile then everyone smiles back. It's very different than in other areas. Also, like once you cross Ruten and you're outside of Tingbjerg, it's -

Interviewee N: It's totally different!

I: Yes, so that's really fascinating to see. I think this is also why I became so interested.

Interviewee N: Yes.

I: You've just mentioned two very interesting things and I would first do one and then the other. So, if you say the media ruins it a bit. Can you maybe elaborate a bit more on that? And also, whether this is a topic that you as neighbors talk about?

Interviewee N: Sometimes. But I think we are more... how do you say? - Concerned about to hurt each other's feelings maybe by giving our expressions. Some words are... put them out. I can hear [*inaudible*] from my Dane neighbors for example. Many of them, they didn't even know that I was Muslim. Because I didn't wear a scarf. And I didn't behave like the others. And I was like: "What do you mean with like others?" I mean like other Muslims? And they didn't know how to put it. And I was like: "Ok, don't worry, I don't get offended by that." I am Muslim, I do practice my religion. But I think religion is my personal thing. It's none of others' concern. And how I do it is also my personal thing.

[Interviewee N assumes that the same question would have been answered differently by another person, because she has experienced that other people are offended when others are not aware that they are Muslim.]

Interviewee N: But the media when I say media... At my work people are very concerned about where I live or where they come from. Because they come from very fancy areas and are living outside the city and all that. And then they hear I'm living in Tingbjerg. "Oh my god, how can you live in Tingbjerg?" - "What do you mean?" - "But it's a place for criminals." So, it's basically known as a place for criminals. And that hurts. Because there are so, so - I haven't met one single criminal in these 20 years I've been living here. So it's kind of funny how people put others in these small boxes. And that hurts kind of. I'm grown up. I can just answer back and be like "I don't care what you think". But I think now we have children, and they are facing the same problems. And it's kind of putting them back. When my daughter, she tells someone that she is living in Tingbjerg, most of her friends' parents won't allow them to come here and visit her, because it's not a good place, it's a ghetto. We have, - the area is called a s a ghetto. We have tried to make the politicians remove that tag, but nothing has happened yet. So, yes. And sometimes, I'm kind of amazed about that people know more about Tingbjerg than I do. Especially, when it's something, when there has been something written in a newspaper. It has happened many times, when I come and the first question "Are you ok?" - "Of course I'm ok, why?" - "Well we heard yesterday, there were shootings in Tingbjerg." - "Ok..., where?" We don't know. So Tingbjerg is a small place but not that small again. It could be anywhere. And it could occasionally be in Gladsaxe or Husum, but it's so... They just call it Tingbjerg. Everything bad that happens is in Tingbjerg. And many times media have taken pictures of the area where the shooting has been and put it in the newspaper and we can all see - this place is not in Tingbjerg. This place is in Brønshøj, Husum or anywhere else, but it's not in Tingbjerg. But it's enough,- those small things are enough to put an image on people who are not living here. So, yes. This is a thing which also make a huge gap between people living outside Tingbjerg and for them who are living in Tingbjerg. I still remember when I had to,- I was for a job interview and this person who was interviewing me, he read my address up and it seemed like he knew about the area, about Brønshøj area. So he was like "You say it's in Brønshøj?" - "Yes, it is." - "Ok, but I don't recognize that address." I say "Ok, if you make a turn from Frederikssundsvej and you go to Tingbjerg." No, you should have seen that man's face. His eyes, they were just about to pop out. He was like: "You live in Tingbjerg?" - "Yes?! I've been living there for about, - at that time I've been living here for 15 years. So I've been living there for 15 years. I'm actually very happy about it." - "Oh, ok..." He didn't know what to say or how to react. But the reaction he just has given was enough for me. I haven't forgotten it. And I'm still disgust about it, so.

I: That's crazy. Is it then also this, as you've said there is this representation from the outside, but then inside it's like -

Interviewee N: I think it depends on which eyes you're looking from. There has happened a lot during the last 10 years. I won't say 5 years, it's too small time. For about the last 10 years. I remember, when I've moved to Tingbjerg I didn't know anyone. I tried to go out, I just had a child. So, I used to go on a lot of walks with the pram and the baby and all that. Not many people used to stop up or say "hej" or anything like that. It started changing about time. I think it also depends on how,- what kind of person you self are. If you are open and you just say "hej!" even though you don't know the person, the person will be like forced to say "hej" back. And sometimes, it becomes,- you develop a friendship or you don't. Because it depends on the other person. How the person reacts. But I think the last 20 years I have seen many people who used to live here, they moved out. I think the only ones, which are left here, they are people who are up in the age. The young ones at my age, all of them they moved away. I don't remember any of them moving back again. They wanted their children to grow up in a safe environment. But also this media circus about Tingbjerg and about Islam have started a hate between people, also in Tingbjerg. If you read the group,- yes,- you will see a problem is "oh, they haven't cut the gras". Ok, booh. But before you know that "It's also because with those brown people they just throw their garbage anywhere". So it develops into something negative and it develops around to people who have not the same skin color. So I'm afraid that the development is going the wrong way. And it doesn't matter, you don't have to live in Tingbjerg to experience that. It's happening everywhere.

[Interviewee N talks about her parents' experience with racism.]

Interviewee N: Times to times I'm amazed how people they react when they hear me speaking Danish. "Oh my god, you can speak Danish?!" - Maybe I should get a stamp [*points to her forehead*]. I have sometimes thought about it. Maybe I should get a stamp "I do speak Danish". And sometimes I just do it, just to get...-make fun of them. When I just pretend, I don't speak Danish. I don't understand what they are saying. So, I just start speaking English. I'm just getting tired of that. So this whole thing, it turned to the wrong direction now. But yes, there are some positive things and there are some negative things. And I think it doesn't matter where you are from. It happens in every area. In every city, in every place.

I: Thanks for sharing. It's interesting, confusing and very much, as you've said, frustrating from your site. I do understand. As you've said, there were many people in your age especially who moved - did you ever considered moving?

Interviewee N: I have. Many times. It's not easy to get an apartment, especially if you want to have a rental. When I started looking for apartments in my younger days, I never put Tingbjerg on my list. I didn't want to move to Tingbjerg.

I: Why?

Interviewee N: Because of the stories at that time. People selling drugs everywhere. I used to go to school, Voldparken school, which is now car and energy center, that was my old school. So, I heard about Tingbjerg, but I haven't been that much here in my childhood. I was raised not far from here. But about the stories I heard - I had many classmates who lived in Tingbjerg. They used to come and tell about the most strange and scary things. And we were like "No way, we are not going to Tingbjerg". But when I started looking for an apartment, even though I've been written up for apartments since I was, I think that moment you can be written up when you are about 12 or 14 or something like that, so I think it was over 10 years. And I couldn't get one. And they kept forcing me to pick one in Tingbjerg. When I refused many times enough then they put an ultimatum for me. If I said no again, then they will remove me from the waiting list. And sadly I've heard the same thing from many other people. So most of them I have heard who have moved away from here, it's not because they've found another rental place, they have bought another one. That's the only way you can get out of Tingbjerg. I think it's,- and when the politicians start talking about ghetto, they should maybe also look into where people,- how people come to Tingbjerg. I haven't heard about one single person who has actually applied for an apartment in Tingbjerg. They are just forcing people to move here. And then they,-

I: And then again try to-

Interviewee N: And now they call a social, - how is it "belasted"? - Yes, ok, area. So, and it's like: ok, who's fault is that? All say, I don't have any issue financially or anything else. I have a child who has just finished her college and applying for university. I have a full-time job. My parents are not living far away from here. I can move anywhere if I want to. But also, when you have a child who's not working and does need financial help, then you don't have enough to save up. So, that's my reason. I can't just move away from Tingbjerg. So, that's why I keep living here. But also because I've,- I'm actually, I'm living just behind this tall building, only tall building here in Tingbjerg. So I'm living just behind that. And it's a actually very quiet area. And I'm very pleased to have to have those neighbors I have. Many of them I have known for over 10 years. The one I knew for about 18 years sadly, she died 2 years ago. She was a neighbor who was living just under my floor. And a sweet, sweet, sweet old Danish lady. The only Danish lady, neighbor who was left in the building actually. But I have some other neighbors who are living there, also some Danish. And we have such a good social networking together. And that means a lot. If you get along with this kind of people. I mean if you find some good people around you, it helps a lot. It doesn't matter where you actually live.

[I ask about the characteristics of the neighborhood.]

Interviewee N: You don't have to do a lot of things or something specific. Just say hello, just put some time to listen to, if they have something on their heart. When you meet them outside, don't ignore people. Acknowledge them. Just smile. A smile can bring you so close to another person and has a huge power that many don't recognize. They even don't know about it. I have so many neighbors around, some of them I haven't seen for years now. But I hear them, because one is deaf than the other one. A habit of talking loudly. But when I hear them, I say "ok, they are home, and they are fine". And there are some others. But every time we meet, it's outside. When we have been out to do some groceries and on my way home there's a bench. And every time we have many things, we always sit there. All of us, we sit there. So when we're there, before you know it you have about 10 persons standing around each other and talking to "Oh, what have you bought? Did you buy some sale there? Ah, why haven't you told me, you have my number, you know that lady!" And,- or some dude who's just there and is like "How are your plans going now? Have you done this and this and this? What about your daughter's bicycle? Have you taken care of that? I can look at it, if you want to." I mean small things, really really small things. If the *[inaudible]* do that it's just something else. It's another story. They don't have time for doing that. But just asking and showing interest, it's enough. So yes, it doesn't cost much effort.

I: Sounds like a kind of healthy community life.

Interviewee N: Yes, it does. I have done once, my daughter she was younger, now she's 18, but when she was younger, I had this habit. When she was going outside to the playground, I never let her go outside alone. I also used to be down there with her. I can sit on sideline with a book or just sit and look at her while she was playing around. But I was always around her. And many times, during summer vacation when people are, the workers are on vacation, so there was no one to clean up in playgrounds. I still have those brushes in my basement. We used to, some neighbors and me go around and start cleaning up in the playground. You know what? Before it was night, it was messed up again. But we had done that. And we still do that, time to time. "You start there, I start there, ok you can start in the middle there." So yes, and we did for each other, we did that for our children so they won't fall over those small stones or they could bicycle or they could do anything or whatever.

[I ask how Interviewee N was involved in community life before she organized the flea market. Interviewee N talks about her organizing flea markets before and her working in the café. She has been involved in many activities since she's moved to Tingbjerg.]

Interviewee N: And now we have talked about it *[the flea market]* and we agreed "let's do something". We don't have to do a huge thing. When I just put that idea, some people started telling me that oh they have work this and this weekend... No,

they're working this and this week. And I was like "and it concerns me...? Ok." And some others started telling me that we should have it in their backyard. And I was like "Ok..." And another one who was also in the group and I've written a lot to, I contacted her, said: "Am I the one who's misunderstanding these remarks? Or what do you think?" She said: "You know what? I write back on them!" - "You do that. Because if I do that, it will be like "Ah, she wants to have it for her own people." She said: "Yes, I know that. That's why I'm going to write back." I said: "Ok, you do that."

I: I think I've seen that. It's an older lady, right?

Interviewee N: Yes. So, it was quite fun actually. So every time you have to write back, I will be like *[whispers]*: "[name of her Danish neighbour],.." - "I'm on it! I'm on it!"

I: Talking about the café here. I mean it's a super nice place, I've also been here several times, but why did you start doing something for the community here in Tingbjerg?

Interviewee N: I live here. I could have done that outside of Tingbjerg but I live here. And I think it's important to know who you're living with. If,- I have this belief. If I can make a small difference for someone else in a positive way, I would do that. Either it could be just to listen to them if they have something on their heart. Guide them into something. If you have been here, then you will notice a lot of people don't even speak Danish. Many of them, they are refugees, either come as a refugee or some other way. But they don't speak the language. So, they have this kind of difficulty to move around. So I can guide them as much knowledge I do have. Or just help them with some things if they want some help. So that's my way to do that. And that was also actually the way we found out with backyard. Yes, it was wanted to gather old things and sell them. It's always good to earn some money. But the main reason was actually, we've used to have these huge social thing that they,- yes, I took my things and put them and I said "yes, I'm selling things". But the same time I used to have tea, coffee, and chairs and all that. And we were having laughs and fun and all that. So I find,- I've learned more people that way than in any other way.

I: Yes, it's just it needs a reason to come together and once people are together, it's-

Interviewee N: Yes, more and many people I know still today, is because of these markets I've used to held.

[Interviewee N talks about how she also met new people at the bus station. And how she met a woman there and that she got to know her life story but didn't even know her name for a couple of years. Interviewee N also says that it has been similar with [name of her Danish neighbour].]

I: It's a super general question, but I would really like to hear your opinion also, because you are you. How is it then to live in Tingbjerg?

Interviewee N: What do you mean?

I: However you want to reply to that, I basically just want to hear what your focus would be on if you say "Ok, living in Tingbjerg is..."

Interviewee N: Oh, I think it's most because of the people around you and the nature you have around you. And if you look economically, financially, there are apartments you have for rental, they are not so expensive than it would be outside Tingbjerg. So there are many reasons. But for me the biggest reason,- my parents don't live far away, I have these huge nature around me. I love going for walks. I don't have to go far to find this peaceful area to just sit and enjoy. I don't see myself moving out from Tingbjerg. I've.. I'm born and raised in Husum where Føtex is today. So, if you,- for you would watching my pictures from my childhood, you would see most of them in Moosen. When I was a baby, from when I was a baby to when I could sit on my father's shoulders or I'm going out with my bicycle or with a doll pram or anything like that, it's in Moosen. So, I've lived here all my life. But not in Tingbjerg area. In Tingbjerg area I've just lived for the last 20 years. Which is a lifetime actually.

[Interviewee N talks about that her daughter has lived in Tingbjerg all her life.]

Interviewee N: Only time she *[her daughter]* says we have to move, is every time media has written something garbage again. So every time she reads it's just like "Mom, I've told you before. Let's move. I don't want to live here any longer. Let's move." Otherwise, she has been happy to live here. So, yes. That's my reason be,- keep in touch with Tingbjerg.

[I and Interviewee N speak Danish for a bit.]

I: Now that you've mentioned what you can really like about Tingbjerg, is there also something that can maybe be improved?

Interviewee N: I think we will go back to this negative focus on Tingbjerg. If we could remove that, both from politicians and from the media side, it could change a lot. Also think,- and what I've heard, I'm not quite sure about that, but what I've heard is that... to save money, they have closed a lot of activities for youngsters. Not the whole small ones, but in between teenagers. And that's not a good thing. Because if they don't have a place they can be, or they can develop some interest or some hobbies or whatever, or do some of their hobbies, then you will find them in gangs or groups out on the streets. So, basically they are pushing our children to do that. Because at the same time, they want us to work as much as we can, be here on the

working market, but by being on the working market, we don't have that much time for the children. So if, and I've heard and seen activities in other areas for teenagers, so if they did the same thing for this group in Tingbjerg, it could change a lot. I never allowed my daughter to go upside alone when she was pre-teen. Because I was also always afraid of in which group or gang, she will end up by getting influenced by others. It's so easy. You start hanging up with one or two friends before you know that you're ten friends, and before you know that you are in a newspaper by calling a, this girls' group. And that's not a place for teenagers to be. So, I miss that.

[Interviewee N speaks about her organising events for young teenagers in Tingbjerg 10 years ago and how difficult it was to get funding and volunteers.]

Interviewee N: So no, it's kind of hard. When you don't get support. Or you don't know how to get support from the real channel. And they are not very open about that. I think it's kind of strangely, funny, difference what they show, - what you've been shown and what there has been done. And I would like to, - that they would maybe look at it and change this situation. At the moment, when you look around, there are not many people in Tingbjerg. You don't see that much people in the streets because I think most of the 50 percent of the people living here, they are on vacation, they are abroad. But as soon as schools they will open again, when the summer vacation is over, the streets will be full again with groups and children and all of that. They have nowhere, no place to be. And that's sad actually.

I: Yes, because there are so many possibilities that could be done and also people who would, like as you've said there are people who would be up to do something.

Interviewee N: Exactly. I think the other thing is now, I've been like this 'frivilig'. 'Frivilig' is that you do something by your own without being paid. But the concept, not many people understand that. And it doesn't matter where you come from, if you're Danish or you're a foreigner or whatever. But not many people do understand the concept. Think if you are doing this 'frivilig' job that you should get paid. But it's not that way. I do this 'frivilig' when I have time to do that.

[Interviewee N tells about how she helps with baking for the café since she doesn't have the time to be there during the opening hours due to her fulltime-job. And also how they call her when they have trouble finding someone doing a shift and her saying yes to the requests. She also speaks about how she's met many new people during her time in the café.]

Interviewee N: But also I've found out there are some amazing ladies working in here, who are so, so good at do whatever they do. Some of them I've started seeing in private now. I've found a really, really good and close friend because of this. So I'm really glad about this.

[Interviewee N points out how she normally likes to separate (voluntary) work and her personal life.]

Interviewee O & Interviewee P

Thursday, 29. July 2021

Interview conducted in-person in Tingbjerg

[Translated from Danish]

[Introduction to the research, asking about consent to start the recording]

I: Can you maybe say one more time when you moved to Tingbjerg?

Interviewee P: 52 years ago, I moved out here.

[Interviewee P moved to Tingbjerg because she lived in an apartment without a bathroom before. She got offered a 2-room apartment in Tingbjerg. She didn't know Tingbjerg before. First, she got offered another apartment in Tingbjerg but she didn't like it. Then she got offered another one where she is still living now.]

I: Can you tell a bit about how people thought about Tingbjerg back then?

Interviewee P: There were not so many foreigners back then. There were many Danes.

Interviewee O: Yes, only Danish families.

[Interviewee P thinks that's because the school was close by.]

Interviewee O: It was a nice little neighbourhood [*bydel*] that you came to. It came with a school. There has never been a 10th grade, has there? A 9th grade,- I heard from many people that there is no 10th grade. And then there was an indoor swimming pool collaborating with the school.

Interviewee P: And that came later.

Interviewee O: And football clubs. There were many activities back then. But it is not at all like that today.

[Interviewee P speaks about her daughter who works as a teacher.]

Interviewee O: And the community,- I think the community was better in that time than it is today.

Interviewee P: I agree.

Interviewee O: You could actually go out on Rute where we lived, there you could actually go outside, also bike, you can't do that anymore. You could have the windows open and the doors but that you can't do at all today. I was afraid.

[Interviewee O says that he is nervous and afraid of burglars.]

Interviewee P: But I have never been afraid to live on the ground floor.

Interviewee O: No, me neither. I have never been afraid to live in Tingbjerg. Through all that came, but it's not,- I don't know if you will agree with me on that - but is it not so safe as it was back then, I think. It is not. So, we can easily go out on the streets. There are also Danes. But it is multi-ethnic, I think that is just, they react, they vandalise, and they,- all that. That makes the rent increase and so on. Also, as Interviewee R says on Facebook "put yourself together" and so on. It's about their attitude. I don't understand why they are doing that. It is also theirs.

Interviewee P: What I don't like is that there are always men-associations, men that,-

Interviewee O: And reading-help for foreigners, and there tours, there is not,-

Interviewee P: - cohesion [*sammenhold*].

Interviewee O: You don't take Danes with you to that kind of activities in the community. There are maybe some of the activities that happen over in the garden, where there also come foreigners and so on. I've also talked with Interviewee P, they don't want to spend time with us, I think. They rather want their own. So they started their own. But then they are also very reserved if you come to the places, like if you are in the café, so you talk a bit with them from Somalia, but beside that they are very reserved. I don't think,- I have the feeling that they don't want us. But that didn't use to be like that back in the days. You were having barbecues on the streets, the children played at the playground, came down and,- sometimes, I remember you should buy either beer or cigarettes for the parents. Then suddenly was there one who said, "The ice cream is on me." Or a lemonade or something else. You didn't need anything back when we were kids. When we moved here '76, that is there also still, and we can just live here, men the community,- but that is just not the same compared how it was.

[Interviewee O and Interviewee P talk about how that changed in the 1990s. They describe how the community looked like back then. Interviewee P says that she never felt unsafe in the area. Interviewee O, however, has the feeling that this changed over time. Interviewee P disagrees, she never felt that way.]

Interviewee P: But I think in the past, there were all the shops, there we also had banks, two banks, fish shops, toy shops, we also had a brewery, where you could sit down and drink coffee and so on. And so we had also a small pub where you could go in and enjoy yourself and get a beer. And so the entire Stor Torvet when it was Christmas time, there were there ornaments and the flea market came later. And then we also had 'fastelavn' [carnival] where they also 'slå katten af tønden' [something like Pinata].

[Interviewee P continues listing things that no longer exist]

Interviewee P: You don't get that anymore. Bike race also not anymore. 'Byfest',-

[Interviewee O interrupts and specifies things.]

Interviewee P: There really was a lot. There was a lot, there was a community. But today, if there are any parties ['fester'] to be thrown, I have the impression,- oh, there should be no alcohol, there should not be any beer how it used to be. But that's what we are now doing here when we have a Christmas party at Tingbjerg's school. So it is, if the people wanted to have a beer, they could buy it, right? But otherwise, if they have a party, uh, there shouldn't be any. Over at Tingbjerg school where they were partying outside, where there were also some coming. There you couldn't buy any beer. And that just isn't right, right?

Interviewee O: If we have to think of them, they should also think of us. And all the activities, that are happening, are more for them than for us, I think.

Interviewee P: I also think like that.

I: If you say "their"-

Interviewee O: But then I don't think, then I don't feel, if I sign up for something I don't feel like I'm welcome or accommodated. You can feel something, there is something, don't you think? You can feel like there is something, that they are, like a little bit, you're not welcome or something like that. Even if they maybe don't say it.

Interviewee P: There are luckily many sweet. But in general,- like, there are too many out here. We are too few Danes, and I don't understand why the municipality sends them out here.

[Interviewee O and P talk about how many Danes in comparison to migrants live in Tingbjerg. According to them, 20% of Tingbjerg's inhabitants are Danes and there are people of 34 or 37 different ethnicities living.]

Interviewee O: But there are also many who don't like you. There are also many who are not part of the community, or not integrated there where they live. They are not interested,- it's like we meet in the café or in the garden,-

[Interviewee O says that interviewee P is not that often in the garden and participates in activities.]

Interviewee O: There are many who say that there are,- those who control it, also those who come, so there is also a lot from their site. So I often feel they say on Facebook, in the group "Os i Tingbjerg", so they say "Oh, it goes so well" which [name] also said. And that's not true,- she was threatened by those immigrants and that went bad with his business. Then you were told "everything was ok". And it was a luxury and pleasant to live in Tingbjerg. But you don't get the insights of how it really is.

Interviewee P: But it is pleasant in Tingbjerg. There are just too many buildings now, I think. But the area itself is really nice.

[Another person enters the room. Interviewee P talks about her daughter, how she joined activities. In the past, there have been more animals like horses around Tingbjerg. They also talk about Sankt Hans celebrations in the past that happened in the area. The celebrations that happened there were also in the past mainly organised by volunteers. Interviewee P shifts topic and talks about the apartments. I ask why Danes moved away from Tingbjerg.]

Interviewee O: There were always some,- I have heard from many that I know that they've moved because of kinds of prejudices or issues in Tingbjerg.

[Interviewee P adds that her children don't live in Tingbjerg either, even though they've stayed in Copenhagen.]

I: Have you ever thought about moving?

Interviewee P: No, I haven't thought about moving. I haven't done that. Because the nature is also beautiful here. So,-

Interviewee O: I have had a thought about it because of this and that. But I also thought, because they think they control Tingbjerg, and then there is all the trouble. Not because you are threatened or then there's also Interviewee P. You can move around well, but there is all that integrated, some would like to be themselves even though they control someone. Then there is also,- you feel often when you talk or something that they have made some sort of association. Just like the madklub in kulturhuset. There you just feel,- they want to be by themselves in the group. Something like "Oh, there's a Dane coming now, he should not think that she or he can sneak in". That's just how you feel. That might not be like that. But,- but you can sometimes miss something between the cultures, something more, something more. It is there. But you can easily gather, you are gathered at the different activities. But that's just happening the way Interviewee P and I think. I don't know if they answer, if you ask, but if you are sitting in some sort of community gathering, they are there for the Christmas party, there they also show up with their children, there you're sitting together and this and that. But something like the café and this and that. There you came in contact with the Somalian.

[Interviewee P and O talk about their experiences.]

Interviewee O: Who controls it? Because housing companies, fsb, SAB they have been merged and the operation between the landlords. And that is that with the Christmas party, Fastelavn, they canceled it. But I also think the thing about Christmas is that they don't celebrate Christmas. And then I've heard somewhere else, I don't know if I've heard it here? Then there was something, but that was because of vandalism down at Lille Torvet, when you enter Tingbjerg at the intersection there where there has been a Christmas tree before, so they have pushed it over and destroyed the lightbulbs, so pushed over the tree and vandalized and then they just said "just remove it" but then I've heard other places. And because there are foreigners at the board, so they said "Because we don't celebrate Christmas" they didn't vote for putting up a Christmas tree. And that wasn't,- that is not so much what a Christmas tree costs and to celebrate. Regardless of whether you say no to a Christmas tree, so is Christmas still something that Danes celebrate. Even though the guy from Turkey and her Pakistan and Turkey they go home and don't celebrate Christmas, so they just have the association in their surrounding, there shall not be a Christmas tree over there. We celebrate,- Why should we pay for a Christmas tree? It doesn't cost that much.

[Interviewee P adds something.]

Interviewee O: They would like us to eat their food.

Interviewee P: I really don't like it. I need some roasted pork.

[Interviewee O emphasizes that also in the café they are following the diets of "the others".]

Interviewee O: So we said to [social worker] "We think that is a bit unfair that we shall eat,- There is the café that was just opened. You shall eat halal the whole time." But that's what she's said, if you shall cook food, we receive 400 DKK, you should also think about the ones,- What about us? Why can't we, then we could split it so that we can have some pork, we cook some pork meatballs and something like potato salat. And the ones who are cooking cook also something like roast beef or something with tzatziki. We did that one time. We basically got so disappointed and mad just when we started. Why should it always be halal? Why can't we get something that we also like?

[Interviewee O says that they only did it like one or two times. I asks who they would describe Tingbjerg. Interviewee P answers that it's especially the green areas that represent Tingbjerg.]

Interviewee O: I don't think the district Tingbjerg is being well preserved like in the beginning of the 1970s/1980s and now the 1990s. That's just like, it cracked the last 10 to 20 years. It's a shame because there are people coming from the outside as visitors and you see children leaving the nest and come back to visit. And there are also many who say "holy shit, mom, do you still live here?"

[Interviewee O continues talking about that topic.]

Interviewee P: Also many of the small institutions, they will for sure also be demolished one day. Because they are building a big house here in the end where there should be a nursery and kindergarten, right? And so disappears this "hygge". I feel like it all becomes too American. Because they've always had these big things, right? Because some live far away and they have cars.

[Interviewee O and Interviewee P talk about the activities that were offered for children in Tingbjerg in the past. I ask how old Interviewee O was when he moved to Tingbjerg. Interviewee O says he was five years old and continues talking about his family and where he has lived in Tingbjerg. Then the topic switches back to the activities that were offered for children in the past. I ask whom they both have most contact with.]

Interviewee P: Earlier I've always had a good relationship with my neighbours. And even though she was Somalian just as her husband, she came inside and had a good time [hygge sig] with my husband or me or the children. And we also went into their flat and we cooked and,- So, but when her husband her husband died she moved to England *[continues talking about her former neighbours]*. But now other Somalians moved in. They only greet and besides that I haven't talked to them.

[Interviewee P continues talking about her new neighbours. She doesn't like that they leave the door open. And they also dress differently.]

Interviewee P: You have to respect the land you're coming to *[talking about her neighbours]*. And when they mow the lawn, the children run and play in summer. That's what my kids did. They enjoyed themselves and nicely tanned. And you could look down and enjoy yourself with them.

Interviewee O: It was also a bit different. Back in the old days, when we moved here in the '70s, '80s, '90s. And just like,- there were,- all these, that was still there. Is it the times that have made it? Did time change it? Or is it their culture and our culture which doesn't really fit together, or what? I don't know that. Because it is still there, so I can explain you, Levke, at the time we saw Tingbjerg as it is, that is maybe still today. But we don't feel like,-

Interviewee P: I don't think so. Because when I go around and look at the apartments when you're on a walk and see how the balconies look like. So, all I can do is being aghast and think "holy shit...".

Interviewee O: Yes, I was thinking more when we met,- when we meet at the different activities, it was like that back then. We saw, but there were way more also with the housing companies, they are there still. But the reason as you're saying is that you also you miss the contact. Is that because of their culture? Are they not allowed? Or is it because they don't want to? Or is it the time? Like you've also said. Does it happen in 3 or 4 years? I mean suddenly we sit here and have a barbecue, talk, sing, they are not like us "sejler op ad åen" *[song]* or something like that in Danish, that they don't like where it is that lalalalala-music. But it could be that they feel like that, but we have never asked them and I think to myself "they have no interest in sharing that with us". While we are more open like, I don't know,- I feel like as a Dane you are more open and share our Christmas, or our national teams in sports, we have heard so many times that we are a happy people but I don't know. But I just miss more cohesion *[sammenhold]*, more, as you've also said,-

Interviewee P: Many years until it is just right.

Interviewee O: It is also many years ago I've moved from down there. We we're talking about *[inaudible]* and that's like 10/20 years ago now. And if you're saying like somebody is still quoting time, if yes, it would probably never happen.

Interviewee P: But also, when they sit down in my backyard and enjoy themselves *[hygger sig]* and I go down through the garden, so I go to them and talk to them. So, then I have the permission to sit down and,-

Interviewee O: Yes, I just heard from many people that they are welcoming.

Interviewee P: Yes, they are.

[Interviewee O talks about him not being invited by 'them' but he would actually like to visit a mosque.]

Interviewee O: I have more foreign friends than Danish friends. Or it's more like the same. But, what do you think it is since we haven't found each other or you are not on speaking terms with each other.

Interviewee P: It's because they must be more open and try,-

Interviewee O: Is it their culture?

Interviewee P: They have,- they've tried to preserve, they are allowed to do that within their own four walls, but when they're coming out, then they should try to open themselves more up.

[Interviewee O talks about women who are going to the café and their husbands don't allow them to talk to Danes there. Interviewee P says that she has never heard about that. Interviewee O argues that that is how he feels. That they don't try to get in contact with Danes, also at the playground, where parents forbid their children to play with Danish children. Interviewee P doesn't share that impression. I ask both whether there is something like a community in Tingbjerg and how they would describe it.]

Interviewee O: If you want to describe the community, so it is because you are together also the community, but it is not like that.

[Interviewee O says that in the café there is no real interaction because you're sitting at the tables by yourself or in groups. But they don't really 'mix'. He doesn't feel welcome there. Interviewee P disagrees.]

Interviewee O: So, you never meet.

[Interviewee O points out the importance to be open. He says that he doesn't have these kinds of problems with children or teenager.]

Interviewee O: But the community itself that Levke misses now, that is not the same as the one when we've moved here.

Interviewee P: There were also not so many foreigners. They were more willing to,-

[Interviewee P talks about her working abroad and being treated well. Interviewee O switches topic back to my interpretation of community and the question I ask.]

Interviewee P: But you can't be a community with everyone.

Interviewee O: No, no, no. But it's not as good as it was back in the old days.

Interviewee P: I don't think,- It can never be as good as it was before.

[I ask why Interviewee P feels like that. She answers that it was different when she was a child. There were also not so many people, not so many refugees. Interviewee O questions whether community is somehow destroyed by the culture of the foreigners in Tingbjerg. Interviewee O thinks about himself that he is quite open and likes to share things. Interviewee P says that there are for sure some who don't want to get in contact with them. But she also says that they themselves should try to open up and for example smile and greet when they enter the café. Interviewee O doesn't think that would help but Interviewee P disagrees. Interviewee O talks about youngsters playing music very loudly in the bus and he doesn't like that. Interviewee P on the other hand likes such things because it spreads joy.]

Interviewee P: But you can say that at the time we've moved here, there was a lot of community life and cohesion.

[Interviewee P talks about bus routes. I ask Interviewee O to talk a bit about his role as a member of 'bestyrelsen'. Interviewee O didn't feel heard there. As a member he has more insights in what activities are planned and what is happening behind closed doors. He talks about the other members of the board. As a member of the board, he was also contact person and his neighbours came to him with their problems. I ask why Interviewee O started to work as a volunteer there. Interviewee O did it because he wanted to say something. In the end he thought it was interesting to do it. Interviewee P adds that it's also a good opportunity to meet people from other districts and exchange thoughts and ideas.]

I: What do other people say when they hear that you're living in Tingbjerg?

Interviewee O: Oh, you want the prejudices.

Interviewee P: I will always tell that it's nice to live in Tingbjerg. When the people ask, "where do you live?", so, are there many who say "no, I'm just living in Brønshøj or in Husum". But I say, "no, I'm living in Tingbjerg". "In Tingbjerg?" So, I say "yes, there it is really good out here", I tell them. Because the journalists nonetheless promote it as a bigger problem than it

actually is. Yes, but there is too little light, they are many that are scared, there has always been enough light. I think the lightning nowadays is worse than in the past. You can see that there is light, but it doesn't lighten the street up as much as it did in the past. Well, I thought that it was so terrible to live out there and when I see them I am not afraid to say that I live out there.

Interviewee O: You can easily criticise how you feel about living in Tingbjerg and what is bad about the area or,- but the media. The media also blows it up, because many times when there's something happening in Husum, Gladsaxe it is said that it was in Tingbjerg. And then there's the thing with Facebook. And then you write stuff like "Ah, you got to stop". That shooting didn't happen in Tingbjerg, it was Husum. And that was the neighbour [*inaudible*], now you got to stop. And now they are writing about northwest that is close by, so it is now 2700, so they write Tingbjerg. Also, that are not pictures of Tingbjerg, so people write them, BT, Ekstrabladet "that is not Tingbjerg. That is northwest". Why are you blaming us, you blow that up. Well, there is the prejudice with "don't move to Tingbjerg, don't move to Tingbjerg. There is trouble, there is trouble, there is trouble". It is like Mjølnerparken, it is like in Ishøj and all these things. So you have also the thing of the media. They blow that up in the newspapers. So, but otherwise it is not so,- I don't think it is so bad here. There are still something with the gangs the young one down at the fritidscentre.

[Interviewee O continues talking.]

Interviewee O: My sister's man is from Iraq, but Danish, his family lives in Næstved and they have also lived there, they got two boys. They don't want to come for birthdays here. And so I ask them "why?". Because they are being threatened down at Ruten, they were stopped in the car, and so should they just see because he is a foreigner and so he together with a Dane and he don't want that. They basically told me they were stopped and threatened, and he doesn't want that for his two boys, who are 7 or 8 and 5 years. So he said "I would like to come to your birthday, but it won't be Tingbjerg". That's a shame to hear, I think.

[Interviewee O continues talking about his family.]

Interviewee O: And that is basically also a little bit bad at the kiosk. And that you would agree with me. There is a room behind where they stand down there, next to the kebab shop. There they have a slot machine, because they are allowed to smoke and sell weed and this and that. The police are not doing anything there. Just when the police are coming, they run away through the tunnel and this and that. But those who own the kiosk, that is wrong of them. That are also foreigners, they are Pakistani, that is bad by them. You should not be allowed to be there.

[Interviewee O continues talking about foreigners and a friend who is being called a racist because he votes for Dansk Folkeparti. Interviewee O says that he doesn't feel safe at some places in Tingbjerg because young people who are standing around on the streets make him feel uncomfortable.]

Interviewee O: But I am so uncomfortable and afraid to stand there. My dad is standing down there with [name] and this and that. And [name] also stands there. He doesn't feel like he fits in when he stands down there. That is just a shame that you're supposed to feel like that.

[Interviewee O says that people were shouting after him in the streets, but he tries to ignore that.]

Interviewee O: It should not sound like Tingbjerg is bad. No, I don't hope that. It is just as I've written to you. There are many positive sides. They are there. And many activities, this and that. That is just as Interviewee P said, that she misses a sense of community. That isn't there. That was basically that there weren't so many foreigners living there back then.

[Interviewee P adds that especially at the celebrations/activities in the neighbourhood the focus is too much on the 'other cultures'. Interviewee O agrees and adds examples. Both of them argue that 'halal' comes along with animal abuse.]

Interviewee P: It is going to be different. But I love the buildings. But now there will come higher buildings. Then it will be like living inside the city. On that way,-

[Interviewee O talks about the urban development plans. Interviewee O asks me about my interview with Interviewee M. He also asks about what they thought about the Danes. Interviewee O repeats that 'the foreigners' are not as open as the Danes and that they don't want to get in contact. He assumes that that might be because of the role of the men in 'their culture'.]

Interviewee O: So, I don't understand what you mean when you say you miss community. Is that just because you feel too many in Tingbjerg? Culture?

Interviewee P: Yes, that is there.

Interviewee O: Yes, I know for sure. That is there. But you don't have anything with,-

Interviewee P: I have some [community] with my neighbour. She greets, and the children greet, and they are holding the door open. Also,- So, that's it.

Interviewee O: I also think that there are many who are nice who don't feel Danish and integrated. I have had a really good family in the other apartment upstairs, they came down for dinner and we took care of each other and saw the children growing up. And we still see them.

[Interviewee O continues talking about him not knowing so many people anymore in the neighbourhood. Interviewee O also talks about how he used to get in contact with people in Tingbjerg.]

[Smalltalk, end of recording]

Interviewee R

Monday, 2. August 2021

Interview conducted on the phone

[Introduction to the research, asking about consent to record]

[I ask when Interviewee R moved to Tingbjerg. Interviewee R answers that she moved there 1996.]

I: Why did you move to Tingbjerg?

Interviewee R: Basically, I've had a studio when I came to Denmark. And then I got married, so we searched for a bigger apartment. And I got an apartment in Tingbjerg when it wasn't this surrounding basically, it was a really beautiful area, and really attractive. There were only Danes who lived here. And I have moved there. I got my children and I feel fine in Tingbjerg.

I: If you say, when you moved there were only Danes in Tingbjerg - how was it for you as an immigrant to move to Tingbjerg?

Interviewee R: Actually, that was really good, because there wasn't *[inaudible]* area, very green area. There are many green areas in Tingbjerg. And that is so beautiful. Plus, it is not so far away from Copenhagen. So that are just 25 minutes until you are in the city. And that was a really quiet area where you can good feel yourself safe, because it is like a village *[det ligner en landsby]*.

[Interviewee R emphasizes how nice the neighbourhood is.]

Interviewee R: I think, I have been really lucky back then and also now.

I: How would you describe Tingbjerg today?

Interviewee R: Tingbjerg today,- that is actually still a very nice area. My problem is mostly the politic that it has turned the focus to Tingbjerg. And the politicians have decided that there shall be so many immigrants, so many refugees here in Tingbjerg. They have pressed the housing companies to accept all kind of people. They handed so many apartments to refugees. They don't know the language; they don't know how the system works. And there are so many new problems, because some people don't know the language, they come from war and they come from,- how is it called? - from emergency states. They are traumatized so they can't socialize, that's impossible. And therefore, after some time we were surprised basically that in 2008 Tingbjerg became a ghetto. And as Tingbjerg became a ghetto, so with that come just all kinds of problems. There are some problems actually, some social problems, like,- that is normal, when you don't know the system, you can't raise your children properly with positive things. So, there were gang environments, there were some criminal activities, there was weed marketing. So, there have happened bad things. *[inaudible]* Plus, the politicians have also,- there were so many laws and that became a traumatized place, where the people were feeling insecure, where they were marginalized and the area is not attractive.

I: So if you now say that it is mostly from the political side,-

Interviewee R: I can say actually, and I have said that all the time, that Danish politicians play a big role in all ghetto areas. Negative roles.

I: Is there anything that can be improved in Tingbjerg?

Interviewee R: In the moment it is actually happening. Because there is this huge 'byudvikling' happening. They are currently building a lot of new apartments here in Tingbjerg. And they would also like to privatize the area because they really wish that the area,- or some apartments, or some row houses, they become some place brands which help to attract many Danes to the area. My problem is, right now they are building these new buildings. But the social problems they are still there. They have not solved the social problems. Because we still have gangs, we still have the very unstable people, we still have some

families that need help. So, there are some things, like,- especially the social thing where they don't have any solutions for. So, in [name of organisation she volunteers for] we are optimistic. That is the future, if,- there happens something especially with the new generation actually who have grown up here in Tingbjerg. So, they also have also started to be active in the Danish community. And they show that they are good at handling things and they can be a part of Denmark. So, I hope, I really hope that the new generation can take the initiative and develop positive things here in Tingbjerg.

[Interviewee R describes how the young organise themselves and how both the youth and the women contact politicians.]

Interviewee R: We are still fighting.

I: What does that personally mean for you that Tingbjerg should not be on the ghetto list anymore?

Interviewee R: Actually, when you say 'a ghetto', so you think completely negative. Because when you find yourself in a ghetto place, you become very very concerned. Because the problem of the ghetto,- that means that you are inactive in the society, that means that you're exposed, that means that you're vulnerable, that means that you are criminal. So that has so many question marks when you say, "I live in Tingbjerg". And therefore, we have some young boys that they don't live in Tingbjerg. They live in Brønshøj. 2700, that is Brønshøj. So, they don't say that they live in Tingbjerg.

[I ask whether Interviewee R thinks it will get better if Tingbjerg will no longer be a ghetto. Interviewee R partly agrees and disagrees. Interviewee R tells that she has given several interviews to, for example, The Guardian.]

Interviewee R: They were totally surprised that Tingbjerg is a ghetto area. Because there are really nice apartments, so many green areas, lovely schools. So you can't say, when you are actually in Brooklyn, or in Marseille in France, so you can actually see a ghetto. But here in whole Denmark you can't see a ghetto. Because all the characteristics of the ghetto, you can't see. But I don't know why they call it ghetto. There are no poor people, who live on the street. There are also no ones who don't eat during the day. There is also not so much crime or people who beat you up on the street. So, basically the students' level in school, that is very good. We have many young people that get an education. We have many that are on the labour market. So, ok even though there are immigrants with negative thoughts. But they nonetheless fight a lot in order to become a part of Denmark. So, basically, I hate the word 'ghetto' or all the words, which are negative. They minimise the human of us human beings.

[I agree and ask how Interviewee R would describe the community in Tingbjerg.]

Interviewee R: Basically, if I for example talk about my family, we have a lovely community in Tingbjerg. We have 15 gardens where I can easily meet my *[inaudible, 15:25]* Danish neighbour. I have basically two Danish neighbours, older people, with whom we are in really good contact. We have never had any problems. We help each other with our apartments if we travel or if they travel. So, we respect each other. So, we don't talk about personal things, how's it called, their private lives. They don't mix in ours. It is just respect what it is about. I think the community is really good, *[inaudible]* because there are many families who live here. Even though they are from different nationalities, I'm talking about over 25 nationalities in Tingbjerg, and there are some who are families. So, they have good relations with each other. But I'm also talking about Danes and immigrants, they have also good relations with each other. Ok, we have also racists here in Tingbjerg. But there are so many immigrants so they can't show themselves. But I can,- That is all with respect here, there are many many Danes who are so sweet and so friendly. I have never experienced something racist in our neighbourhood.

[I ask how people react when Interviewee R tells that she is living in Tingbjerg. Interviewee R says that the young ones don't say that they live in Tingbjerg when they are searching for a job. But Interviewee R calls herself a 'Tingbjergner'. People call her 'Interviewee R Tingbjerg' because she is very active in community life and known for that also outside of Tingbjerg. I ask in what form Interviewee R is engaged in community life. Interviewee R talks about her voluntary work where she mainly worked with women to prepare them for the job market. Due to that work, she was offered a job as 'boligsocialmedarbejder' in Tingbjerg. In this position she organized several activities and build a network in the district. Now she is working in another job because it was difficult for her and the people around her to separate work and private life.]

I: Why did you get engaged in Tingbjerg?

Interviewee R: Tingbjerg is my neighbourhood, that's where I live and where my son lives and where my childhood friends come and visit me. So, I really wish that it stays attractive area where you can feel yourself safe. I think it is also an obligation that we're active in the community, because when you're working as a volunteer, that is also an obligation. Not everything costs money, I think. There are some things you can easily do on a voluntary basis, as a human. To help each other, to lift/support each other, to trust each other. So, that has also a great meaning, because that is just human.

[I ask how Interviewee R would describe the role of the associations for Tingbjerg and the women who participate in the associations. Interviewee R says that they have done so many things in Tingbjerg.]

Interviewee R: I am pretty happy about the efforts because that means a lot for our neighbourhood that it is shown and seen that you're living in an attractive neighbourhood, in a corner you could say. It is not always that there is a positive *[inaudible]*. We have also some who would like to continue to use projects *[inaudible]*. We work for free.

[Interviewee R tells that there are some who think that the projects should be expensive, but she doesn't agree with them. I ask whether Tingbjerg has changed over the years. Interviewee R thinks that a change is still happening.]

Interviewee R: You can see that they've had a nice urban development in Tingbjerg three or four years ago. But I always say the whole time that you can't change people through buildings, with mortar, to become more attractive. Because those we miss in Tingbjerg they. We still have some exposed people. We still have crime, we still have some party people, we have some things, I think, some social they should work with. And therefore, I think the whole time you should solve the social problems, because when you solve the social problems you can easily introduce some activities and a development for the whole area. Ok, when you see some buildings with 17 floors, so that means that you are civilized. But it is not that what it is about. I think, the least, - if you say that the people are doing well, really doing well, and help each other and take care of each other and, - how's it called? - the people don't have any social problems. There are not so many who have mental problems. That is what it's all about. That is what is creating life. That are humans who are creating life in Tingbjerg.

I: Since you're talking about urban development, I have also seen that you share something from 'Almen modstand' are you also active there?

Interviewee R: Yes, I'm also, - Why I'm active in Almen modstand is because I think it is important that solidarity can lead to/create something good. Because when you [inaudible] so you are individual. But if you socialize you can create a lovely community. And in addition, we have that fight with, - How's it called? - resistance, because we have some terrace houses where people with a handicap live. They can't fight the fight. And that's why we are fighting for them. Because they would like them to move and tear down their terrace houses and build some privatized. And therefore are we against that. But beside that, I am not against them developing Tingbjerg to make it an attractive area. But nonetheless, they can't build in the green areas because they basically have some really good playgrounds and they have started to build some apartments. That's annoying. Because that doesn't fit to Tingbjerg's architecture.

[Interviewee R invites me to show her around Tingbjerg. Interviewee R emphasizes that she doesn't like the idea of the terrace houses being build in the area.]

Interviewee S

Friday, 6. August 2021

Interview conducted on the phone

[The interview was first conducted in Danish, these parts are translated. From minute 10 on, the interview proceeded in English]

[introduction to the research, asking about consent to start recording]

I: When did you move to Tingbjerg?

Interviewee S: I've been living here for 3 years now.

I: Have you been living in Copenhagen before?

Interviewee S: Yes.

I: So have you heard anything about Tingbjerg before you've moved?

Interviewee S: Yes, the people talk bad about it.

I: What do they talk about for example?

Interviewee S: They say that it is bad, because there is a lot of crime. And many, - that's a ghetto-area they say.

I: And why did you move to Tingbjerg?

Interviewee S: I've moved to Tingbjerg because I liked the place. It is close to Utterslev Mose. And I wanted to have a park close by. That's why I chose Tingbjerg, because it is similar to a park and enough green around you.

I: I can understand that. It is really nice.

Interviewee S: I really like nature. I like to live in Copenhagen but I still like nature and there is a lot of green here in Tingbjerg. Very green nature.

I: So you've also been to Tingbjerg before you've moved there?

Interviewee S: Yes, I've also been here before. I have a friend who used to live here. That's why I knew it a little bit.

[I ask whether her experiences match her expectations]

Interviewee S: Yes, I'm really happy to live here.

I: So, a very general question. How would you describe Tingbjerg today?

Interviewee S: I would describe it like 'it is really good'. I think it's a really nice place, and a very good place. And I am really happy to be here.

I: And what do you like about Tingbjerg?

Interviewee S: Everything. We have green, nature right beside us with a nice park. We have some nice apartments, from the inside they are very nice. Just like my apartment, that is really good. And,- how is it called? - some good apartments, green nature, and it's close to everything. The train runs every half an hour and so you're still in Copenhagen. So you are in the municipality of Copenhagen, but there is still a lot of nature. And so overall, I can't think of anything I don't like. I really like the whole.

[I ask whether Interviewee S thinks that anything should be improved in Tingbjerg.]

Interviewee S: Well, there are some young boys from Somalia, 15/16 years, they make some trouble, that is quite annoying. But, apart from that it is really good. We have also some very bright apartments here. But ok, there is also something else that is annoying. That is with them currently building new buildings. That is also quite annoying.

I: Can you talk a bit more about that?

Interviewee S: What is here annoying is that they build in the middle of the other apartments. So the people don't get any light inside their home. It's just,- that just looks wrong. There are two things that are not good here. There are young Somali boys of 15/16 years or 14 years, they make trouble. And so are that the old buildings, they are also not so good. That is quite loud. They look quite wrong these buildings they are currently building.

I: Wrong? What do you mean by that?

Interviewee S: It doesn't fit together. It doesn't match with the other buildings.

[Interviewee S talks about the concerns she has because of the new buildings, which is mainly the light-situation.]

I: You now just mentioned a lot of physical features you really like about Tingbjerg, so the green surrounding and the apartments. How would you describe the community in Tingbjerg?

Interviewee S: I think it's very nice. We have like a library and a kulturhus which we use a lot, and there are a lot of youngsters and adults and old people, I mean. A lot of the residents, they visit the library and the kulturhus. And we are very happy to be there. And also they have a cafeteria. There are people volunteering. And like work there. And,- I think we have a nice,- I would say the solidarity [sammenholdet] is really good. It seems like there is a certain section of the residents in Tingbjerg that are very passive. So they don't vote. And they don't go to the library, they don't,- I mean, they are just very passive. Like a section of the residents here. I know that. So you will not see them voting, you will not see going anywhere, you will not see them talking to anybody. It seems like they are just very passive. *[Interviewee S sees this passivity as a reason why vaccination centers were opened in Tingbjerg.]* They are just very passive. Maybe they have,- maybe they don't speak the language. I mean maybe don't speak Danish and they don't take part in anything. They are maybe just living inside their own bubble and that's why. We have that. And everybody knows that we have that section.

[I tell that so far I only spoke to people who are very much engaged. Interviewee S estimates that around 1,000 inhabitants (which is around 1/6 or 1/7) in Tingbjerg are passive.]

Interviewee S: So maybe they [the passive ones] are just in their own homes and then they visit the homes of some of their relatives. And that's all. And they are on passive income.

[Interviewee S emphasizes that she thinks that everyone is aware of that section of people, as she calls it.]

Interviewee S: But we have like both extremes here in Tingbjerg. Like, we have one extreme that is completely passive and never does anything. And never participate in anything. They just live in their own little bubble. And on the other extreme we have like people who are very very engaged. But they are a minority. They are like a handful of people, maybe 10-30. That are very, very, very, like engaged in the area. I know for example my friend Interviewee M, she is very, very engaged. Very active.

[Interviewee S thinks that the majority is something in between these two extremes. She would see herself also as part of the majority, so as something in between. She participates in community life by volunteering in the café sometimes and visiting the library.]

Interviewee S: I know,- at least I know all the women who partake in the cafeteria. And I have a very good relationship with my neighbours as well. And I also partake in the,- what is it called? - We have some meetings, once or twice a year that I also partake in.

I: So it's from the housing association?

Interviewee S: Yes exactly, housing association, yes.

[I ask who the people are Interviewee S is most engaged with in Tingbjerg. Interviewee S answers that that are mostly the people in the cafeteria. But due to her full-time job she doesn't have that much time right now. While she was a student and during Corona she participated more in community life.]

I: Why was that important for you?

Interviewee S: It wasn't so important. It was just like very, you know cozy, and made you feel good and feel like,- I mean it was just very,- I just enjoyed it. Also because I feel like I have some great friends, I made some great friends here in Tingbjerg as well. So that was also very nice. I mean I have been always very happy from the beginning here in Tingbjerg. And I know that the area has,- I don't know why it has a bad rumor [reputation], because me and everyone else that I know, and I know at least 30 other residents of Tingbjerg here personally. And also my neighbours for example. We are all very happy for living here. So we are very happy like residing here. But people from outside, I don't know why they have like this negative image of Tingbjerg. Because residents like us, we are very happy about this area and we love living here. So it's a mystery. I mean it's only people from outside that have a negative image from Tingbjerg. But us who live here, we are very happy for living here. I mean it's a very positive area. I see it very positive.

I: Have you ever asked someone from outside why they have such a bad image of Tingbjerg?

Interviewee S: Yes, they say something about the newspapers. Or because,- I mean there are two,- one told me that it's because she has read something in the newspaper. Another told me it's because a lot of foreigners. And most importantly, they said it's because of the ghetto law. You know the ghetto law has like categorized certain areas as 'these areas are ghettos'. And that gave the area a really negative image of being a ghetto. But I have never looked at it as a ghetto like that, I mean. But I think it's the ghetto law that has like damaged this area and given it a bad reputation, certainly. But it's *[inaudible, 19:22]* also think about the fact that there are a lot of foreigners here. And that somehow also gives it a bad reputation.

I: Has this ever influenced you as a person?

Interviewee S: Not at all. I mean I don't,- I do,- I mean, no, because I already knew Tingbjerg and I,- because I had a friend who lived here. That was pretty clear that I wanted to live here. And I haven't regret it even once.

I: That's great to hear.

Interviewee S: I mean, in the contrary, I have,- I mean for me it's a very positive thing. It has been a very positive experience to live here. And I'm still very happy and I feel grateful that I got an apartment here. So I'm just really happy, that makes me more happy about living here now than I was before moving here. Before moving in I was like "Ok, I want to live there". But now I can see this like really the right decision. So I'm just very happy.

[I ask why Interviewee S is more happy now. She answers that she is more positively surprised than she expected. The opening of Lidl also contributed to that, as well as the location and the light-situation.]

I: Why was that *[becoming part of the community, reaching out to the neighbours]* important for you? Or why is it still important for you?

Interviewee S: Actually, for me I just wanted to know the recipes of the women, because I knew they are Turks, and they have Turkish backgrounds. And there are Arabic backgrounds. And I think they make great food. Women from *[inaudible, 22:35]*. So that's primarily why. Because I love the exotic Arabic food from the middle east. So I wanted to know their recipes. I think that is one reason. And the second reason: I wanted just to see like what was happening in Tingbjerg. And I wanted to get to know some of the other residents, just to see like what is happening here. And I was certain it was the right choice to make. I was very happy. I think it was,- I made some great friends. So that is good.

I: Yes, it's probably the best reason ever.

Interviewee S: The only bad thing about Tingbjerg is, I noticed some Somalian boys, like teenagers making troubles. I mean I heard them burning one car for example once. And I also saw them like,- I actually saw them bombing one clubhouse here as well. And then sometimes in the bus they are like making a lot of noises. So the teenage Somalian boys and also some Arab boys, I mean they are very annoying. So that's the only negative thing I have experienced here.

[I ask where Interviewee S lived before. Interviewee S answers that she has lived with her parents in Husum until she was in her late 20's. I ask what Interviewee S's parents think about it. Interviewee S's parents thought it was ok, because they were happy to have more space in their own apartment. They lived in a 2-room apartment and Interviewee S shared her room with her two siblings. I also explain my project in more detail.]

Interviewee S: That's a very good question, because my,- me and my other friends who are - and my neighbours - who live here, we have always trouble understanding why people from the outside have a negative image of Tingbjerg. Because us who live here, we have a very positive image of living here. It's like little *[inaudible]* for us, that people think like that from the outside. But it's because of the ghetto law. The ghetto law has given it a bad, I mean a bad image.

[I agree with Interviewee S and speaks about her impressions.]

Interviewee S: Yes, I think it's because of the ghetto law. That you have this problem. And there is also a myth, from outside Tingbjerg that it's very easy to get an apartment in Tingbjerg, but that is not true. Because it took me 8 years on the waiting list before I got an apartment here. And let me say, it's very difficult in all of Copenhagen to get an apartment. And nobody gets an apartment in Copenhagen just in some months or something like that. It takes a lot of years. And also in Tingbjerg it takes a lot of years. It's just that, it's,- in Tingbjerg you have to wait maybe less years than compared to Frederiksberg maybe, it's still not easy anywhere in Copenhagen to get an apartment.

[Interviewee S continues talking about the assumption that it's quite easy to get an apartment in Tingbjerg.]

Interviewee S: The residents here in Tingbjerg, they have their whole families living here. And they are not going to move out. I mean I have, and I met some of the women in Tingbjerg, they have adult children living in Tingbjerg, and their children are also living in Tingbjerg. And their cousins living in Tingbjerg. That you have whole families residing in Tingbjerg. And they are not going to move out because they have their whole family in the area.

[Interviewee S continues talking about families living in Tingbjerg. I ask about the housing market. Interviewee S explains the system to me.]

Interviewee S: I mean, I don't know if after a year or two I will get married maybe and I would need to move to a bigger apartment. So that's why,- and I would probably want to stay here in Tingbjerg. I will just get another apartment that is larger than the one I have now. So that's why,- I mean I think that is a very good option, a very good thing for me that I'm renting an apartment. Because I don't think I will reside here for very long. Maybe just for some years.

I: But you would stay in Tingbjerg?

Interviewee S: I would be happy to stay in Tingbjerg. I would just want to get a bigger apartment than the one I have now.

I: Makes sense, yes.

[Interviewee S says it's easier to get an apartment in Tingbjerg now that she's already living there.]

Interviewee S: You can write that I want to stay here.

I: Yes, I will for sure. But it's actually, it's an answer I received from a lot of people. Like you said, once you live in Tingbjerg, people feel like it's a good place to live.

[Interviewee S emphasizes again that she would like to stay in Tingbjerg. Topic switches to the development plans introduced by the authorities.]

Interviewee S: But we have mixed feelings I think in Tingbjerg about it [the development]. And we are all like, it's mixed feelings.

[Interviewee S shares my view as an outsider on the development.]

Interviewee S: Yes, it's [the plan] actually very vague and all you see is like a lot of trucks and noise and stuff like that, and. So it's uncertain and mixed feelings about it. But most of the time people don't talk about it so much. So, it's still not something that people think about that much. But I think maybe in a year or two when they begin to see some of the new buildings, then maybe they will get more conscious about it.

I: Yes, it's super interesting also at the same quite confusing.

Interviewee S: So, I think the majority, people don't really know what they should think about it. Because it's like very vague and abstract right now and I mean,- also because we have this section that is very passive, they don't,- I'm sure they don't even have any opinion about it.

[Interviewee S says that it is quite difficult to get these people engaged.]

I: I guess you have people like that in every neighbourhood, in every society.

Interviewee S: Yes, but I think in Tingbjerg we have more of them. And I think the reason for that is, because we have a big section of people who don't know Danish. And who have never been in the Danish,- who have never worked, like never had a proper job and they don't know the language. And most of them of course are females. I think like women maybe, little bit elderly women as well. Who have never like, been outside. Or don't know the language. And therefore, they don't really know much about what is happening. So I think we have relatively little,- larger section of that here in Tingbjerg. But they are everywhere, yes. And I also think there are Danes who are like that as well. You have passive Danes as well.

[Small talk, end of recording]