

## A public anthropology of policing

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*A Public Anthropology of Policing* discusses the virtues of a public and engaged anthropology of law enforcement. It takes as its case the sometimes exclusionary dealings of law enforcers with (post)migrants. These include street encounters during patrol as well as interactions within the Dutch police organization where officers with various ethnic backgrounds come together and try to make a living. The ethnographic materials presented come from a long-term field study (2008–2013) in which officers were joined ‘on the beat’ and in which several hundreds of talks and interviews took place.

Paradigmatically, a case is being made for a public presence of anthropologists preoccupied with policing, because of the critical societal function of the police. A frontline organization requires frontline academics who do not shy away from public debate, critical review and engagement with the organization under scrutiny. All the more so when addressing disquieting matters such as ethnic divides in Dutch society that prove to be exacerbated by the issue of legal standing. Empirically, cases are offered that show the corrosion of the public character of Dutch policing and the risks involved in terms of discrimination and the arbitrary, even privatized, use of power. With the advent of ‘psy-frames’, police work *and* police officers are increasingly psychologized and boundaries between the private and the public are blurred. This does not only lead to the ‘inclusion’ of the whole personality and personal judgment of police officers at work, but also to a police force that no longer hesitates to work itself into the private lives of the public. It is also in this way – reclaiming the public in policing – that *A Public Anthropology of Policing* must be read.

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# A Public Anthropology of Policing

## Law enforcement and migrants in the Netherlands

Paul Mutsaers

# **A Public Anthropology of Policing**

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in the Netherlands**



# **A Public Anthropology of Policing**

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ter verkrijging van de graad van doctor  
aan Tilburg University  
op gezag van de rector magnificus,  
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For Ed, Murat and Sandra,  
who give me confidence in law enforcement





# Preface

A commitment to justice and equality has galvanized this book's journey. My first memories take me back to the time when I was about five or six years old. I grew up in one of the working-class districts in Tilburg, a city in the Netherlands at the border with Belgium. Large parts of the neighbourhood in which I grew up have now been gentrified. One of the hotspots in the neighbourhood back then was the *Noorderlicht Concert Hall*. This was in the heyday of punk rock, in the eighties. I remember spiked-hair and skin-pierced figures sitting at the sidewalk on a summer afternoon, enjoying a beer or a joint. They were a favourite target for the police and I never understood why. All I saw was peace-loving people enjoying their music and their pot, a product that can be legally consumed in the Netherlands, as I'm sure you know.

About a decade later I found myself in *Tilburg Noord*, the so-called ghettoized quarter of town, where I lived with my parents and brother. At the shopping mall there was an innocent encounter between my brother and the police. The latter seemed to have a hard time properly framing the behaviour of someone with Down Syndrome. Let's say that civility was far from present in that encounter.

Many years later, in 2007, I was doing anthropological research in a completely different setting. Although, strictly taken, it was not the topic of my fieldwork, many a Guatemalan obviously told me about the atrocities and police brutality directed against the rural poor, under the right-wing military regime of Efraim Rios Montt.



These biographical accounts and events give some sense of social structure and the role that the police have in it. To a greater or lesser degree they underscore the seriousness of matters relating to policing and justice, particularly of the impact that someone's social background may have on the risk to be caught up in legal entanglements. Although these

accounts do not allude to it, ethnicity in particular plays an important role.

The social divides between the ethnic majority and ethnic minorities in the Netherlands have been exacerbated by the issue of legal standing. According to the Central Bureau for Statistics of the Netherlands, more than 30% of those suspected of a felony in the Netherlands in 2013 belonged to a non-western minority group whereas this subpopulation comprises 11.7% of the total Dutch population (CBS 2013). In 2006, the relative percentage of non-western detainees was 1.4% against 0.2% of the native Dutch – a sevenfold multiplication! In addition, the capacity for immigrant detention has seen a *seventy*fold increase between 1980 and 2006 and its share of total prison facilities has risen from 9% in 1999 to more than 18% in 2006 (Broeders 2010). A non-western migrant in the Netherlands has to live with the statistical fact that he is much more likely than a native Dutchman to be detained.

These statistics have often served as a ‘pretext’ for Dutch politicians of all persuasions to speak in a matter-of-fact discourse about ethnic minorities, juveniles in particular, and crime. Labour speaks about Moroccan juveniles having an ‘ethnic monopoly on street nuisance’ (Diederik Samsom) and the right-wing Freedom Party (Geert Wilders) argues that ‘Moroccan street scum speaks one language only: apprehension, detention and deportation.’ When a bus driver is mildly wounded by an ethnic minority youth in Gouda, the conservative liberals speak about a ‘nation on fire’ (Laetitia Griffith) and a moral panic holds the country in its grip for weeks. Political rhetoric is effectively translated into juridical ‘innovations’ that increasingly crack down on minorities, as will be seen throughout this book but in Chapter 5 particularly.

It is stating the obvious to say that this matter-of-fact discourse is merely one way of framing the problem. Crime statistics are never obvious, because there is no one-dimensional or unequivocal relation between the police and the public in general, let alone between the authorities and minorities. Crime statistics depend on these relations, which in turn depend on choices being made. And I am not only referring to the ‘choices’ of particular individuals, or groups of individuals, to commit a particular crime. The choices that are made by those in strategic positions deciding about police policy are equally or perhaps even more important when it comes to the establishment of crime statistics. For instance, jail populations will look differently when law enforcement

operates along the lines of community policing than when its guiding tactic is to counter broken windows.

The debate about policing styles is unavoidably centred on the question of ethnic or racial injustice. As Michael Greenberg argued in a recent article in the *New York Review of Books* about broken windows and policing:

‘If a window in a building is broken and left unrepaired, the rest of the windows will soon be broken as well, because the unrepaired window signals that no one cares. This explains why the police should make arrests for panhandling, public drunkenness, loitering, and other minor infractions that have long been considered unavoidable by-products of urban street life.’ (2014: 22)

Typically, such low-level infractions occur among the homeless. In the Netherlands, 40% of the homeless have a non-western background (CBS 2012a), which is an effect of particular policies that increase the likelihood that those who reside in the Netherlands illegally will end up homeless, as we will see below. We begin to see how crime statistics are being shaped by the twin projects of policing and policy-making<sup>1</sup>.

However, this book is not only about different styles of policing and the policies from which they stem. It is also about the negligence that typifies Dutch police leaders who seem to be unable or unwilling to recognize that different styles – different frames, discourses, or *modi operandi* – have an impact on the relations between law enforcement and the public, its minority segments in particular. Throughout the book we will see that across the Netherlands, officers work with different frames, different ‘background expectancies’ (Cicourel 1968), in mind. These frames guide them in their encounters with migrants, some of which are severely migrant-hostile while others are surprisingly benevolent. The frames that guide officers in their behaviour at work – that lead to ‘guided doings’ (Goffman 1974) – are shaped by a number of factors, such as their personal histories, the supervision that they receive, the conditions of work, the government policies that are imposed on them, the structures of incentives, as well as the representation of the social world that society and its political representatives produce.

In general, however, none of this is taken into account by Dutch police leaders. They act as if police-public relations can be reduced to inter-

personal relations between an officer and a particular citizen, or non-citizen for that matter. By extension, improvements of police-public relations are sought in the cognitions and behaviour of the individual officer. Consequently, when, for example, incidents of police discrimination are reported, these are conceived of as ‘private troubles’ characterized by idiosyncrasy, rather than as ‘public issues’ that are patterned and systemic. In various incarnations, a psychologization occurs that reduces migrant-hostile policing to the individual officer’s inability to overcome the automatic tendency to make categorical judgements based on race or ethnicity, irrespective of the context in which these judgements develop. Automatically, change efforts are suggested that give an absolute primacy to the individual officer, not to the (sub)system in which they operate and that give direction to what they do.

Throughout the project I have persistently attempted to understand such psychologization as a frame in its own right; as a way to make sense of migrant-hostile relations in policing. Guided by the sociological imagination that C. Wright Mills had in mind, this ‘psy-frame’ is brought into contact/conflict with other frames. These counter-frames help us to understand that the thoughts and actions of individual officers are in fact bound up with broader developments and issues, that is, that they act as social beings who operate in a certain habitus – not as individuals *sensu stricto*. Such an approach helps us to read ‘the empirical microscopy of everyday policing against the larger forces that give shape to it – forces inherent in the age of the market, of deregulation and privatization, of the fetishism of rights and the rule of law’ (Comaroff 2013: xvii). Throughout this book attempts are continuously made to correct the imbalance in psychological and social claims.

While the Police Commissioner and the responsible minister decree that more individualism in policing is necessary, and encourage it under the guise of ‘professionalism’, ‘craftsmanship’, ‘de-bureaucratization’, ‘deregulation’, or ‘discretion’, this book issues a clarion call for change in the opposite direction. Police reforms that aim to achieve a form of justice that includes rather than excludes minorities by means of individual change efforts only, will not work. Especially not when these individuals are given the discretionary authority to reject these reforms (see Chapter 6). Moreover, top down encouragement of individualization will only lead to more ‘privatized’ and ‘unchecked’ police violence, of the sort we have recently witnessed in Ferguson, USA. The paradox, though, is that

this privatization is structural, and so is the sort of violence that it produces (Davidson Buck 2015). Structural violence is the effect of the triumph of psychological ways to organize policing. When officers learn, as we will see throughout this book, that bureaucratic impersonality is the social evil of our time, and that they need to develop their ‘authentic selves’ (with all the intimacies, feelings and emotions) at work, we should not be surprised that personal frustration, irritation, animus and prejudice are indeed expressed. When the organization prefers personality over impersonality and private selves over public roles while at the same introducing a set of severely migrant-hostile policies, we should also not be surprised about the sort of selves and personalities that are moulded. It is in that light that this book intends to reclaim the public role in policing.

### Note

<sup>1</sup> We should not forget that the Greek word *politeia* points to both ‘police’ and ‘policy’. Will Garriot (2013: 4) writes the following:

‘There is a deep and abiding relationship between police and governance. Indeed, as the etymology of “police” reveals, the two terms were once virtually synonymous. The term “police” emerged in Western political discourse as early as the thirteenth century. It is generally traced to the French term “*police*”, which was used to capture the meaning in the Latin term “*politea*” (Greek “*politeia*”) – the source for both “police” and “policy” in English. Indeed, in its early European usage, “police” is the term used to refer to the power to govern and/or the act of governing itself, suggesting a closer affinity to the contemporary notion of “policy” than police (Gordon 1991). The objects of police were many.’



# Acknowledgments

My all-times favourite author, C. Wright Mills, wrote more than half a century ago that neither love nor hatred of work is inherent in man. For some it is a mere source of livelihood; for others it is a significant part of one's inner life, an exuberant expression of self. Both perspectives put a serious toll on the worker. The first category wants to restrict labour time, but often can't; the second always tends to lengthen the working day, but shouldn't. There is really only one person who has been able to prevent me from definitely falling into this second category and that is my wife, Marleen. Thank you for being the intensely human woman of acute intelligence, immense generosity, with a delightful sense of play and humour that you are. Thank you also for being so patient with me and for your absolute devotion to our little family. Maarten, our oldest; loveable as you are, you turn every morning into a sheer moment of joy. I am confident that your spontaneity, sociability, intelligence and curiosity will bring you all the good in life that you wish for. Midas, our youngest; it is never hard to coax a smile from you – happier than you a baby cannot get. You and your brother give meaning to our lives and the lives of your grandparents, who we thank for always being there for us.

At work I owe my gratitude to dozens of people, who have all made valuable contributions to this book. In particular I want to mention Officer Murat Kiral, whom I have come to consider a good colleague and friend over the years. Thank you for sharing your critical perspectives with me on matters related to crime, policing and justice. The same holds true for Hodo Hassan. Our meetings have been (and hopefully continue to be) both enlightening and hilarious. Thank you for your dedication and involvement.

In academia I would like to thank my good colleagues at *Anthropoliteia* – Kevin Karpiak, Jennie Simpson and Beatrice Jauregui in particular – and at *Border Criminologies*, especially Mary Bosworth and Ines Hasselberg, for giving me a chance to firmly embed my research in an international field of excellent anthropologists, sociologists and legal scholars. Closer to home

I thank Ruben Gowricharn, Odile Heynders, Ad Backus, Jos Swanenberg, Sanna Lehtonen, Piia Varis, Jef van der Aa, Tom van Nuenen and Massimiliano Spotti for the many interesting conversations that we had and that helped me to advance my dissertation project. Last but not least I owe a lifetime of gratitude to Arie de Ruijter, Jan Blommaert and Sjaak Kroon for their continuous support. You've led the way in darker times and gave me a richer understanding of solidarity and of academic work as a collective enterprise. It's on the shoulders of giants that I stand.

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All of you – and many others – have given valuable input to this book. However, as the saying goes, the final product is my problem.



# Contents

Preface	<i>vii</i>
Acknowledgments	<i>xiii</i>
1 Public Presence	<i>1</i>
2 Frames	<i>15</i>
3 Ethnography	<i>31</i>
4 Migrant-hostility	<i>41</i>
5 Thickening Borderlands	<i>71</i>
6 Craftsmanship	<i>93</i>
7 Psycho-technicians	<i>109</i>
8 Greedy Institutions	<i>129</i>
9 Reclaiming the Public in Policing	<i>149</i>
References	<i>155</i>
Tilburg Dissertations in Culture Studies	<i>175</i>



# 1 Public Presence

A discipline that embraces the bewildering variety of world languages, that is found on a thoroughgoing extroversion to cultural diversity, that willingly confronts a myriad of social forms, should be able to find a more generous vision of possible styles and registers and manners of expression and presentation.

*Alan Campbell, Popularizing Anthropology, 1996*

It may be held that it is laudable for an anthropologist to investigate practical problems... but if he does so he must realize that he is no longer acting within the anthropological field but in the non-scientific field of administration.

*Edward E. Evans-Pritchard, Applied Anthropology, 1946*

## **Cops, anthropologists, and what it is that they do and don't share**

Really, there aren't that many differences between a cop and an anthropologist. First, as a group, both have occupational contact with the widest spectrum of human variety. If cops work with crack dealers, so do anthropologists (cf. Bourgeois 2002; Karandinos et al. 2014). If cops work with 'illegal immigrants', so do anthropologists (cf. Blommaert 2009; Mutsaers 2014a; Peutz 2006). Not only cops work on white collar crime; so do anthropologists (cf. Ho 2009). Cops and anthropologists alike garner attention to loitering youth (cf. Fassin 2013a). If cops work on human trafficking of bodies and organs, so do, as the repetition makes you immediately intuit, anthropologists (cf. Scheper-Hughes 2004). Second, the anthropological equivalent of undercover police operations is the idea of 'going native', blending in, immersing oneself. I say so tongue in cheek of course, because, where undercover cops should always try to

keep their identities concealed, anthropologists are ethically obliged to play by the book and reveal their true identities and purposes in all cases and at all times. But then again, the fact remains that both are working ‘bottom-up’ and ‘from within’ to gather intelligence and information. Both do intensive fieldwork and are physically close to the people they scrutinize. In that sense, beat officers are perpetually doing ethnographic fieldwork. That’s why street-level police experience is of such great value to the anthropological discipline. Third, because their work takes place not in laboratories or other settings that are more or less controlled but in real-life situations, cops and anthropologists have to work under pressure of unpredictability and non-linearity. As a result, individuals within both occupations often make decisions on different premises than their colleagues do. This comparison introduces two of the main topics in this book: police discretion and discrimination as well as the incredibility of authoritative, monotone and scientific representations in just-so-stories told by anthropologists with a flair of matter-of-factness. There are, inevitably, personal idiosyncrasies in police work *and* the work of the anthropologist. Much more about this below. Fourth, while both engage with people of all walks of life, cops and anthropologists both have the tendency to focus on the marginalized, the poor, the underprivileged. Cops are drawn to them by the bulk of crime they expect to find among these classes; anthropologists are more likely to be concerned with the massive suffering they expect to find there. Chapter 5 puts the contrasts of these two worlds into words.

I will spend a few separate paragraphs to the fifth and final point of comparison because of its crucial importance for the rest of this book. In different ways, both cops and anthropologists are increasingly expected to be on the frontlines, that is, to establish a public presence and to have public value.

Cops first. As Maguire et al. argue in the introduction to their critical anthropology of security, ‘the concept of security saturates contemporary politics, policy and media’ (2014: 1). Security dominates current discourses on the state of contemporary societies and the police are given a pivotal role by this discoursing. They are what Manning (2010) calls the ‘immediate face of government’ and form one of the most eye-catching frontline public organizations. More or less recent events in Ferguson (Missouri, USA) and elsewhere (such as Los Angeles, Denver, Detroit, Paris, Brixton, Liverpool, Bristol or Birmingham) make this all the more

clear and show that the police are already visibly present at the frontline. They do what they're asked. Unfortunately, these frontlines often turn out to be *fault* lines that draw boundaries on the basis of race and ethnicity. All of the cities mentioned above have been sites of ethnic rioting and of police violence against minorities.

Clearly, the police often stand in direct contact with the population and their work can leave visible, even physical, traces (e.g., Dasgupta 2014; Goffman 2014; Jauregui 2013). Owing to their monopoly on the legitimate use of violence within the boundaries of the state (as Max Weber's classical definition has it), they are the first governmental actor that can be deployed when social order needs to be enforced or restored (Fassin 2013a). When roaming in the districts, containing a demonstration, responding to an emergency call, mediating a conflict, investigating a homicide, or policing a riot, the police are actually producing and reproducing socio-political hierarchies in the settings in which they operate. Victims are juxtaposed to perpetrators, legality is pitted against illegality, people are framed as the law-abiding or the law-breaking type, petty criminals are distinguished from major criminals, organized crime from the activities of lone wolves, those who are suspected of misdeeds when loitering in a certain public place from those who are not even noticed, the overpoliced poor from the underpoliced affluent, the deserving from the undeserving. People can be labelled 'escapees', 'bogus migrants', or 'incorrigibles' and such labels rarely stay without consequence. Police work can be of much value to the lives of people and is often appreciated, but it can also delimit people's lives and opportunities. For some people law enforcement is a last resort they gratefully embrace in case of emergency; for others it may exact high costs in terms of stigmatization, humiliation, even brutality (Fassin 2013a). In many ways I concur with Lipsky that the police act as the gatekeepers of important dimensions of citizenship. As an executive organization they socialize citizens and non-citizens to expectations of government and to a place within or outside the political community (Lipsky 2010). Exactly because it has such a strong public presence, this organization should always be subjected to critical public review.

Measured by public presence cops beat anthropologists hands down, and this has only little to do with numbers. Throughout the past decades serious critique has come from within the anthropological discipline about the tendency to skirt those who have been studied after they have

been studied and, more generally, about the sheer absence of anthropology in the public sphere (e.g., Clifford and Marcus 1986; Eriksen 2006; MacClancy and McDonough 1996; MacClancy 2002a). Despite the fact that anthropologists have always dedicated themselves to matters of public concern and have concentrated on relevant issues such as fundamentalism (Beeman 2002), political socialism (Verdery 1996), urban poverty (Lewis 1959), policy worlds (Shore et al. 2011), neoliberal security (Rosas 2012), stock markets (Ho 2009), aid (De Waal 2002), and the commodification of ethnicity (Comaroff and Comaroff 2009), they have seldom done so in a writing that is not 'cloaked' with 'the thickest of prose' (MacClancy 2002b: 4). Rarely is something written that is readily accessible to or translated for a general public. Prominent anthropologists such as Eriksen (2006) and Hannerz (2010) have argued that change must be forthcoming lest the discipline will wither.

It has not always been so. People like Franz Boas, the founding father of American anthropology, played a major role in and was given much credit for the attack on scientific racism. Margaret Mead adopted a flowing prose that seemed to work well in popularizing anthropology (if one is repelled by the word 'popularizing', Beeman [1987] suggests thinking of it as a public service). Ruth Benedict's *Patterns of Culture* (1934) sold in the millions and turned out to be very successful in challenging popular preconceptions about culture (cf. Eriksen 2006). It has been said about *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword* that it altered the lives of numerous Japanese.

We can only speculate about why things have changed. Personally I think it has much to do with the pressure that is put on academics to publish in highly ranked international journals and the cutthroat competition that rules anthropology and the academy writ large. Much can be said about it and has been said about it, but it is beside the point. What concerns us here is what can be done, with the little means available, to show the relevance of anthropology to the outside world and to convey anthropological insights to a more general public. I will first say a thing or two about what I consider the necessary elements of a 'public anthropology' and then continue introducing the themes and structure of this book in the next chapter.

## **A public anthropology: what it should and shouldn't be**

Judging on the basis of the academic journals in which anthropologists publish, public anthropology seems to be in its heyday. Almost all major journals in anthropology are actively making their contribution to it (e.g., Brondo 2010; Fassin 2013b; Gomberg-Muñoz 2013; Lamphere 2003; Low and Merry 2010; Osterweil 2013) and there is now even a separate journal called *Anthropology in Action. Journal for Applied Anthropology in Policy and Practice*. A whole swath of applied ethnographies exists that are tailored to organizational contexts (e.g., Bate 1997; Van Maanen 2010; Watson 2010a; Yanow 2009; Ybema et al. 2009) and the *American Anthropological Association* has dedicated its entire 2014 annual meeting to questions revolving around a public anthropology (Which partnerships should we build? Which audiences should we seek?)

The problem is, though, that most people have no access to these journals or conferences. Don't get me wrong; I admire the effort and make my own contributions, but I do not think it suffices. I think we should raise our game and engage more with a wider public, including the people we study. Only by doing so do we take seriously what Giddens (1990) once said; namely that the knowledge we create spirals in and out of social life, whether we try to keep our knowledge within the inner circles of initiates or not. Eventually, knowledge breaks out of the boundaries its producers create. If it does – in fact, we should stimulate it – we better make sure that it is understood the way we intend it to be understood. Allow me to give two examples of how anthropological knowledge can spiral in and out of social life and what the consequences can be if one is not prepared for it.

'A student of African ethno-history is conducting field research in Gabon. He is concerned with the Mpongwé, a coastal group who, in the nineteenth century, were active in contacts with European traders and colonists. The "tribe" still exists, in the region of Libreville, and the ethno-historian has arranged to interview the current Mpongwé chief about traditional life, religious ritual, and so on. In preparation for his interview the researcher consults a compendium of local custom compiled in the early twentieth century by a Gabonese Christian and pioneering ethnographer, the

Abbé Raponda-Walker. Before meeting with the Mpongwé chief the ethnographer copies out a list of religious terms, institutions and concepts, recorded and defined by Raponda-Walker. The interview will follow this list, checking whether the customs persist, and if so, with what innovations. At first things go smoothly, with the Mpongwé authority providing descriptions and interpretations of the terms suggested... After a time, however, when the researcher asks about a particular word, the chief seems uncertain, knits his brows. “Just a moment,” he says cheerfully, and disappears into his house to return with a copy of Raponda-Walker’s compendium. For the rest of the interview the book lies open on his lap.’ (Clifford 1986: 116)

*Compilation of field notes about the Dutch police*

In 2010, I got acquainted with Superintendent Donald. A team leader of a police team that I was observing at that moment introduced us. The introduction took place because Donald was working at that time as a diversity trainer and the team leader figured it would be good for me to talk to him. His trainings could be valuable for me to observe and he would definitely be interested in my research. I attended his classes, we got along well and one thing led to another. Before we knew it we were in the backseat of the Mercedes of the Commissioner, who gave his driver the order to drive us all the way to Frankfurt Airport, where we took off first to Singapore, then to Sydney and, finally, in a very old Fokker aircraft with screw propellers, to Canberra, the capital city of Australia (the details convey the sacrifices I made for this research; I hate flying). Our job was to give a joint presentation at a conference organized by the Centre of Excellence in Policing and Security, a collaboration of various academic institutes in Australia that was initiated in 2007 by the Australian Research Council. Touched by the words of Bradley and Nixon (2009), who had spoken about ‘dialogues of the deaf’ between police scholars and police practitioners, we had prepared a paper and a presentation that showed the fruits of combining my research with Donald’s diversity training (at that time he was halfway training 1,500 uniformed police officers across the 22 teams of the force). Simply put, my findings exposed some of the risks of managing ethnic



diversity in the force and gave direction to possible solutions. Donald's trainings served well to disseminate these findings and to communicate and debate these potential solutions. All for the good of diversity within the 22 teams.

Our presentation was well received and we had a jolly good time down under. But it was too early to merrily skip off into the sunset. About a year later I finally had the chance to meet a policewoman, Meryem, about whom I had heard many positive stories and whom I was looking forward to meet for quite some time already. From hearsay I understood that she had a promising career and was unanimously regarded as a 'high potential' that was making it to the strategic level in the organization. Owing to the serious lack of ethnic minority officers in the higher strata of this organization, I was dying to speak with her. However, when I spoke with her, she told me this: 'I did very well [in the organization]. I have been working here for 20 years and I managed pretty well to climb the ladder. I was on my way to the highest level. But all of a sudden, everything changed. I wondered whether it had something to do with the political climate. Is it because of the new government [the migrant-hostile Freedom Party – PVV – had recently started to support the minority government]? Are people within this organization so easily manipulated by political pressure? Promotion plans were aborted and my superiors distanced themselves from me. Was I a threat? Did people become afraid of me? One of the things I'll never forget is that my superior told me: "You and I, we have been enemies for centuries." Soon I realized that this was about Christianity and Islam. I am not a Muslim; I had never read the Koran. But then I bought one and I read it, twice! I started reading about the prophet Mohammed. I wanted to. For nights I had been awake, crying, considering to "go back" to Turkey, where I was not even born. I am born in the Netherlands.'

I lost my cool when I heard that Donald had argued in certain quarters of the organization that the best way to deal with the 'diversity problem' was to sack minorities. After all, research at Tilburg University had pointed at some of the risks of diversity in police teams. White officers, he had said, fiercely opposed the presence of ethnic minority officers in some teams and that resulted in an unproductive working climate. Later it turned out

that Meryem was given the assignment to re-organize an all-white team of which she was the team leader. This had caused so much resistance among the seasoned and entrenched officers that Meryem herself ended up being relocated.

An encounter between an ethno-historian and a Mpongwé chief at the West Coast of Africa several decades ago; the struggles of an upset police ethnographer traveling to Australia and back to Western Europe, down to present times (in 2010). In various times and at various locations anthropologists are dealing with strikingly similar issues – illustrated by two episodes that unfolded in completely different places and periods. They have been selected to take such a pivotal role because they both throw an old formula into confusion – that of the privileged, authoritative and scientific representation of a people. This formula has dominated the anthropological discipline for a long time. Both cases show that those who anthropologists have typically been assigning the role of ‘informant’ refuse to settle with such a one-dimensional role. A clear-cut role division between researcher and researched is not accepted. It is visible to the naked eye that the boundaries between observer and observed are no longer, if they have ever been, impermeable. The two episodes confirm what has been repeatedly emphasized by (some) anthropologists over the past three or four decades (e.g., Clifford and Marcus 1986; Fabian 1983; MacClancy and McDonaugh 1996); namely that anthropological accounts cannot be seen as just-so-stories, as objective and neutral reflections of reality ‘out there’.

In other words, the old ‘clubbiness’ (MacClancy 1996) of self-acclaimed omniscient and omnicompetent anthropologists deliberating about tribe X or Y or ritual W or Z is crumbling and I strongly believe this is for the better. It is crumbling because, as the Gabon encounter demonstrates so well, we cannot assume that the works of anthropologists (and other human scientists for that matter) aren’t read and put to use by the people they study. Such usage changes social life. Intertextuality – that is, the production of text under the influence of, and with the desire to influence other texts (Marcus 1986) – is not the prerogative of scholars or other text workers. We now know that academic texts do not only have use-value within the confines of the academic world, but are increasingly used beyond it (by people as diverse as church goers, employees, consultants, Mpongwé chiefs, policemen,

Wall Street bankers, policy makers, the proverbial man on the streets and so forth). As my own example shows, such usage can have a strategic undertow.

Some disturbed reactions can be expected. Don't sabotage the linear process of research! (you should know that my Australian adventure took place halfway my police study). Data collection first, then data analysis, and when all is said and done, disseminate! Don't disrupt the division of roles! Let researchers research and their subjects be subjected to it. Don't create jacks-of-all-trades who then profess to be researchers, advisors, and informants all at once. In spite of all these conceivable objectives, I have not felt prompted to make my approach more rigorous or my research attitude more conservative. The crux of the matter is that the episode simply appears to lend support to what Giddens (1990) had already said about the spiralling of knowledge in and out of social life. How this spiralling goes is not always in our hands. The aforesaid points at the sheer impossibility of doing 'clean' research. Had I waited with the dissemination of my findings, similar things would have most likely happened to other people at other times. Although I am fully aware of the fact that this is no consternation for Meryem, in all likelihood troubles would simply have been postponed only to intervene with someone else's career development at a later time. In this case, what I could do was putting the course of events to use as new input for my understanding of how this peculiar organization, the Dutch police, works and promising myself that future productions would be accessible and usable to all.

This brings us to the first criterion of a public anthropology: how to write it? This was the main topic in MacClancy's and McDonaugh's *Popularizing Anthropology* (1996). How ethnographies – the key productions of anthropologists – are written down and put in print determines for a huge part to what extent they are accessible to a more general public, which in turn has a significant impact on the ease with which knowledge creations and lived realities can entwine and co-evolve. A text adorned with human science jargon has little extra-academic appeal and will most likely not be picked up outside academia. Don't get me wrong; I do not intend to say that public anthropology ought to be all of anthropology. Lévi-Strauss' *Structural Anthropology* (1963), although a trial to read, is just as important as his popular *Tristes Tropiques* (1955) or Oscar Lewis' extremely accessible *Five Families* (1959) or Marjorie Shostak's (1981) absorbing account of the life of Nisa, a !Kung

woman. I see public anthropology as an integral part of the discipline, a sort of translator that takes upon itself the task to render anthropological works accessible to common sense, that informed annotation of everyday experience, as Clifford Geertz (1983) once called it.

If you ask me ‘why a public anthropology?’, I tend to answer with Ruth Benedict (1934: 1) because ‘anthropology is the study of human beings as creatures of society’, and all those creatures, that is, all of us, should stand to gain from anthropological insights. These insights cannot be enclosed within the bastions of science and should eventually always be imparted to a much wider public. This is the only way, I believe, to counter abuses of anthropological (or other academic) output, such as exemplified above in the police case. Not concealment and accessibility for the happy few, but maximum openness, within the boundaries of privacy protection and the like, for all who are interested in and have an interest in our work.

If the first criterion of a public anthropology has to do with how it is written, the second has to do with how it is performed. It befits a public anthropology to be as open and transparent as possible about how ethnographies come about. This was the topic of several milestone publications in the 1980s, such as *Writing Culture* (Clifford and Marcus 1986) and *Time and the Other* (Fabian 1983). Although these authors also addressed the ways ethnographies should be written (more about this in a second), they were additionally concerned with how ethnographies were (to be) performed. Questions were raised such as: under what conditions do anthropologists perform their studies? What are their epistemological predilections (that is, how do they prefer to generate knowledge)? What kind of power asymmetries are involved? And: Who speaks? Who writes? Where and when? With or to whom? Under what institutional and historical constraints? (Clifford 1986: 13).

In addition to the realization that the lived realities that anthropologists study are likely to be (partly) shaped by the knowledge that is created about them, and can thus never be captured in a language of complete and definitive truths, it slowly started to dawn that the ethnographer and his or her informants are collaborators, or, to use a very old anthropological concept, ‘bricoleurs’ in a work of interpretation, as Bourdieu has it in his afterword to Rabinow’s *Reflections on Fieldwork in Morocco* (1977). As such, the production of a certain ‘truth’ about a phenomenon, a theme or a people becomes an intersubjective

enterprise, which is neither completely objective nor completely subjective but dependent upon a mutual understanding of the world by different and collaborating or conflicting subjects (Ong 1987).

The title of Clifford's introduction, *Partial Truths*, to his and Marcus's edited volume is telling in this regard and so is Paul Rabinow's citation of Foucault: 'Truth is to be understood as a system of ordered procedures for the production, distribution, circulation and operation of statements' (1986: 240). Within such a system 'truth games' (e.g., Foucault 2010) unfold that are on the one hand influenced by 'regimes of truth' (e.g., scientific regimes or institutional regimes) and on the other hand by the tactics and strategies of individuals who operate within such systems. Put differently, when an anthropologist enters a certain field of study (s)he is confronted with a certain ordering of truth statements (e.g., stating within a police organization that criminals can be good people gives out an offensive ring – what does that say, after all, about the usefulness of the corrective powers of criminal justice systems?) Within such an order individuals can, depending on the power of constraints, take various positions and decide about the various interests that certain statements may serve. As a result, they can decide to be completely open about something or to conceal certain information or only partially disclose it.

This is important stuff. It is good to be open about ethnographic procedures and honest about the quality and validity of knowledge. It is important to realize that informants are guided by their own interests when they conceal or disclose certain things in the company of a researcher. The organizational anthropologist Barbara Czarniawska (2007) rhetorically asked: 'Whose interests should direct their accounts if not their own?' As it is a core understanding of a public anthropology that objective and neutral 'truths' cannot be obtained, as we have said, its task is not to decipher the objective truth behind people's words, but to look at the wording of their discourses and the interests that colour interpretations. What colours do these interpretations take? And what impact do we, as researchers, have in this colouring? As Kim Fortun (2009: xv) argues in her foreword to the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary edition of *Writing Culture*, '[a]uthority comes not from being unquestionable but by acknowledging partiality.'

But here comes the big 'But', which takes us right back to the first criterion. Such self-reflection should not result into an uneasy moving through a postmodern hall of mirrors that renders the author stalled,

unsteady, fumbling for direction (Geertz 1998). We must be able to say something without a thousand footnotes of self-doubt, lest the broader public discredits our work as throwaway pieces in which everything is so ephemeral and contingent that things are far-gone by the time people read about them. What Clifford Geertz has called ‘epistemological hypochondria’ has led to more cocooning, rather than less; it has only further chased anthropology down the road of introverted rumination (Eriksen 2006). A public anthropology finds no aid in the ‘narcissist temptations of postmodernism’ (ibid). Despite its intent to bring anthropology to the people, *Writing Culture* can rightfully be said to have achieved the opposite, largely so because of its elitist writing style and deep-rooted self-concern.

What I consider to be a third element of a public anthropology is – to use a hackneyed phrase – ‘making the familiar strange’. *Verfremdung*, defamiliarization, looking at things quizzically, thinking along unfamiliar lines. Classically, anthropologists have used the reverse strategy of making the strange familiar. Writing about tribes where people ate one another or shot arrows at the moon, it worked to show basic human features shared by all. When anthropologists started to study their own societies, defamiliarization became in vogue. Its basic premise is that society can be different; things do not have to be taken for granted (Eriksen 2006). Anthropologists should be at the forefront of the public debate in order to urge people to slow down, think things over again, reconsider. At present, debates, especially when taking place in the hit-and-run media go at a tremendous pace. As a result, nuances disappear and public debates are of an ‘epochalist bent’ (Du Gay 2003); a new epoch seems to arrive every day. In this book we will, for example, ‘unthink’ and de-familiarize the bureaucracy-bashing that is currently going on at the Dutch police and discuss the serious consequences that it has in terms of equality, neutrality and impartiality. It is important to note that a *popularization* of anthropology does not boil down to a *populist* anthropology. In fact, it befits a public anthropology to say unpopular things and to criticize what John Kenneth Galbraith once called ‘conventional wisdoms’ (1958). Eriksen (2006) draws on Foucault, who in turn draws on the Greek, when he introduces the concept of *parrēsia*. Ignoring the personal risk that it entails, the parrēsiast speaks against power and interrogates received wisdoms.

Finally, a public anthropology addresses critical issues that matter to people plus tries to address them pragmatically, with a practical objective in mind. It does not require a lot of trouble to imagine that policing and security are such critical issues that matter to people the world over. I have made my case in the previous section. With respect to practicality a few remarks are in order. If it comes to practical relevance, it depends on the field of study what options are within reach. Since my own study took place in a huge public organization, I had plenty. For instance, it was easy for me to locate the source of power and speak to it. At several occasions, for example, I gave presentations to the District Management of a police district where I conducted my study. I have regularly talked to team managers to convey my message. I have organized conferences at the police about my research and gave training to police students. In case there would be a diversity training that I knew of, I attended as a critical listener (not that it would always help, as we will see later). Whenever an individual police officer requested my assistance, I was available. When it comes to knowledge sharing, I write a monthly column at the national intranet of the Dutch police, publish on open-access websites (e.g., Mutsaers 2012a, 2013), write for a public administration journal that is well read by policymakers and professionals (e.g., Mutsaers et al. 2012), and make my contributions to an international blog about the anthropology of policing (*Anthropoliteia*). No, I don't want to veer into self-congratulations; I simply want to name some of the options for dissemination and proactively tackle the argument brought forward by someone who wants to reach out but doesn't know how.

In the next chapter, we will turn to matters of policing and security in the Netherlands and take first steps towards a (un)popular anthropology of policing.





## 2 Frames

The police, like all members of a society, operate with background expectancies and norms of a 'sense of social structure' that enables them to transform an environment of objects into recognizable and intelligent displays making up everyday social organization.

*Aaron Cicourel, The Social Organization of Juvenile Justice, 1968*

### **Bureaucracy and professionalism**

What have we said so far? For a long time anthropology had been struck rigid by conventions that have kept its personnel within academic confines and have limited the value of anthropological inquiry for practical purposes. This started to change in the 1980s and 1990s when the groundwork was laid for a 'public' or 'popular' anthropology that is more transparent about its own procedures and more accessibly written. Not only do I believe that, as experts of the range and depth of human diversity, anthropologists have an obligation to be potentially open to all of human kind – an obligation which they can honour by sharing their expertise and making it publically available; I also believe that it is necessary to keep anthropologists in business (Hannerz 2010). Evans-Pritchard's standpoint (see the second epigraph of the previous chapter) will not do the job. In order to meet such an obligation (i.e., to be open) and to keep in business, public anthropologists ought to make sure that they attend to the concerns of people and address critical social issues that matter to them (Lamphere 2003). Sharing is not a one-way-street thing; it involves senders and receivers. Both parties need to have an interest in the sharing of something – whatever that may be.

We have already claimed that policing is such a critical issue because of the frontline presence of law enforcers. Besides, agents that are

involved in matters of legality and justice carry with them a stock of knowledge about social types that are constructed in the processes of law enforcement and order maintenance (cf. Cicourel 1968). Now, it is not only due to their societal function that the police play such a critical role; their social organization and structures of authority are equally important. What is so damn quaint about police organizations is, as Wilson (1968) described long ago, that discretion increases as one moves *down* the hierarchy. In contrast to lower ranks in other large-scale bureaucracies, rank-and-file officers ‘have wide discretion over the dispensation of benefits or the allocation of public sanctions,’ a discretion which is practically unreviewable (Lipsky 2010: xi). Considering the critical societal function that the police have, this is particularly worrisome but necessary nonetheless, it is argued. In the words of Stinchcombe (1980: 50):

‘Perhaps nowhere is [the] potential conflict between individual decision-makers and the principles of bureaucracy better illustrated than in police departments. Few other agencies demand such procedural regularity while at the same time requiring such autonomous self-direction from its lowest-level ranks. By virtue of the awesome nature of the police mandate, the complex situations to which they must respond, and the very ambivalence of their role in society, the administration of law enforcement would appear to necessitate a unique organizational approach.’

This uniqueness has to do with the paradoxical combination of discretion and obedience, leeway and regulation – a combination that is best captured by Lipsky’s concept of ‘street-level bureaucrats’ (2010). Due to a complex and ambivalent task (serving and enforcing) as well as the lack of on-site supervision, street-level officers often rely on personal qualifications more than on formal routines. It is therefore common knowledge in the sociology of police that, exactly because law enforcers employ discretion in their invocation of the law, they do not merely apply legal maxims as ministerial agents of the state (Bittner 1970; Mutsaers 2014a, 2014b). They ‘prejudge’ people they encounter in the streets and draw upon their own conception of justice with respect to whether and how to intervene. Wilson wrote that ‘the line between prejudging [people] purely on the basis of police experience and prejudging them on

the basis of personal opinion (“showing prejudice”) is often very thin’ (1968: 38). Police discretion might thus very easily result in discriminatory and selective enforcement of the law. This observation sparked a huge debate in the sociology of police about what could be done to prevent discretion from turning into discrimination.

While some who engaged in the debate were convinced that relations between the police and those who have to bear the brunt of prejudice (the usual suspects: migrants, the homeless, the deviant, loitering youth) could be bettered by rulemaking (e.g., Davis 1974), others were not and believed that every new piece of bureaucracy could in practice be circumvented (e.g., Bittner 1970). This matter also became salient in Reuss-Ianni’s classical work (1983). In her famous study on street cops and management cops in New York she observed that officers’ degrees of freedom and autonomy were reduced and bureaucratic structures were strengthened in order to improve community relations, particularly with Black and Hispanic communities. More recent studies continue this line of thought and point to a trade-off between leniency and equity (McLaughlin and Murji 1999; Miller 2010; Quinton 2011). It is argued that discriminatory enforcement can and must be countered with effective monitoring systems that enforce rules and accountability upon individual police officers.

Police discretion seems to be inevitable not only because of the lack of on-site supervision, but also because it is a sheer impossibility to enforce every infraction of the law. While it is generally argued that this has to do with the abundance of crime, it might just as well have to do with the juridification of society and the continuous extension of the law. Whatever the reasons, the fact is that police organizations are typical examples of what Lewis A. Coser (1974) has called ‘greedy institutions’. They always seem to demand more from their personnel. The workload is experienced to be infinite. As a consequence, street officers permanently have to select infractions to which they decide to respond. They simply cannot address all.

I am going to take it as a given here that this selection is, by all parties involved, desired to occur in such a way that the principles of a democratic polity are respected. The way people are treated when they face the law ought to rest on equality, justice, impartiality and basic rights and responsibilities (Manning 2010). Now, in the literature basically two avenues are explored to achieve this. We have already

briefly touched upon the first and that is the road of bureaucracy: rulemaking, regulation, accountability, strict supervision, clear task descriptions, well-specified and delimited roles, administrative control, and the like. While the demise of bureaucracy has since long been anticipated (see Stinchcombe 1980; Wilson 1968), its defenders (e.g., Armbrüster 2005; Du Gay 2005; Goodsell 2005; Kallinikos 2004) keep emphasizing its indispensability as an organizational format that produces responsible and effective governance in a variety of contexts. They stress that bureaucracy is

‘the only manifestation of a continuous effort to create responsible, accountable governance by ensuring that discretion is not abused, that due process is the norm not the exception, and that undue risks are not taken that undermine the integrity of the political system.’ (Du Gay 2005: 4)

The defenders of bureaucracy are well aware of the critique that has been given on this particular form of organization. Kallinikos (2004: 14) is fully aware of the fashion to badmouth bureaucracy and writes that

‘popular belief associates bureaucracy with routine, initiative-stifling office work and an introvert organizational culture of rigid administrative procedures and redundant complexity... an institution that degrades human dignity and perpetuates social inequalities.’

In anthropology too, the bureaucratic form of organization has been associated with ‘the social production of indifference’ and a system in which individual officials can easily duck their responsibilities (Herzfeld 1992). Kallinikos responds that much of the critique often begins with a disqualification of the secondary or variable aspects of bureaucracy, such as red tape and overregulation. Nonetheless, in the critique bureaucracy is disqualified altogether, thus including its primary or constitutive aspects. For instance, Kallinikos thinks of the division between person and office as one of the most elementary and socially innovative characteristic of the bureaucratic foundation. The capacity to isolate or suspend personal or social considerations (Max Weber’s *sine ira et studio* principle) other than office-related ones keeps the organization flexible

and just. The non-inclusiveness of bureaucracy – what Michael Walzer (1984) has called ‘the liberal art of separation’ – decouples role-taking from the experiential totality (personality and social identities) of the office-holder. Bureaucracy is thus ‘dehumanized’ and limited in scope in the sense that personal, emotional and identity aspects (gender, race, ethnicity, etc.) are not supposed to be the object of attention. Personal liberty is protected by keeping it away from bureaucratic control.

The other avenue that is explored is diametrically opposed to bureaucracy: the road of professionalism. Numerous recommendations have been made since the 1980s to ‘de-bureaucratize’ law enforcement organizations and many have to do with the intended liberation of (in our case police) professionals. Advocates encourage independent judgment and wider discretion, job enlargement rather than restricted roles, decentralization of authority, the development of good morale through professional training and learning, and argue for the elimination of unnecessary regimentation (Stinchcombe 1980). These recommendations are intended to counter the alienating and dehumanizing effects of bureaucracy and to preserve the integrity, the ‘wholeness’, of the individual officer. In line with the basics of organizational theory, it is argued that officers will never become really committed to decisions they feel they have no part in making (Reuss-Ianni 1983: 124). In other words, if the upper strata of the bureaucracy decide that police officers should police in an impartial and non-discriminatory manner, and introduce myriad bureaucratic techniques to make sure that it is done, resistance and recalcitrance are the result. Advocates of the professionalization of police work argue for the alternative; give individual officers more responsibility and train them so that they acquire good morale. In addition to a legal commitment to non-discrimination there should also be a moral commitment to it.

Wilson (1968: 281-282) is crystal clear when he states that bureaucracy and professionalism are competing:

‘For some purposes or to some people, the problem with the police is that they don’t follow the rules. They question when they shouldn’t, search when they mustn’t, arrest when they have no grounds. The remedy, therefore, is to bureaucratize, or “judicialize”, the police: make them subject to more and more explicit rules, have these rules reviewed by the courts or by other nonpolice

agencies, and reduce their discretion wherever possible... Other persons, and in different circumstances... want the police officer to perform as a “professional” who has a service function. He should be freed from “objective” evaluation on the basis of arrest records and should emphasize creating and maintaining “good community relations”. Training and supervision, this argument goes, should encourage the patrolman to take a broad view of his role, exercise initiative and independence, appreciate the discretion he necessarily possesses, and learn his beat and work with the people on it.’

## **The Dutch situation**

As reflexivity is at the very heart of anthropological reasoning, writes Didier Bigo (2014: 192) in his afterword to *The Anthropology of Security*, anthropologists are generally very much aware of being positioned in a certain time frame. The current *Zeitgeist* of Dutch policing is undoubtedly in favour of professionalization rather than bureaucratization. Bureaucracy is eschewed, conceived to be a burden. Max Weber’s legal-rationalistic ideal of bureaucracy is forgotten or no longer believed in (see Mutsaers et al. 2012 for general comments on this issue).

This became particularly clear when the senior management of the Dutch police recently had to respond to the attention that was garnered to the tense contacts between the police and migrants in the Netherlands. We are now slowly getting to the central object of study: the policing of migrants in the Netherlands. Within a couple of years several publications from the hands of Dutch scholars (Çankaya 2011, 2012; Mutsaers 2014a, 2014b; Svensson and Saharso 2014; Van der Leun and Van der Woude 2011) had appeared for the first time in history on the range and depth of ethno-racial profiling – ‘the practice of using ethnicity, race, national origin, or religion as the basis for making law enforcement decisions about persons believed to be involved in criminal activity’ (Open Society Justice Initiative 2012: 13). In addition, Amnesty International (2013) came out with a report in which it was claimed that ethno-racial profiling is occurring in the Netherlands on a systematic basis. When the Amnesty report was presented to the Dutch police in Amsterdam, it was immediately discredited by its upper strata, who

postulated that ethno-racial profiling is not occurring systematically but incidentally and is therefore attributable to the individuals involved in such incidents (see Mutsaers 2014a and 2014b).<sup>1</sup> In his blog, the Commissioner of Police gave a personal reaction to the Amnesty report:

‘Selecting someone simply on the basis of descent goes against our sense of justice. It is not integer and not professional... Does that mean that we cannot be accused of ethnic profiling? Of course not. It is statistically unlikely that all of the 63,000 police officers work without making judgement mistakes... Just like everyone else police officers have intuitions and assumptions about minorities... By means of training we constantly invest in knowledge and insight: what does it require to work in a multicultural society?’ (Bouman 2013)

Ethno-racial profiling is here de facto transformed into a function of the professionalism of individual officers, who need to learn how to wield their powers of discretion with better precision, a central element of which is countering stereotypes and prejudice. On the website of the National Police it is stated that there is no reason to worry because the curriculum that all police recruits already follow includes diversity awareness and sensitivity trainings that ought to take care of this. Simultaneously, individual officers are given more autonomy and freedom by current police reforms that are intended to de-bureaucratize the police (Opstelten 2012).

Remarkably, these processes of individualization run in synchrony with the nationalization of the Dutch police. Whereas 26 relatively independent forces existed until January 2013, there is now one national police. This implies one Commissioner of Police, who in turn is accountable to one minister (of the Ministry of Security and Justice). Even more than before, (in)security has become a national issue and the organization is currently being reformed in such a way that this issue can be addressed uniformly, by one system. Reform plans are executed with a language of decisiveness and vigour, a language that features stuff such as ‘Attack Programs’ to counter bureaucracy or to reshape old-fashioned and fragmented information systems into one system (e.g., *Aanvalsprogramma Informatievoorziening* or *Aanvalsplan Bureaucratie*). All operational police teams, nation-wide, are currently being organized

according to equivalent structures and all services (communication, facility management, finance, HRM, ICT, and information management) are being nationalized.

This is important to notice because it allows the Commissioner to decree that there is one system and that every deviation is therefore an individual deviation. In broad terms, there is one frame of reference, one norm. Deviations are individual abnormalities. This idea is problematic in several ways. First, going back to the matter of ethno-racial profiling: empirical work on this topic in the Netherlands is scarcely out of the egg. This renders the claim that it stems from a lack of professionalism and the inability of individuals – as individuals *stricto sensu* – to make informed decisions a conjecture. Different scholars in different times and places have either advised to bureaucratize or professionalize police departments in order to make them work impartially and without discrimination. There seems to be no final judgement here, so local contexts and subsystems need to be taken into account. This is where anthropologists are at their best.

Second, recent work from US-based police scholars demonstrates that the professionalization of police officers in relation to our topic (discrimination) is far too much guided by a focus on the cognitive and socio-psychological aspects of ethnic and racial relations in policing. Paul Amar (2010) argues that these approaches fail to specify how cognitive states relate to broader power relations and government logics. Similarly, in their book *Pulled Over: How Police Stops Define Race and Citizenship* (2014) Epp et al. argue that ethno-racial disparities in relations of policing are not so much an effect of the motives and cognitions of individual police officers but of institutionalized practices of policing that are moulded politics. Their argument goes against the widespread belief – informed by psychological theory – that racism is mainly a personal animus. Epp et al. claim that this is simply a distraction, a way to dodge the real problems, which are far more difficult to grasp and resolve. Similarly, in her book *On the Run*, an engrossing account of struggles between the police and minority residents for control over the streets and homes of Philadelphia, Alice Goffman (2014) does not point to the defects of character of police officers to understand police discrimination, but to the tasks that they are assigned (Jencks 2014).

These works can be seen as a response to the withering away of critical sociological studies such as Anthony (1977), Baritz (1960), Braverman



(1974), Burawoy (1979) and Edwards (1979), in which unequal treatment was primarily understood in terms of social and institutional structures of opportunity, rather than individuals' shortcomings or intrapsychic bias and error. On the other side of the coin, it is a response to the coming of a 'cognitive turn' that has occurred under the aegis of psychological research on the cognitive basis for unequal treatment. William T. Bielby (2008: 57-58) writes that rejecting the role that social, institutional and organizational contexts have in matters of discrimination, poses several risks:

'First, it reinforces the perception that discrimination occurs simply because of individual's personal shortcomings, i.e., their inability to overcome the automatic tendency to make categorical judgements based on race or gender, regardless of social context. Second, as a result, it invites reform proposals that focus exclusively on individual and interpersonal processes... Third, by highlighting automatic or unconscious processes at the level of individual cognition, it avoids addressing the ways organizations act to structure decision-making context so that cognitive biases are allowed to affect... decisions. Fourth, it avoids addressing the responsibility organizations have for taking steps to ensure that the impact of cognitive bias is minimized and analysing the effectiveness of any efforts an organization takes along these lines.'

Throughout my 2008-2013 ethnographic study among Dutch police officers (the methods, analytical labour and challenges of the ethnography are detailed in Chapter 3) it struck me that the way police managers deal with ethnic diversity and discrimination – both within police departments as well as on the streets – can be characterized by the individual-centred thinking that Bielby condemns. Every time strained relations between migrants and non-migrants develop imperfections are imputed upon individual officers, as if these developments can be seen as their *private troubles* rather than as broader *public issues*, to speak with C. Wright Mills (1959). There seems to be a serious lack of sociological imagination (Mills again), the sort of imagination that is required to understand that police officers do not behave as they do purely because of their psychological traits or moral qualities. Their personal histories, the supervision that they receive, the conditions of work and the

government policies that are imposed on them, the structures of incentives, as well as the representation of the social world that society produces are equally or even more important (Epp et al. 2014; Fassin 2013a). Ignoring all these matters by ‘professionalizing’ officers with psychological trainings about their own stereotypes is like fighting fire with oil, as we will see. Stuart Hall (2002: 58) was right on the mark when he said that

‘The question is not whether men-in-general make perceptual distinctions between groups with different racial or ethnic characteristics, but rather, what are the specific conditions which make this form of distinction socially pertinent, historically active. What gives this abstract human potential its effectivity, as a concrete material force?’

## **Frame analysis**

In this book, we are going to see that, for Dutch police officers, the conditions Hall referred to are of a variety of sorts. The Dutch police cannot be conceived of as one system, or one culture, despite the tireless efforts to bring homogeneity, uniformity and standardization to the workforce. It is to be seen as a fragmented organization that exists of myriad subsystems and frames, each of which may provide officers with ‘background expectancies’ (Cicourel 1968) when they are on the job. Such an approach helps us to consider the above described individualization as one such frame – a frame that comes under the guise of professionalization. An anti-bureaucracy frame.

Frame analysis automatically brings us to the work of Erving Goffman. In his discussion of frameworks and framing, Goffman defines the most primary of frameworks as schemata of interpretation that render ‘what would otherwise be a meaningless aspect of the scene into something that is meaningful’ (1974: 21). In other words, people experience through frames and such frames automatically make experience relational. After all, a frame is

'a particularly tangible metaphor for what other sociologists have tried to invoke with words like "background", "setting", "context", or a phrase like "in terms of." These all attempt to convey that what goes on in interaction is governed by usually unstated rules or principles more or less implicitly set by the character of some larger, though perhaps invisible, entity (for example, "the definition of the situation") "within" which the interaction occurs. "More or less" is the operative phrase here because the character of a frame is not always clear, and even when it is, participants in interaction may have interests in blurring, changing, or confounding it.' (Berger 1985: xiii-xiv)

In other words, a frame is a 'socially organized interpretive schema' (Cicourel 1968: xviii), which is per definition superindividual. We can thus consider a frame to be a social rule or guiding principle that gives direction to people in their everyday doings when they are at play or at work. As a concept it helps us to resist thinking of experience as a pure, unmediated, unregimented aspect of the individual. In their experiences and expectations, people are always influenced by background factors that set a limit to what can be expected, to what is interpretively possible in a certain event or situation. For instance, when law enforcers go out on the street and make quick inferences about 'what is going on', different frames are at play at the background. These can be legal categories, political representations, street histories, folk concepts, the latest concepts in criminology, and so forth. Such inferences are not idiosyncratic phenomena lodged within the minds of individual officers – they are socially organized and shared by others in the police occupation or the criminal justice system at large (Goodwin 1994). In an analysis of the Rodney King trial, Charles Goodwin demonstrated superlatively well that professionalism is not about an individual's cognitions, skills or capacities, but about discursive practices that are used by members of a profession to shape events and subject them to professional scrutiny. What is important here is that such scrutiny occurs through 'perspectival frameworks', or 'professional vision', provided by a professional coding scheme that helps professionals to make sense of reality.

In sum, we are dealing neither with an all-embracing system ('the police') nor with the idiosyncratic behaviour of individuals. So, while general requirements and procedures are laid down by senior police

managers at a national level for members of the Dutch police organization, police officers will develop and deploy their own theories, recipes and shortcuts (their own frames) for meeting these general requirements in a way that is acceptable to themselves and their supervisors (Cicourel 1968). They will do so not as individuals but as members of (organizational) communities – local, regional, national even international – that operate in a socio-political environment. Similarly, the law, and most importantly, the right to equal treatment laid down in the first article of the Dutch constitution, is the same for all officers. But how it is interpreted is a different matter. This has nothing to do with discretion as an idiosyncratic phenomenon. Discretion is being shaped in a particular habitus in which officers operate as social beings that share certain frames.

When people use frames they do so as social beings who draw on the resources around them. The idea of resources – and the access that people have or don't have to them – brings us to the problem of voice: the conditions of speaking in society (Blommaert 2005). Voice 'refers to the capacity to make oneself understood as a situated subject' (ibid: 222) and thus to the authority (given or taken) to frame and to give direction to experience in the relational sense of the word. Framing is thus regimented and this is where power struggles come in: the authority to enforce frames that limit the 'moves' of interactants is unequally distributed (Berger 1985). Power, status, prestige, a majority identity, smart tactics, the ability or willingness to blend in and socialize in line with settled norms, and a whole bunch of other things may give people an upper hand in framing, and thus in voicing.

In Chapter 4, we will encounter various frame-struggles, or struggles over voice. Light will be shed on various subsystems, subcultures, or better, 'frames-within-frames' (Goffman 1974) that rule within the Dutch police. We will encounter dominant migrant-hostile frames, but we will also run into what Goffman has called 'out-of-frame activity' and 'frame breaking'. In addition, we will see – throughout the book – that the syntax, the language, of people's responses to certain frames can sometimes be very ungrammatical and full of internal contradictions. For instance, certain frames become relevant when internal affairs (e.g., diversity management within the organization) are at stake, whereas opposite, competing, even conflicting frames are used for external affair (e.g., managing diversity on the streets). Accounts will be given of police

officers' experiences across the country to give insight in the various sub-systems and 'frames-within-frames' that exist within the Dutch police.

Chapter 5 is based on but not identical to an article that was published in the *British Journal of Criminology* (Mutsaers 2014a). Its main thrust is that, in order to understand migrant-hostile *policing* (the practice), one has to look carefully at *the police* (the institution) as well as behind it (Hallsworth 2006). In that sense it goes one step further than Chapter 4. Through an ethnographic account of Somali migrants in the city of Tilburg, and of one individual in particular, it is shown that migrants are increasingly and deliberately harassed and targeted for control by numerous public, semi-public and private agencies who cooperate in so-called 'security networks'. What this amounts to is nothing less than what is described in the anthropological literature as a 'thickening of borders' (e.g., Rosas 2006 and 2012), meaning that the border is no longer geographically fixed. The border is all around us, but this does not mean that it imposes the same constraints on everyone. Borders 'mean different things to different groups and work differently on different groups' (Fassin 2011; Rumford 2012: 894). We shall see that for some people migrant-hostile policing simply boils down to internal border control. Even more than Chapter 4, Chapter 5 pointedly demonstrates that the effort to cast such policing in psychological language is pointless. The psychological language that we will scrutinize in subsequent chapters, and that is persistently used by police managers, is merely one frame used to give meaning to such forms of policing. A frame that is strategically used to blur other frames.

Chapters 4 and 5 portray migrant-hostile policing as deeply political phenomena. They produce a truth in which ethnicity is refused to be taken as a constant factor in the minds of people. It is instead conceived of as something historically grown, politically determined, and dependent on the vicissitudes of complex everyday and organizational life (see also Mutsaers et al. 2014 and Siebers et al. 2015). Chapters 6, 7 and 8 show that this particular truth is continuously challenged by another one: migrant-hostile policing springs from officers' mind sets. If we can better these, if we can professionalize through training, education, personal development plans, coaching, mentoring, survey-taking, mediation, and empowerment, we're good. To achieve this, we need to get rid of bureaucratic obstacles that hinder professionalization. Officers need to have more professional freedom, more discretion, and better morale.

They should not hide behind role, rank and status but should bring their personalities, their authentic selves, to work in order to be able to give the public a humane rather than standardized and scripted treatment. Hierarchical (that is, bureaucratic) intervention in case of ethnic or racial tensions is redundant and thus superfluous in self-managing and problem-solving teams, where ‘concertive’ rather than vertical control prevails (Barker 1993).

Chapter 6 gives an account of one particular training that is saturated with the language of professionalization. It analyses a course titled ‘Multicultural Craftsmanship and Honour-Related Violence’ that was given by three police officers over the course of eight days and that was attended by about 80 colleagues who work for the same department as the three instructors. As we will see, key issues pertaining to policing in a multi-ethnic society are altogether framed as intrapsychic affairs of an individual officer. In combination with a de-bureaucratization that transfers responsibility onto the shoulders of individual officers, a peculiar condition is established that allows individuals to simply brush aside the intended police reforms (that is, attaining to a form of justice that includes rather than excludes minorities).

Chapter 7 builds upon an article that is published in the journal *Critique of Anthropology* (Mutsaers forthcoming) and explores the effects that external consultants and advisors have on the professionalization of police dealing with migrants. In contrast to preceding chapters, attention is now garnered to how migrants are policed internally, that is, how the careers of migrant officers are policed within the force. In that sense the subtitle of this book captures both the policing of migrants in the streets and within police stations, where, albeit in small numbers, police officers with a migration background try to build a career. This is not to say that these two domains are separable. I will give a flavour of just how important the efforts are of one particular consultancy organization – the *Nederlandse Stichting voor Psychotechniek* (the Dutch Foundation of Psychotechnics) – in terms of expanding discretion and subjectivity in decision-making (which, as we have argued, is not a fully individualized phenomenon but a socialized aspect of policing). Under pressure of an increasing psychologization of labour (relations), the division between person and office that Weberians (e.g., Kallinikos 2004) hold onto so dearly, is abandoned. As a result, officers are explicitly encouraged *not* to suspend personal or social considerations while on the

job. Frames of wholeness and totality are strategically used to give a sense of ‘humanized policing,’ while in fact the conditions are created in which personal animus can run its course. After all, a craftsman (see Chapter 6) experiences no split between person and office.

The idea of a psychologization of labour (see also Blommaert et al. 2012) is further worked out in Chapter 8, which is based on an article that was published in *Anthropology of Work Review* (Mutsaers 2014c). The chapter offers a critical take on the excessive use of psychological applications, that is, management techniques that open up the psyche of the individual officers to interceptions, evaluations and manipulations by superiors. It builds upon the work of DiFruscia (2012) on the psychologization of labour under the aegis of Human Resource apparatuses and contributes to it by centralizing the role that confessions have in this process. Even more so than in Chapter 7, this chapter shows how through a particular framing of the professional, the finer and more intimate regions are opened up of the personal and interpersonal life of police officers, who are subjected to nothing less than a reformation of the character. Not only does this work at the detriment of migrant police officers, as we will see – it also entails the risk of policing in which bureaucratic checks and balances are simply thrown overboard.

The concluding chapter, Chapter 9, brings the central message home and highlights some of the merits, as well as the challenges, of a public anthropology of policing. But before we turn to the empirical chapters, a few words will be spent on the ethnographic project that led to this book.

## Note

<sup>1</sup> See <http://www.politie.nl/nieuws/2013/oktober/28/oo-politie-wijst-etnisch-profileren-af.html>





### 3 Ethnography

In case I have not said this somewhere earlier in the book I will say it now: beware of my partisanship, my mistakes of fact and the distortion inevitably caused by my having seen only one corner of events. And beware of exactly the same thing when you read any other book on this period of the Spanish war.

*George Orwell, Homage to Catalonia, 1938*

#### **Some basic thoughts on ethnography as an intersubjective enterprise**

At the moment of writing, six years have passed since I first set foot in the Dutch police organization. It took some time before the ‘face-to-face and soul-to-soul’ field experiences (as Van Maanen 1988 calls them) could be adequately monographed, that is, before the ethnographic project could grow into a book. When the project within this organization was in full swing (it started in March 2008 and lasted until May 2013, that is, if there is ever such a thing as a concrete ending with ethnography), I was afflicted more times than I anticipated with a feeling of hopelessness. Being deluged with input from my informants – some of it produced on my behest, some of it coming naturally – there were times I had no idea what I was studying. If the eminent anthropologist Clifford Geertz was right in stating that we need an ‘exact apprehension of our object of study, lest we find ourselves in the position of the Javanese folk-tale figure, “Stupid Boy”, who, having been counselled by his mother to seek a quiet wife, returned with a corpse’ (1973: 196), I was in serious trouble. There was something with words and trees, but it was often not clear what was what. The rise and demise of grand schemes and conceptualization ran at a roughly equal pace, oftentimes bringing me back to square

one. Abstractions, concepts and theories that were met with confidence in one phase, seemed to be contradicting and crumbled apart in another.

However, as time wears on one can benefit from hindsight and things gradually start to fall into place. While this is a gradual process, it must always start at a certain moment, I suppose. For me this occurred when I was going through the pages of Paul Rabinow's *Reflections on Fieldwork in Morocco*, in which he reasons that 'fieldwork is a dialectic between reflection and immediacy' (1977: 38). This brought some peace to mind. After all, this was what I had been doing all along. I could lose myself in the immediacy of a police shift or a heated interview and then reflect upon it at a later time. I started to realize that ethnographic research is a step-by-infinitesimal-step process. One cannot simply wrap concepts around the things that are observed, store them, and then unfold them when the time has come to write a book. The key to becoming a skilled ethnographer, as Robert Bellah has it in the foreword of Rabinow's book, is to be at ease with the fact that ethnography involves constant evaluation and reevaluation.

To bring this a bit closer to police scholarship we can emphasize with the celebrated police expert John van Maanen (1988, 2010) that such (r)evaluation entails different sorts of scholarly work. I concur with him that ethnography cannot be reduced to *fieldwork* or to any other methodological approach for that matter. I strongly agree with him that ethnography is a methodological approach *and* an analytical perspective. It is not only about *fieldwork* but also about *headwork* and *textwork*. Fieldwork of the immersive sort that involves stuff like lengthy participant-observation with its 'intense reliance on personalized seeing, hearing, and experiencing in specific social settings' is of course definitional of the trade (Van Maanen 2010: 222). However, the conceptualization, contextualization and communication of the ethnographic materials that are collected during fieldwork are just as important and can best be grasped by terms such as *headwork* and *textwork*. These may for instance include the different sort of works that we read and apply in our own work, or the concepts that we develop and deploy (in my case many will come from the anthropological and sociological rather than psychological literature, for instance). But headwork and textwork may also concern the choices we make at the writing desk. In this book a lot of 'critical tales' (Van Maanen 1988) are written that allow for precise descriptions and multiple perspectives. This too defines ethnography. In

the words of a famous ethnographer, it is perhaps better to have ‘different coats to clothe the children than a single, splendid tent in which they all shiver’ (Goffman 1961: xiv).

Appreciating these different sorts of scholarly work and being open about them is an effective way of dismissing the old clubbishness that allowed anthropologists to say barely anything about how text- and headwork affected fieldwork and vice versa, as if their own thoughts did not matter in the way ‘reality’ was portrayed. As stated in Chapter 1, it helps to think of ethnography as neither subjective nor objective, but as intersubjective and interpretive. A mediation of two worlds through a third (Agar 1986). A mediation between the frames that organize the experiences of informants and the analytical frames that help the researcher to organize these frames in turn. A useful distinction is made by John van Maanen in a ground-breaking article in *Administrative Science Quarterly* (published in 1979). He distinguishes the first-order conception of the informant from the second-order conception of the researcher who gives a theory-based interpretation of the informant’s interpretation. So, people in particular settings ‘come to understand, account for, take action, and otherwise manage their day-to-day situation’ (Van Maanen 1979: 540) and the frames that guide their experiences and interpretations are in turn interpreted by the researcher through analytical frames that form a contact point with theory.

Understood as such, the role of a sociologist or anthropologist is not to describe and understand the interpretive schemas, frameworks, discourses or theories (I use these words interchangeably throughout the book) that members of a certain community employ in reference to their truth conditions, but in reference to their local conditions of use (Cicourel 1968). An important aspect of this usage is how these frames, theories, discourses or schemas are employed as filters of available social ‘facts’, that is, how social meanings are generated, thereby permitting further inference and action (ibid). The next step for the researcher is to contrast ‘members’ theories of social problems with his own general theories about social order’ (Cicourel 1968: 27). This is the quintessence of interpretive analysis, which is intersubjective to its core.

An illustration might help to make a bit more clear what I mean. In 2013, I drank a cup of coffee with Serkan, a Turkish-Dutch Senior Constable. Over the course of several years we got to know each other well. We talked regularly, I interviewed Serkan three or four times and

'shadowed' him for some time at work. One day he approached me saying that he felt confused. We sat down for that cup of coffee. For a while already he felt that he was pretending to be someone else, someone he did not want to be. He had adopted certain personality traits he felt were not of his own making or desire. He talked about experiencing his 'real me' and 'fake me' interchangeably. I remembered an interview talk I had with him in 2008, in which he already mentioned these 'two Serkans' that would alternately pop up at work. I suggested that this was something that was going on already for quite some time. He agreed but for a long time could not get to grips with it. Until he saw a psychologist. Within no time he copied the language of his psychologist and talked about identity conflicts, alter egos and psychological instability. This psychological frame subsequently led to particular behaviour; it became his guidance for social action, or better, inaction. He started to work fewer hours and agreed with his superior not to go out on the streets for a while. He felt weak, uncertain and insecure.

Serkan was not the first case of this kind that I came across. For years I had been studying similar cases in which particularly ethnic minority police officers experienced comparable things. They experienced an identity rupture but were groping in the dark when trying to figure out its causes. The psychological language about personality traits circulating within the organization was the first thing available to them to explain what they experienced and why they experienced it. By adopting this discourse they started to believe that their troubles were due to their own psychological weakness.

I confronted Serkan's interpretations – and the frames employed to organize his experiences – with my own interpretation, produced by empirical research and theoretical reflection. I allocated Serkan's troubles to the Human Resource (HR) regime, dominant within the organization for quite some time already. This particular regime can be characterized by what Alvesson and Willmott (2002) have called 'identity regulation'. Through this kind of 'soft' management control, psychological profiles and identity traits are continuously prescribed and imposed upon people under the guise of professionalization. And not without consequences as we shall see later; non-conformism can easily result in career stagnation.

This particular frame confrontation helped both Serkan and me. A 'doubling of consciousness' (Rabinow 1977) occurred through which both Serkan and I became aware of our own interpretations. Serkan, although

he could not all by himself change the identity management schemes that troubled him, felt relieved to know that (1) more people had experienced what he experienced and, relatedly, (2) his troubles were not only his private troubles but public issues caused by social phenomena beyond the self. Equally, our conversation was beneficial to me. The power of psychological discourse was confirmed once again and I learned to improve my interpretation of how people cope with it.

I believe that one of the greatest benefits of a public anthropology that is open about its procedures to all parties involved is what my colleague Jef Van der Aa (2012) called ‘instant valorisation’. The micro-emancipatory potential of a public anthropology lies in its capacity to stimulate out-of-frame activity/thinking, when the frame in question is suppressing people in ways that are almost imperceptible to them. While I subscribe to Orwell’s statement in the epigraph of this chapter, I also believe that it is the power of ethnography to draw out the background expectancies and frames that influence people in their lives. This is the most difficult yet most interesting goal of ethnographic research (Cicourel 1968; Van Maanen 1979). In doing so, the ethnographer triangulates numerous angles.

### **Ethnography in practice: The field, the data, and the techniques**

Dell Hymes once caustically wrote that ‘some social research seems incredibly to assume that what there is to find out can be found out by asking’ (Blommaert and Dong 2010: 3). Evidently, this assumption is nonsense for not all can be found out by asking. In that sense I agree with Karen Ho (2009: 31) who wrote that a focus on the discourses and talk of people without a corresponding analysis of what they actually do is ‘ethnographically flat’. An example might help us again. When my fieldwork was drawing to a close I had a conversation with a team leader who was alert to ethno-racial profiling in his district and somewhat alarmed by my observations in relation to it (see Chapters 4 and 5) – which I openly shared with him. In terms of his efforts to counter practices of migrant-hostile policing he was pre-eminent above all other police leaders with whom I spoke. Interestingly, during that conversation

he told me about the disproportionate number of corrupt ethnic minority officers and asked me to keep an eye on minority officers in particular during the remainder of my fieldwork period. While rejecting ethno-racial profiling in the streets in his *talks*, he encouraged such *practices* within the walls of his police station. Different frames ruled internal versus external affairs.

It boils down to a very simple observation: people's walk and talk can differ substantially and of course this has to do with interests. I repeat myself when I ask with Czarniawska (2007): whose interests should direct people's accounts if not their own? Like her, I am not interested in the objective truth behind people's words; I am interested in the wording of the discourse and the way this relates to the different forms of conduct that people display. What are the interests that colour interpretations? What colours do these interpretations take? Who or what decides the colour? These are questions that matter and that have consequences for the methodology that is chosen.

Again, we can turn to John van Maanen (1979) for enlightenment. He makes a distinction between 'operational data' and 'presentational data'. It's worthwhile to quote him at some length:

'Field data represent primarily the ethnographer's recording of first-order concepts as they arise from the observed talk and action of participants in the studied scene. This information is of two generic but distinct types. First, there is the "operational data" which documents the running stream of spontaneous conversations and activities engaged in and observed by the ethnographer while in the field. These data surface in known and describable contexts and pertain to the everyday problematics of informants going about their affairs. Second, there are the "presentational data" which concern those appearances that informants strive to maintain (or enhance) in the eyes of the fieldworker, outsiders and strangers in general, work colleagues, close and intimate associates, and to varying degrees, themselves. Data in this category are often ideological, normative, and abstract, dealing far more with a manufactured image of idealized doing than with the routinized practical activities actually engaged in by members of the studied organization. In short, operational data deal with observed activity (behaviour per se) and presentational data deal with the

appearances put forth by informants as these activities are talked about and otherwise symbolically projected within the research setting.’ (Van Maanen 1979: 542)

Now, my intention is not to take presentational data as fiction and operational data as fact. Van Maanen emphasizes that separating presentational from operational data is an analytical accomplishment and that the line between the two is rather thin. My point is that ethnographic research cannot be limited to an analysis of people’s interpretations. Hymes is right; we cannot learn everything from presentational data, that is, from an inquiry into people’s (solicited) interpretations. We should equally observe what people do when they are (relatively) unconcerned with appearances, images, impressions, symbols and interpretations.

To make my point, it helps to go back to the time my research started. This was in 2008, when a former Commissioner of Police and then director of the National Expertise Centre Diversity (LECD) of the police had concluded on the basis of research that was conducted by the Free University of Amsterdam that ethnic tensions at the Dutch police could legitimately be framed as ‘institutional discrimination’ (Trouw 2008). This was a brave and at the same time risky statement, one that could be compared to the (in)famous report of Judge Sir William Macpherson about the mishandling of the investigation by the London Metropolitan Police of the murder of the black teenager Stephen Lawrence in which Macpherson concluded that institutional racism was a fact (see for instance McLaughlin and Murji 1999 or Souhami 2014), albeit with the distinction that the LECD director was triggered by problematic interethnic relations within the force whereas Macpherson mainly referred to racial tensions between the police and the public. Statistics were published about the percentages of non-western ethnic minority police officers employed by the different police forces and ethnic minority officers were interviewed on television. The 6.7% of non-western ethnic minority officers employed by the Dutch police in 2008 (Boogaard and Roggeband 2010) was below the 10.8% of the total population in the Netherlands (CBS 2008) – which is particularly harmful to a public organization that sees itself forced to constantly work on its legitimacy considering the nature of its activities. In addition, many of the interviewed officers felt harassed out of their jobs and had left the

organization. The time seemed right, in other words, to do a more fine-grained analysis of this so-called 'institutional discrimination' within the Dutch police.

And yet, during a pilot study in 2008, I observed nothing in the 'guided doings' (Goffman 1974) of police managers that suggested that the institutional aspect of 'institutional discrimination' was taken seriously. The operational data did not converge with the presentational data...

Initially, my research project thus started as a study of interethnic labour relations within the force. I was predominantly interested in the construction of ethnic boundaries (Barth 1969) between officers and interviewed small groups of rank-and-file officers (on an individual basis) in several regional forces. In 2008 and 2009, I conducted, recorded and transcribed 37 interviews with (Senior) Constables, Sergeants, a Superintendent, a Chief Superintendent and two Policy Officers specialized in diversity issues. These officers worked in ten cities and villages (and their surroundings) that together covered five regional police forces. The locations of the stations selected for study were chosen on the basis of their work area and personnel file. In some stations a variety of minority officers could be encountered (such as in Rotterdam or Utrecht); in others a single 'token' was all there was (such as in Dongen, Gouda or Oosterhout). Also in terms of their surroundings, the stations that were studied in 2008-2009 can be characterized as quite diverse. Some officers operated in sleepy and ethnically homogenous places such as the provincial town of Dongen; others worked in the chaos of the multicultural harbour city Rotterdam. Some worked in new estate areas such as those at the outskirts of Tilburg; others operated in the commercial heart of Eindhoven.

With the backing of the LECD director mentioned above, my access to the entire organization was as good as secure. I sent out official e-mails to district and team managers, whose names were still available on the website of the police at that time. In these e-mails I introduced myself and the project and mentioned the endorsement of the Commissioner. This gave me access to all teams.

In tune with the settling-in phase of ethnography, I was initially trying to get accustomed to the world of law enforcement. Verily, I was quite impressed by the abundance of locks, guns and handcuffs. As a young anthropologist of policing I was freely walking around at compounds that



are not accessible beyond the front desk to most people. About half of the participants in my first bit of field research were visibly having difficulties getting an idea of what I was doing there and started the interview with a little suspicion. When I think about it now, my guess is that this was more an interactional problem than a problem of character. My first twenty or so interviews came out of the blue for those who were interviewed. I contacted their Superintendent or Commander who either forwarded me to some people or gave me a list of names that I could use to contact people myself. The interviews were planned and rather formal. I often conversed with my participant in an interrogation room (rookie mistake!), conducted an interview that lasted between three and eight quarters of an hour, and then our ways separated again. In standard works on methodology (e.g., DeWalt and DeWalt 2002) these interviews could be qualified as 'semi-structured'.

I was interested in what actually happened at the work floor, but I soon found out that these interviews only produced (re)presentational data. I felt the need to not only talk to people about what they do, but also to observe their actions in the field.

The next twenty or so interviews went better. I became more comfortable and skilled as an interviewer and, more importantly, I had something to build on. Most of the people involved in this second round of interviewing had completed a digital diary, which they e-mailed to me prior to the interview. I used what Zimmerman and Wieder (1977) had dubbed the 'diary-diary-interview method'. Like Zimmerman and Wieder, I commissioned my informants to keep an annotated and chronologically organized diary for a week according to a set of instructions. These instructions turned the diarist into a 'surrogate observer' who kept an eye on ethnicity-related and diversity-related events at work, and was asked according to a who/what/when/where/how formula to report about the actual event, the time, location, people involved as well as the context of the event (also in terms of relevant preceding and subsequent events). I urged diarists to make entries on a daily basis. Both ethnic minority (7) and majority (11) officers kept diaries. During the interviews diarists were prompted to elaborate upon their writing and to use it as a springboard to explore other, related, events. Whenever possible the diary period and interview moment were separated by a time span of several weeks as to create the possibility of discussing short-term consequences as well.

It was in 2011 that my first-hand observations started and that I began to shift my focus from interethnic labour relations to the policing of migrants on the streets. I was employed by the Police Academy of the Netherlands to do four more years of police research. Although law enforcement agencies can be expected not to be very keen of being observed by outsiders, I never experienced any difficulty in gaining access to the field – unlike others who came up against serious and definite obstructions of the authorities (e.g., Fassin 2013b). It deserves note that I never met resistance during my fieldwork and was always facilitated to fulfil my job as a fieldworker. Neither was any attempt made to encapsulate me or to deprive me of my relative autonomy as a researcher. At important moments I was able to keep my distance. With this I do not mean that I could walk away from my responsibilities, but that I was able to step aside and to shed critical light on what I observed.

Whether I wanted it or not, ‘out there’ on the streets it became almost impossible not to be concerned with the ways migrants were policed. Due to his physical co-presence in the field, an ethnographer cannot simply decide to see certain things but not others. In the field, I have simply tried to follow linkages which each event made obvious. In doing so, I started to notice that policing preserves and consolidates a certain social order in society that deprives migrants of rights in terms of equal access to and contact with the critical public administration that the police organization is.

In 2011, 2012 and 2013, I immersed myself in the daily routine of police work. I spent around 12 months with police officers from all ranks (from the ‘top brass’ to the ‘newest recruit’) in three different departments in three cities – in chronological order: Bergen op Zoom, Amsterdam and Tilburg. In total, I ‘shadowed’ (Czarniawska 2007) 15 officers in 12 months, thus on average three to four weeks per officer, several days per week. That is, I primarily shadowed those 15, but it goes without saying that many more were observed on the job. Four officers were shadowed in Bergen op Zoom for about three months; six in Amsterdam for about four months; and five in Tilburg for about five months. In this period (2011-13), 45 interviews were conducted as well, in addition to thousands of informal conversations.

## 4 Migrant-hostility

The problem is not to know whether the police act identically everywhere, within a national territory or across borders, but whether the type of relation they have with a certain public, the way in which political incentives influence their practice, the effects of various systems of evaluation and sanctioning on their conducts, or the justification they provide for their deviant behaviours are generalizable.

*Didier Fassin, Enforcing Order, 2013*

At two o'clock in the morning of January 9, 2013 I am with Harry during a last-out shift, which starts late in the afternoon and lasts until the early hours in the morning. At this unearthly hour we are posting on a parking lot to observe a few shops across the street, which have recently received some attention from burglars. If it had not been the end of a very busy night, this would have been a good moment to contemplate the sacrifices officers continuously make in long stretches of featureless and uneventful shifts for the occasional moment of thrill and excitement. However, as said, it was a busy night in which we did two traffic controls at two different locations, among other things.

Earlier that day, after dinner (a quick sandwich), I headed with six officers to an idyllic village nearby, Hilvarenbeek, which is part of the area that was allocated the other week to one of the community officers joining us that night. In the car on our way there Harry said to me with an overtone of sarcasm: 'We go there because everybody has a right to his portion of police service,' being under the impression (like everybody else in the patrol unit) that not much is going on in this village that requires police presence. 'We go there because Halil needs to show his face and make a good impression on the residents as their new community officer.' (Ironically, a week later two calls came in at the station on the

same day from people complaining about an *allochtoon* – a word that the Dutch use to denote non-Western minorities; *autochtoon* is used denote the Dutch majority – who was spying on them. It turned out to be Halil, who was working in plain clothes). Around seven p.m. we arrive at a location the officers deem suitable for the traffic control. About thirty minutes later I find myself with a flashing light in my hand directing drivers to the parking space of a gas station, where the traffic control takes place. One officer on a motorbike is responsible for the roadblock, one is watching over the police cars and four are doing the actual control, which involves checking people's driver's license and insurance papers as well as an alcohol check (only in case officers suspect excessive use of alcohol).

While directing the traffic – a task that I take very seriously – I am chatting with Mehmet, a Turkish-Dutch Senior Constable. He decides that there is no point in beating about the bush and says: 'I don't know what we are doing here. This is really not our target group.' That this was how they all felt became clear from the leniency that was exhibited during the control. Only once the motor agent gave chase to a driver who tried to circumvent the roadblock. For the rest it was a quiet evening and nothing really happened. Not a single citation was issued despite the fact that several people didn't carry their license or insurance papers with them. One man was even allowed to call his wife to come and bring his driver's license. To general laughter the officers requested to see her license too and after an hour or so, the traffic control was history.

We drove to the small police station in the village – which is only manned during office hours. We grabbed a cup of coffee, but as it sometimes goes with police work, we had no time to actually consume it. The operator at the precinct station forwarded an emergency call that had come in from the asylum seekers' centre at the outskirts of a nearby village. A quarrel had developed into a threatening opposition of two groups of people. As the nearest unit we were dispatched. With over a hundred miles an hour we rushed to the centre and arrived after fifteen minutes or so. Miraculously – and to the disappointment of my companions – there was already an abundance of police cars at the location so we tailed off without action.

Later that night we carried out another traffic control, this time in the officers' 'own neighbourhood' (i.e., in the northern part of Tilburg where their police station is located). The sociological distance between the

population of this neighbourhood (Stokhasselt-Noord) and the population in Hilvarenbeek is considerable, measured by the annual income (per person) and ethnic background (see CBS 2010 and 2012b). ‘While statistics can never adequately describe a community,’ I agree with Reuss-Ianni (1983: 34), ‘they can at least set proportions.’ In Hilvarenbeek people earn on average 30,200 euros a year, whereas in Stokhasselt-Noord this comes to 21,300 euros (the Dutch average is 29,800; all figures are for 2010). In Hilvarenbeek, 22% earns a high salary (more than 41,300 euros a year), whereas 38% earns a low salary (less than 19,200 euros a year). In Stokhasselt-Noord, 6% earns a high salary and 55% a low salary (the Dutch average was 20% high versus 40% low in 2010). 2% of the people living in Hilvarenbeek have a non-Western background, whereas this is 51% for Stokhasselt-Noord. As you may immediately intuit, I am giving you all these statistics because the traffic control in Stokhasselt-Noord lacked every bit of the leniency that was exhibited during the control in Hilvarenbeek. This was a bicycle control (mainly checking for lights) and everybody who was cycling without lights was fined. While it is no hard evidence for ethno-racial profiling in the strict sense of the word, this particular winter night in 2013 nonetheless revealed that the law is not always applied uniformly. Everyday policing is replete with practices that disproportionately subject minorities to scrutiny; practices that minorities may rightfully perceive as an affront to their equal rights. What’s even more important, these officers abused their discretion as a group. The idea of ‘target groups’ had become institutionalized in this particular local setting and had become an important frame for officers to work with.



Despite the importance of the task to describe the *Varieties of Police Behaviour*, to use the title of Wilson’s (1968) classic, the fact that officers do not function in a ministerial capacity, that is, as purely ministerial agents of the law, is not the core issue in the present text. In tune with the epigraph, which is drawn from Didier Fassin’s *Enforcing Order*, our concern in this chapter is much broader. Varieties of police behaviour – and the disproportionate impact of the harshest of it on minorities – have been well recorded (e.g., Body-Gendrot 2010; Çankaya 2012; Fassin 2013a; Goodey 2006; Hallsworth 2006; Miller 2010; Open Society

Justice Initiative 2012; Van der Leun and Van der Woude 2011; Quinton 2011). For instance, the literature on Driving While Black (e.g., Larrabee 1997; Tomaskovic-Devey et al. 2004) has convincingly shown that traffic violations (even traffic controls) are often used as a pretext for stopping and searching motor vehicles driven by minorities, which is of course an unconstitutional but hard to prove police practice. (The officers who appear in the vignette above, however, were actually quite frank about this. They simply confessed about the disproportionate number of stops and searches of ethnic minorities during traffic controls). However, the more demanding but therefore also more valuable task is to venture beyond instances of police behaviour and study the things Didier Fassin draws our attention to. On the basis of 15 months of anthropological research on an anti-crime squad in a large conurbation in outer Paris he writes that

[T]he police do not behave as they do purely because of their psychological traits or moral qualities; their actions depend very largely on their personal history, the training they have undergone, the supervision they receive, the conditions of work imposed on them, the tasks conferred by government policies, and the representation of the social world that society produces.' (Fassin 2013a: 24)

These are the sorts of issues will be dealt with in this chapter and the next.

## **Political incentives and representations**

We will start in the city of Tilburg – the city where the traffic controls occurred that were described in the previous pages. It is a special case because it is my hometown, as mentioned earlier. It is also an exceptional case because of the seemingly contradicting developments within the district. The marvel is that in terms of its efforts to counter practices of discriminatory policing it is pre-eminent above all other districts in which I conducted my study. Simultaneously, however, it instructs its personnel

to identify suspects on the basis of ethnicity, nationality and race. Let us zoom in on this contradiction.

When Amnesty International published its report about ethno-racial profiling in the Netherlands (2013) – which in time coincided by and large with the reception of the critical and controversial work of Sinan Çankaya (2012) on discriminatory policing within the Amsterdam police – the police district of Tilburg was one of the first responders. Since the Amnesty report was published at a time that my fieldwork activities in Tilburg were in full swing, the team leader of the unit where I was working invited me to several district management meetings that had this topic on the agenda. During these meetings I observed nothing but a genuine concern with the issue. I was approached for advice and asked to propose concrete measures to counter ethno-racial profiling – which the District Management Team (DMT) rather euphemistically described as unfair ‘selection mechanisms’.

However, when I sat together with a few officers from the unit (including the team leader) to make some last-minute preparations for the upcoming DMT meeting, a Sergeant remarked that he was disturbed by a contradiction. He was about to enter an event organized to deliberate about concrete measures against ‘unfair selection mechanisms’, while, not that long ago, he was instructed to single out ‘target groups’ for scrutiny during a roadblock. This, understandably, seemed incompatible to him. His observation was confirmed that same month by several e-mails which I received from a Senior Constable (a female with a Dutch background who will go by the name of Karin) who was visibly fed up with the inequities she felt were all around her. The things she describes go directly against the grain of the district’s policies and are therefore worthwhile to quote at some length. The fragment has been translated from Dutch for readability rather than linguistic accuracy. Moreover, certain parts are slightly altered to protect the anonymity of the informant and the people around her.

*Beginning of e-mail (March 19, 2014)*

Hi Paul,

I have finished my training some time ago and now work as a Senior Constable. For a while now I run into things at work that bother me. Serkan [the Turkish-Dutch colleague who appeared in

the previous chapter] advised me to contact you, because of your expertise.

*In a nutshell* [original in English], I notice that citizens are discriminated a lot by my colleagues. In the 'war against burglaries and muggings,' people are selected without mercy for stops and frisks on the basis of their skin-colour or descent. I try to stay away from this sort of thing and continue to control people on the basis of their behaviour [not their looks]. However, when colleagues stop and frisk 15 Moroccans just like that, I can't deny the fact that they come across some who have an outstanding warrant or unpaid fines. During such moments I always say to myself that, if I would only control Ford Ka vehicles, I would all of a sudden find an alarming number of vehicles that are uncovered by insurance. Nonetheless, I get the feeling that I can't do a good job because I refuse to control someone simply because he or she has a Moroccan back-ground. The fact that the first two pages of the 'Top 10' in Tilburg [a list with recidivists] only include coloured people doesn't help much. Out of comfort I remind myself of the Fort Ka-idea.

Lately, I've been shocked by some of the assignments I was given by my superiors. For instance, during a roadblock I had to check 'a group of Moroccans who are always hanging around'. I asked the colleague why. 'Because they are our target group.' I asked in return why they are a target group: because they are known to commit burglaries or because they are Moroccans? On his turn he asked me [sarcastically] if I didn't know what a target group looks like.

During another control, which took place due to some recent muggings and shoplifting, everyone looking like a Romanian had to be checked. During the briefing I informed about the purpose of this control. Were we supposed to look for suspicious persons or to control simply everybody with Romanian looks? And what do we do next? The answer was: 'All Romanians need to be expelled from the city centre. Check them and send them away. Well, you don't have the authority to do so, but you can bluff a little. If they don't leave, follow them until they do.' I couldn't possibly explain this to the Romanian guy on the street.

As time wears on I increasingly get the idea that, in the eyes of my colleagues, I can't do a proper job as long as I don't discrim-



inate. It makes me feel very sad. I feel coerced to discriminate, to show racist behaviour even, and I don't feel comfortable with it. That is not my job. When I can't dodge [the described assignments], I feel horrible as a human being.

I don't know what to do. It is not the question for me that something has to happen, but I don't know what. Considering your expertise, perhaps you can give me some advice. I haven't discussed this with my superiors, and only superficially with two colleagues, because I don't have the idea that many people think like I do.

*End of e-mail*

What can be learned from Karin's disconcerting message? Firstly, we should notice the disparity between policies and formal agreements on the one hand and the ramshackle, multi-frame reality of police practice on the other. In official documents produced by the National Police, the word 'target group' will not appear in connotation with ethnic minority groups. (Admittedly, there is an exception, as we will see in the next chapter. For the Alien Police, quota have been established to make sure that a certain number of 'illegal foreigners' are detained and expelled. Automatically, this leads to target-group policing on the basis of [putative] ethnic backgrounds). And yet here we are, in this particular locality, where the use of target-group labels are abundant. Romanians are labelled as shoplifters, Moroccans are coded as burglars and muggers, and so on and so forth. Officers live by these codes and labels; these codes and labels transform a strip of everyday activity, e.g., everyday policing, into a 'meaningful' activity that helps officers to 'make sense' of their working environment. But then again, not all officers are caught up in these frameworks, not all of them are engrossed by them. Karin and some like-minded officers proactively challenge target-group frames; they are, in other words, involved in frame-breaking activities.

As Goffman stated, frames organize more than meaning; they also organize involvement (1974: 345): 'During any spate of activity, participants will ordinarily not only obtain a sense of what is going on but will also (in some degree) become spontaneously engrossed, caught up, enthralled.' Involvement, he stresses, is an 'interlocking obligation':

‘Should one participant fail to maintain prescribed attention, other participants are likely to become alive to this fact and perforce involved in considering what the delict means and what should be done about it – and *this* involvement necessarily removes them from what they themselves should be involved in. So one person’s impropriety can create improprieties on the part of others.’ (Goffman 1974: 346)

Hence the efforts of Karin’s colleagues to ridicule her, to frame her as the outsider, the deviant, the abnormal. Her counter-frames (of justice, non-discrimination and impartiality) posed a threat to the smooth organization of their everyday experiences at work. Her frame-breaking activities could have disruptive effects on the ongoing flow of everyday experiences and the frames that allow officers to come to terms with the highly unpredictable events that characterize police work. When an individual breaks frame, ‘disorganized flooding out and flooding in are possible’ (1974: 359).

We can see that the migrant-hostile frame of ‘target groups’ is effectively guarded. Despite her best intentions, Karin is not able to go on with what Goffman calls ‘out-of-frame activities.’ She feels coerced to discriminate and succumbs to the pressure. This brings us to a second crucial observation: despite Karin’s critical attitude, had we only registered her behaviour or asked her about it in a standardized questionnaire, we would have come to the conclusion that she too is guilty of ethno-racial profiling. But behaviourism is not doing the job here, as it gives us a very skewed and objectionable depiction of what really happened. Even worse, would we extrapolate from her behaviour to her ‘moral qualities’ or ‘psychological traits’, we would immediately have to send her to one of the awareness, sensitivity or diversity trainings that are so popular within the Dutch police and which are seen by senior police managers as the panacea for ethno-racial profiling (see Chapter 2). The truth is that Karin discriminates even though she does not want to. She is instructed by the operational leadership to do it. Perhaps to the disappointment of the psychological counsellor, the problem we are facing is not psychological but sociological, political and systematic in nature. What should be the object of change is not the moral quality of the individual but the nature of the tasks that are conferred upon her by superiors.

Ethnography – which we have loosely defined, with Rabinow, as the dialectic between immediacy and reflection that is based upon an intersubjective mode of apprehension – proves to be irreplaceable. Had we only been concerned with Karin’s immediate conduct (and my interpretations of it) we would have missed the contemplations preceding it. Were we on the other hand only concerned with her contemplations, interpretations and reflections without doing our own interpretative work around her actual behaviour, we would have underestimated – or let go unnoticed – the forces that pushed her towards certain performances she despised but conducted nonetheless. Evidently, Karin’s e-mail is exceptional because she is already interpreting her own behaviour on an advanced level and she is brave enough to do some real introspection. Then again, I believe that such valuable materials are only forthcoming when the initial strangeness of the researcher has worn off and a smooth rapport has been developed. They are contingent upon the labour intensiveness of research and the closeness of the researcher to his informants, which in turn allow for genuine intersubjectivity.

The forces that pushed Karin towards the performances that she herself disapproved of are several – and of course subject to debate. This brings us to a third point. Some might be tempted to point at something vague like ‘organizational culture’, a concept which gained prominence among organizational theorists in the 1980s and 1990s. From this perspective it is *the* police culture that puts pressure upon individuals to act in line with the mainstream. However, I have my reservations about the police culture concept. I prefer to keep it at bay because it has been poorly defined and can therefore be of little analytical value (Chan 1996: 110): ‘Police culture has become a convenient label for a range of negative values, attitudes, and practice norms among police officers. It is suggested that because police officers at the rank-and-file level exercise enormous discretion in their work, their informal working rules can subvert or obstruct police reforms initiated at the top, or law reforms imposed externally (Reiner 1992).’ Chan gives several forms of critique on the concept of police culture that are relevant to our case.

First, we would lapse into oversimplification if we would speak of only one police culture. This is an argument we have already sought to bring across. Chan distinguishes between command, middle management and lower participants and we can see distinctions between these in our case as well. Different subcultures exist that give meaning to the daily life of

officers at work. Within these subcultures, sub-frames are used that guide the experiences and expectations of police officers. In other words, police officers are not passive recipients of a police culture. Rather, they take an active role in the acculturation process. If there is such a thing as police culture(s) it is mediated by individual experiences; experiences that may just as well subvert it and lead to subcultures (which, subsequently, start to guide people in their experiences – this too, in my view, is a dialectic process). Karin is a good example but so is Aziza, a middle manager (Superintendent) who works for the same team as Karin and is her direct superior. Aziza, who has a Moroccan-Dutch background, is the one who was responsible for the control that involved the Romanians, discussed above. She had explicitly instructed street officers to focus on behaviour (e.g., suspicious moves) and ‘facts’ (e.g., the carrying of special ironized bags used to shoplift) only. Her instructions were sabotaged, however, by Jack – a Sergeant who had openly resisted Aziza’s approach during the briefing and went out on the streets telling Romanians that ‘their friends are already in jail’ and that he ‘doesn’t like Romanians’. While this seems to confirm the idea of the police culture concept that police officers at the rank-and-file level exercise enormous discretion in their work, which allows them to subvert or obstruct instructions from above, I have found numerous examples that show the exact opposite. The point is, there is no homogenous police culture (which is not to say, of course, that no attempts are made to *homogenize*). There is no homogeneity of interest and purpose and officers have rival interpretations of what good police work should be like. While Karin was nauseated by the behaviour of her colleagues, they, in turn, could equally think of her as a liability for the good reputation of the team due to her tendency to ‘underenforce’.

The third form of critique that Chan has on the police culture concept relates to its insularity from the political context of policing. It goes without saying that the police do not operate in a political vacuum. In fact, they are an executive operation directly influenced by politics. And politics offer frames. As Bittner (1970: 11) emphasized long ago, ‘the differential treatment [the police] accord [the policed] reflects the distribution of esteem’ in society at large. A proxy for such a distribution may be the esteem (or, better, the lack thereof) of migrants held by those chosen by the electorate. Illustrative of the direct impact of politics on

policing is a second e-mail that I received from Karin on March 26, 2014. Here is one fragment:

‘Last week in the canteen, five colleagues were discussing the recent statements of Geert Wilders (‘fewer, fewer!’). Some remarks were made and after a while, the conversation became nasty. It started with a colleague who said that not all Moroccans are criminals, but that we just get into contact with the messed up ones. ‘That gives a wrong picture.’ Someone else responded, saying that he had the idea that 90% of the Moroccans were bad, 10% good. This triggered a series of discriminatory remarks from several colleagues. For instance: “all Romanians are muggers is not a prejudice but a fact,” or, “the majority of Moroccans are criminals.” I tried to respond but I was opposed with massive resistance.’

It makes sense to state that the police are disproportionally confronted with what Engbersen and Gabriëls (1995) have called the ‘bastard spheres of integration’, but that is beside the point. The more relevant observation concerns the direct impact of politics on migrant-hostile police attitudes. Karin is referring to Member of Parliament Geert Wilders (leader of the right-wing and migrant-hostile Freedom Party, the PVV), who had caused quite a stir at a local election rally in The Hague when he asked his supporters if they wanted more or fewer Moroccans in the Netherlands. In response, they had chanted ‘fewer’, to which Wilders replied: ‘We’ll organize that.’ Such representations, or frames, of the social world that are produced by the political spokespersons of society, do not stay without consequences. Exemplary is that Wilders’ ideas about large-scale deportations (he proposes them recurrently) show much resemblance with the actual ‘micro-deportations’ that are done by police officers (see the next chapter, but also see the exhortation of Romanian shoppers to leave the city centre, as discussed above). Signs of such politically induced migrant-hostility within the police organization abound. In her diary, Aziza wrote about one of her first shocking experiences within the Dutch police:

‘I was cleaning my desk when I noticed this newspaper article. In this article an argument was made for the deportation of

Moroccans from the Netherlands. A very blunt piece. I saw it in 2003 in the canteen of the station when I worked there for six months. I was shocked. I copied it and put it back. I didn't do anything with it.'

A few weeks after she had given her diary to me, she said in an interview:

'That something like that is in the papers, fine. That Geert Wilders exists, also fine. But that this can be copied and displayed in the canteen of a police station. I was like... Where in heaven's name have I ended up? What kind of organization is this? I know of course that it was only one person who did it, but it says something about the entire organization. I secretly copied the article but didn't do anything with it. This had to do with the fact that I was new in the organization. You don't know it that well.'

Similarly, a Superintendent in Breda, Surinam-born Dinesh, felt ill at ease with the website launched by the PVV in 2012 where people can complain about Central and Eastern European migrants in the Netherlands who cause nuisance or 'steal jobs':

'The government creates problems, because people, including police officers, begin to think like "there you have that Polish guy again, or that Romanian." People [at the station] speak about these things. For example, this morning it was broadcasted that the PVV has this website where you can file a complaint about Polish people. People here discuss it and say "hey, shall we do that as well?" As a supervisor I think I have to do something with that. So, this morning I said "I don't think you can say these things. Of what will it be the beginning?"'

Obviously, migrant-hostile discourses in the media and politics can have a direct impact on interethnic labour relations as well (see also the work of Siebers 2010). When Sergeant Ayse, born in Turkey, arrived at the department of the Alien Police in Rotterdam for the early-morning briefing she found a newspaper with an encircled heading. When she noticed that the article was about a clash between Muslims and Christians she knew this meant trouble. During the briefing she collided

with two of her colleagues. To her dismay she found out how they thought about her. One of them said:

‘You Muslims really have to knock it off; you think you can allow yourselves anything. We Christians will attack the Turkish consulate and teach you what violence is.’

The other one followed suit and added that it was about time to take the white cone hats out of their lockers again, making an unequivocal reference to the Ku Klux Klan. The brutality of an event like this demonstrates that people do not make sense of the happenings around them *tabula rasa*. Like always, people are socialized in a certain habitus over time and a newspaper article like this will not instantly turn a loving person into a hateful one. Something was already going on here. However, we do need to take into account critical events like this, which occur in a particular socio-political climate, and think of them minimally as triggers of ethnic conflict. In terms of career advancement, Ayse took a serious hit (see next section). In addition to such material disadvantage (ethnic closure), social reorientation (ethnic salience) was indisputable as well:

‘Then you fall back upon your old life, you see? I want to integrate in society, I want to do things, but then you withdraw, you go back to your own culture. Well, you have the need to talk about it, but in your own language. You only want to talk with people who understand you. For me it was very hard to explain to a Dutch social worker what I experienced inside. Many Turkish people live for their honour, you see. Maybe this is unthinkable for a Dutch person, but at that moment dishonour is inflicted upon you. They rather could have kicked me to death.’

What we see in all these cases is, to speak with Jan Blommaert (2005: 236) that ‘multiple ideological and identity positions are at play simultaneously, not in a chaotic or random way but structured and to some extent predictable.’

Officers across the hierarchy work with different theories, different templates or frames, regarding their work – in this case particularly about how to police minorities – and these theories, templates or frames

are by no means determined by a 'fixed' ethnicity. Not only Harry but also Turkey-born Mehmet discourses about the sheer waste of time when people other than those who belong to the so-called 'target groups' are given police attention. Then again, Mehmet told me that he felt absolutely hopeless when he, as a Turkish-Dutch police officer, was seen as a 'target' for affirmative action programs within the organization – despite the good intentions from which they follow. Not only Aziza and Dinesh are critical about the migrant-hostile frames that enter the organization; so is Karin.

What we see emerging are 'polycentric' and 'stratified' systems in which hierarchies of identities can be developed (Blommaert 2005). Polycentric in the sense that officers are oriented to different 'centres of authority' when it comes to meaning making. At certain times they copy the frames of the politicians they admire; at other times peer frames are more relevant. Undoubtedly, a researcher is equally seen as a centre of authority and we cannot rule out the possibility of the use of socially desirable frames in that respect. Following this line, officers can be drawn to all sorts of centres of authority (e.g., people, institutions, representations, concepts) at various times. How receptive they are to a certain frame can depend on a variety of things: their personal histories and previous experiences, the supervision they (have) receive(d) at work, the conditions in which they have to work, the government policies that are imposed on them, the structures of incentives (what pays off?), etc.

And yet a stratified system can develop, not in the sense of the organizational hierarchy, but in the sense of certain identity positions acquiring the upper hand in framing. What we see in the previous fragments – and in what follows hereafter – is that hostile discourses about migrants, though being one among many, gain the upper hand. Minority positions are subordinated and overruled by majority positions (again, not in terms of ethnicity, but in terms of perspective, framing, discoursing, and the like). In the next section we will see how this upper hand is achieved.



## Types of relations and management styles

Back to Ayse for a moment. The context and aftermath of this event are discussed with greater clarity and nuance in Chapter 7, but it will help to briefly look at the type of relation that was expected by Ayse's superiors. When the collision had occurred, Ayse, who I have come to know as a very articulate person, clammed up completely. She called in sick and stayed home for three months. The team leader who had been present during the briefing had refused to intervene. He had watched expressionlessly. When Ayse filed an official discrimination complaint, it was ignored by the organization. Anti-discrimination laws, which form the essence of the first article of the Dutch constitution (the article in reference to equal treatment), were not stipulated in a law enforcement agency. They were considered a bureaucratic obstacle that would do no good to interpersonal relationships. Instead, Ayse was invited by her team leader for conflict mediation; a dialogue session between her and the aggressors. A solution that respects officers as professionals, who must be able to solve their own problems; a responsabilization strategy. Ayse refused because she expected to be thrown to the wolves again, which, in her eyes, would only aggravate her condition. She felt that trouble was recuperating for the next engagement. Her refusal to participate in the mediation was not tolerated and she was forced to leave the team. Ayse was chastised for not defending herself. The rebuke felt like a slap in the face.

C. Wright Mills once wrote that people nowadays feel that their lives are a series of traps. 'They sense that within their worlds, they cannot overcome their troubles, and in this feeling, they are often quite correct' (1959: 3). It is not difficult to understand that Ayse must have felt the same way. She was responsabilized for something that was arguably beyond her reach. How can I change the attitudes of my colleagues, she asked:

'I'm willing to go into mediation about how we use our key cards or something, but this is completely different. These people have made up their mind. They are no kids of 16, 17 years old.'

The type of relation that was envisioned by Ayse's superiors was the sort of power-free relationship between individuals who are masters of their own life, who can rule out exogenous influences and take matters into their own hands. Such relationships are best managed, argue many of the police leaders I have interviewed, by dialogical, post-bureaucratic, horizontal, participative or – to jump on the latest bandwagon – follower-oriented leadership. Leadership by consent rather than coercion. However, that the word 'consent' loses its connection with other words in the semantic cluster, like participation and independency, becomes clear enough from Ayse's case and is known since Burawoy's (1979) famous book on the manufacturing of consent. Those who sabotage the manufacturing process are excommunicated. They can go somewhere else.

In reality, therefore, such forms of leadership often result in types of relationships that boil down to a survival of the fittest. This sort of Social Darwinist framing is well captured in the language of a Moroccan-Dutch community officer in Amsterdam, Abder. When I talked with him about discrimination within the organization, he said:

'Colleagues within the Dutch police discriminate. It is as simple as that. They question your loyalty because you have a different ethnic background. You might be just like the criminal ethnic minority on the street. Due to that image – which is fuelled by contemporary politics – you have to fight an uphill battle as a minority within this organization. You're always one step behind. In the end minorities disappear. They are harassed out of the organization. What people don't realize is that basic rights are at stake. The right to exist. The right to earn a wage. The right to take care of a family. This is about whole families. [When I joined the organization] I was at the bottom of the food chain. Carnivores were all around me. I was just a naïve herbivore who had a different image of the police. I had a great sense of justice, but this changed when I became a member of this organization. It is a jungle in here with racists and all. But it was not my intension to be chased away. So I adapted. Not that I became a carnivore myself; I built protection around me. A very thick skin.'

In his first years at the police, Abder had to suffer severely from discrimination. None of his colleagues wanted to join a beat with him, he

was locked up in a wardrobe, and his partner left him outside in the cold when a xenophobic citizen had forbidden Abder to enter his house. (This, by the way, is something that regularly occurs to minority officers and which they have to swallow as ‘social professionals’ who are supposed to attain one of the highest goals of the organization: client satisfaction). Years later, when he was working as a Sergeant (he is now Inspector), Abder’s skin was thick enough. At a certain point he was able to avert an outburst of ethnic riots all by himself. Several years ago, one of Abder’s colleagues got into a conflict with a Moroccan-Dutch kid who was driving his car across a square where cars were forbidden. Things got physical and the officer dragged the – by then handcuffed – kid to the station for almost 60 yards, holding him by his hair. Obviously, this caused quite a stir in the neighbourhood. Out of protest, a group of about twenty-five Moroccan-Dutch youngsters marched to the police station in Amsterdam West, a quarter where ethnic relations between the police and the public were already tense due to innumerable conflicts in the past. In response, the whole station got into gear, ready for the attack. Abder:

‘Our Commissioner always spoke of ‘flash moments’, moments that can change the whole situation within a blink of the eye. This is when you get situations like in the *banlieus* of Paris. [He is referring to the events in Paris in 2005, when the young Zied Benna and Bouna Traoré were killed in an electrical substation where they were electrocuted while hiding from a police chase. Their deaths provoked riots at the outskirts of Paris in Clichy-sous-Bois and spread quickly. In the three weeks thereafter, riots flared up in the sensitive urban zones – *Zones Urbaines Sensibles* – of more than 200 of the main cities of France. See also Fassin 2013a or Koff and Duprez 2009.] This was such a moment. If we hadn’t managed it correctly, it would have been a trigger for riots, Molotov cocktails, stations under attack, riot policing and what have you more. My task then was to keep the peace and to keep the two parties separated. It is unbelievable that one of these parties was my own... I was upstairs when one of the students came to get me and said “[Abder], come down! Things are really spinning out of control.”

As the community officer in the neighbourhood, Abder knew most of the people. His first thought was to call the parents of the detainee and settle things with them. But when he came down to the front desk he saw that they were already there and that they were just as agitated:

‘Father had already come to the station, together with the mother, the boy’s brothers and sisters as well as the grandparents, who had come over from Morocco for a family visit. So I ask my team leader: “What are you going to do?” “We are going to beat all of them out of the station, because they don’t want to leave.” “And then what? Once you’ve beaten them out of the station, what’s going to happen?” “Yeah, well, we will see.” “They will come back with superior numbers, that is what’s going to happen. It will not solve the problem. Beating them out now will mean broken windows and cars afire later.” “I don’t give a shit; at least they’ll be out.” “Let me speak to the parents and talk to them.” “You have five minutes.” “Come on, you’re acting as if restoring peace in this neighbourhood is my responsibility only. It is the responsibility of all of us, including you, as the team leader.”’

Abder decided to ignore his boss and turned to the protesters:

‘With all due respect, that kid has been arrested for good reasons. I am going to inform his parents now, because they are the ones who should be involved. I am requesting you to step outside now. I assure you that your friend will be treated decently. Leave now, otherwise things will get out of hand. They [pointing to his colleagues] are ready to kick you out. You will come back in greater numbers, but that will only confirm the negative reputation of the neighbourhood. Where will that leave you, the neighbourhood, your mothers?’

After some time Abder was able to convince the father of the detainee to talk the group of protesters into leaving the station. When all had left and Abder went to the back office to inform his colleagues about the positive outcome of the negotiations, he found nothing but clubs and batons lying scattered over the ground as a symbol of disappointment:

‘Nobody came to me but one colleague who had to look over his shoulders when he whispered: “I can’t tell you this in front of the others, but you did well.”’

What men are interested in is not always what is to their interest, wrote C. Wright Mills (1951). Similarly, these men and women appeared to be avid for a fight even though this would not be in their interest in the long run. Events in the recent histories of the police in cities like Ferguson, Los Angeles, Denver, Detroit, Paris, Brixton, Liverpool, Bristol or Birmingham have shown that police violence can easily result in riotous protest, multiple casualties and seriously disturbed relations between the police and the public, which take a long time to recover (most likely the best remembered, apart from the events in France, are the riots in Los Angeles in 1992, now known as the Rodney King uprising in which 2,383 people were injured, 8,000 arrested and 51 killed and in which more than 700 businesses were set ablaze and material damage of over one billion US dollar was caused – Bergesen and Herman 1998). So far, however, large-scale ethnic riots have been absent from the Dutch scene of policing and this is commonly attributed to the long tradition of community-oriented policing. At least since the appointment of Commissioners Nordholt, Straver and Wiarda (the ‘rebels of the 1970s’ who fought for more social forms of policing) several decades ago, Dutch policing is known as the ‘social paradigm’ (Punch et al. 2005). In comparison to other countries, such as the United States or France, the Dutch have managed to build a different type of relation with the public, it is said, which has successfully prevented ethnic rioting in the main cities. Researchers at the Dutch Police Academy have tentatively argued that this type of relationship – that is, a fairly good one – is largely the result of the institutionalization of community policing (Adang et al. 2010).

It is, however, precisely this word ‘institutionalization’ that needs to be debated. With this I do not intend to say that we should discuss the institutionalization of community policing in the Netherlands in general. For such a debate I lack the knowledge, plus there is the fact that community policing is organized in very different ways across the country. Closer to the concern of this book, however, is a debate about the (degree of) institutionalization of community policing specifically in relation to ethnic minorities who live in the communities. In this light I do not believe that community policing is institutionalized at all. I think

that we should be alert to the possibility that it is characterized by individuation and a dependency on a selected group of individuals. Abder's experiences are a clear case in point, but so are the experiences of Sergeant Mo (born in Morocco). I would now like to turn to his experiences as well as those of his direct colleagues (Frank and Richard) to make this point. Thanks to the richness of the collected materials we can look at them at length, also as a way of concluding this section generously.

The station where Mo worked for several years, in Gouda, has a history of ethnic conflicts involving in particular Moroccan-Dutch youngsters in the neighbourhood Oosterwei, which is known in Gouda as 'little Morocco' (Adang et al. 2010). In an interview that took place with community officers Frank and Richard they expanded on their relations with these youngsters in the 1990s. Richard:

'Our relations with the Moroccan world were of a very problematic nature. A lot of confrontations, a lot of violence. It became ever more hostile. Late at night groups of youngsters were no longer approachable. All we did was hunting. A car with a Moroccan in it was per definition stopped and searched. It was turned inside out.'

Frank added:

'Yeah, with these populations it was just a zero-tolerance approach. "Cleaning the streets," that sort of thing. It was war when I came here as a community officer in '95. Flipped cars, broken windows, a lot of confrontations.'

This was before Mo was recruited as a community officer in this neighbourhood. When he had left in 2008 (for reasons that will be outlined below) things got worse than ever before, or so it seems. In September 2008 a bus driver who was driving the line that runs through Oosterwei was assaulted and mugged, according to bus company Connexion by a man with a darker skin-colour. The driver was hurt with a knife but he only had a relatively minor wound and recovered quickly. However, bus drivers decided collectively to avoid Oosterwei for a couple of days, despite the fact that the assault had occurred in an adjacent neighbourhood. The incident triggered no less than 197 newspaper

articles and the media started to orchestrate the public opinion in such a way that everybody believed that the assailant was Moroccan from origin and committed his crime in Oosterwei. The mass-communication system started to work as a selective reflection of society that reinforces certain features by generalizing them (Mills 1951).

Very much in line with the mugging incident in London, 1972, which Stuart Hall and his colleagues (1978) analysed so well, a ‘moral panic’ about Dutch society broke out when a memorably sharp debate was sparked between Members of Parliament. With sensationalist intentions, the socialist party (SP) framed the assailants as ‘hooligans’, the conservative liberals (VVD) panicked about ‘a nation on fire’ and the right-wing populists (PVV) suggested to withdraw the army from Uruzgan and deploy it in Gouda (*NRC Handelsblad*, 11 October 2008). As always (see Mutsaers 2012b), the local authorities on site were better endowed with faculties of reflection and imagination. They stayed much calmer and were less reluctant to play the ethnic card. Commissioner Stikvoort openly criticized the aforementioned national spokespersons, pointing at the potentially harmful effects of their populist exaggerations. The mayor of Gouda stressed that we were really talking ten streets only and claimed that facts were continuously distorted for the benefit of newspaper sales. Nobody, however, took lessons from the work of Hall and associates in which they analysed the social history of such a moral panic, of which the role of the police as an amplifier of violence is a crucial part (see Oudenampsen 2014 for a proper analysis of the Dutch situation on the basis of Hall’s seminal work).

All of this gives an idea of the image held of the neighbourhood by national politicians, the media and the public at large and shows the challenges with which any community officer employed in it is confronted. For Mo, however, these challenges were manifold. He was recruited and selected for the job without regard to regular HR procedures, because his team leader (who also happened to be born in Morocco) was avid for an officer with a Moroccan background to work in Oosterwei. The transfer was a promotion for him – he got promoted from Senior Constable to Sergeant. These two factors aroused envy among Mo’s colleagues. Frank:

‘At a certain point he was promoted, just like that. There was no procedure, no job interview, nothing. And I was like “hey, maybe I

wanted the job as well.” I was like, “this is not how these things are supposed to go.” And they had created a special job profile for him, some mixture of community policing and ethnic minority relations.’

Richard continued:

‘We had that before. Moroccan colleagues were actively recruited. Autochthonous candidates were just not hired or promoted. We were simply not allowed to apply. But many [Moroccan-Dutch officers] have failed and have left the force. It all went very slow. Some couldn’t adapt because of their back-ground. All of this caused a lot of resistance among autochthonous colleagues.’

Mo knew full well that he was not going to be spared. He told me that before he was transferred, he had heard that people had said, ‘if Mo comes we are leaving,’ Mo:

‘There was no warm welcome. Jokes and stuff about Moroccans were a daily thing around here and then someone like that [i.e., a Moroccan-Dutch officer] joins the team. It was one group and they did things their way.’

This was confirmed by Frank and Richard. Richard:

‘Before [Mo came], people would come in after a fight cursing like hell. “Fucking Moroccans.” Hard talk about certain populations, still shaking with a cup of coffee in their hands. But now, that is no longer possible. And if it does happen and Mo happens to overhear it, he’ll tell you something. But I think that people should have a release, to vent their feelings. Perhaps a separate, isolated room where you can curse for five minutes. “Those fucking Moroccans.”’

There was a particular social dynamic within the team that isolated Mo from the very beginning he started his new job. This, however, was not what bothered him so much and he claimed to be able to withstand the opposition flowing from the social distance between him and his



colleagues. It was the reverse side of the medal, being socially (and physically!) close to neighbourhood residents, that put a toll on him.

Mo was deployed in the very same neighbourhood in which he grew up (and resided). Since about 90% of the neighbourhood residents has roots in Morocco, he happened to know almost everybody in the area. As a consequence, his contacts with the public were often very informal. Oftentimes he would even skip the early-morning briefing at the station to go into the neighbourhood straight from home, in civilian clothes. This was accepted, even encouraged, by the team leader. Many of the residents e-mailed Mo directly or even had his mobile phone number, which they did not hesitate to use. In the evening Mo could be found in the Moroccan teahouse among neighbourhood residents, which was frowned upon by his colleagues. To them it was a place where they fought so many times; to Mo it was a valuable source of information. During *Salat al-djuma*, the Friday prayer, Mo could be found in the Mosque in his civilian clothes when he was off and in uniform when he was on duty. Some colleagues considered this outrageous and started to accuse him of corruption ('you're mingling with the enemy,' was an often-heard phrase). As a rejoinder to such accusations Mo always pointed to the fact that Dutch, that is, ethnic majority colleagues, whenever they would be in the Mosque to forge valuable police relations, were always applauded for doing such a good job. And whenever he was accused of 'talking with the enemy', he would simply reply: 'Of course, that's what I'm getting paid for.' Despite his lucidity and his reasonable defences, colleagues started to mistrust him nonetheless.

In my analysis this had less to do with primordial feelings of hate or envy towards 'ethnic others', or with personal prejudices or ill-temper for that matter, than with a radical shift in the outlook of policing as well as the social organization of work. Let me explain.

Mo's arrival coincided with a different strategy in policing. For years a hard approach was taken, but it failed to work in Oosterwei (see also Adang et al. 2010). It only contributed to a spiral of violence and decay. Mo was meant to be the social face of the police in Oosterwei and was expected to implement the shift from what Punch et al. (2002) have called a 'legalistically oriented style of policing' to a more 'socially oriented style.' His presence had to assure the (primarily Moroccan-Dutch) residents that the police were no longer to be seen as 'impersonal officials tied to their cars and wary of involvement in any messy and

burdensome social tasks, [but as] more devolved, concerned, approachable groups of public servants with a service orientation' (Punch et al. 2002: 77). And it worked. With pride Mo talked about how he helped 'older Moroccan ladies' with administrative tasks, such as filling in social service forms, and how this helped him to build trust in the community. As a result, more intelligence was gathered than ever before, which in turn contributed positively to crime fighting. Mo's success story was confirmed by his colleague, Frank:

'It's such a pity that management let him go, though. He lived in that area, he went to the Mosque, he knew everybody. You only had to show him a picture and he recognized who it was. He really proved his merit.'

And yet, Mo ended up being embittered about the situation and decided to abandon his post. I believe his troubles were twofold. First, it was exactly the social aspect of his work that rendered Mo vulnerable to being identified with 'the enemy', 'the criminal ethnic other'. The teahouses, the Mosque, the administrative assistance and social service, the dissolving boundary between life and work, home and office – in the eyes of his colleagues, they turned Mo into a representative of the Moroccan community at large and an ally to 'criminal Moroccans' in particular. Ethnic boundaries did not develop spontaneously; in a way they were organized. Second, other officers did not follow suit in community or socially oriented policing in this particular community. Mo stood alone. As a consequence, residents built personal trust in one police officer, not institutional trust in *the police*. This isolated Mo even further. On top of that, he was blessed and simultaneously damned with a management team that fully supported him but also adopted a strict laissez-faire management style. They were confident that he could solve his own problems and was therefore given all the freedom he needed to do so (no briefings, unlimited and private contact with neighbourhood residents through e-mail and mobile phone, etc.). While Mo wanted all of this – let us not deprive him of agency – it became too much for him. He told me that he felt like 'crying in the wilderness'.

He was left to his own devices because his devices proved to be unexamined. He had managed to achieve what nobody else before him could; securing a relatively stable situation in Oosterwei, Gouda. It was

not, however, as if he had no managerial backing. He did, but he had it as an old-style beat constable who is not embedded in the organization. This is an organizational aspect of great importance, which takes us back to our earlier remarks about the institutionalization of community policing with which we began the analysis of this case. Punch et al. (2002) make a useful distinction between different sorts of community policing in the Netherlands: (1) beat officers (in the 1960s and 1970s), (2) neighbourhood teams (in the 1980s and 1990s) and (3) community officers (roughly since the 1990s). One of the distinguishing factors is the degree of internal and external integration of the officer, with external integration referring to the relation between the police and the public and the internal dimension to the integration of community-oriented officers and the rest of the organization. Beat constables scored high on the external and low on the internal dimension. As a result, they slowly drifted away from the organization. With the introduction of different styles of community policing, this process of drifting away was turned.

Progress is seldom a convenient linear process, as we know, and the periodization of Punch et al. is clearly intended as a depiction of policy development, not street reality. The ramshackle reality of police practice, as we said before, is all too often completely different from the plans of ‘pencil pushers’. In reality, there is not one single police organization but a diversity of sub-organizations, as Punch et al. acknowledge, which compromise between legalistic and social policing, external and internal integration, force and service, hard and soft, and so forth. Different sub-organizations can exist alongside one another simultaneously. This was certainly the case with the region-based organization and will continue to be the case after nationalization, is my guess. As a consequence, relations between the public and the police will continue to be of various kinds. This does not mean, however, that this diversity shouldn’t be subjected to critical review. In the foregoing we have pointed at the various risks of the beat constable formula in a ‘sensitive zone’ such as Oosterwei. One successful officer is not a sure passport to organizational success. When officers stand alone, successes achieved are very precarious. They become contingent upon the efforts of... one individual.

Simultaneously, dominant majority positions can persist. In the preceding pages we have seen that those who occupy minority positions are constantly framed as deviant individuals. Ayse is framed as weak. She doesn’t have the mental resilience to roll with the punches and to stand

here ground. Her ideas of what a just organization should be like are marginalized. Bureaucratic interferences (e.g., the stipulation of anti-discrimination legislation) are deemed obsolete and she is forced to adopt the frame of individual negotiation and competition. Abder is all alone in the prevention of ethnic riots and Mo, despite being applauded by his managers, feels like 'crying in the wilderness'. These frames of individual deviancy and abnormality align well with the national policy of individualization, as we have seen.

## **Review and preview**

The task of this first empirical chapter has been to make plausible that migrant-hostile policing cannot so easily be reduced to the intrapsychic domains of individual police officers. Materials have been assembled that have allowed for an analysis of types of relations, management styles, political imaginaries, representations, incentives and so forth; the social phenomena that make the police institution into what it is and that are at the foundation of the cognitive processes of individual officers. We have seen how politics directly fuel migrant-hostile relations between police officers and result in feelings of insecurity and dispensability. We have seen how discretion that is sanctioned by the department allows for strikingly different types of relations with different populations. In contrast to Lipsky (2010), who vehemently argued that ethno-racial profiling does not arise from official policy, we have seen that street officers are in fact explicitly instructed to profile and act on the basis of (alleged) ethnic characteristics (this is also an important topic in the next chapter). We have seen that management styles have been adopted that altogether devolve responsibility to individuals in case of ethnic tensions (Ayse, Abder and Mo had to bear the brunt of such leadership styles).

Now, if we go back to Chapter 2, where we gave some thought to the juxtaposition of bureaucratic and professional solutions to migrant-hostile policing, a few remarks are in order. It is clear that, if we look at the various elements of both, not a single one is the panacea to police discrimination. In his *Economy and Society*, Max Weber distinguished six general principles of the bureaucratic form of organization (Weber et al. 1968: 956-958):

- I. The principle of official jurisdictional areas, which are generally ordered by rules, that is, by laws or administrative regulation.
- II. The principle of office hierarchy and of channels of appeal, which stipulate a clearly established system of super- and sub-ordination in which there is a supervision of the lower offices by the higher ones.
- III. The principle of the modern office, which is based upon written documents (the 'files'), which are preserved in their original draft form, and upon a staff of subaltern officials and scribes of all sorts.
- IV. The principle of office management; at least all specialized office management usually presupposes thorough training in a field of specialization.
- V. The principle of full working capacity of the official, irrespective of the fact that the length of his obligatory working hours in the bureau may be limited.
- VI. The principle of general rules, which are followed by the management of the office and which are more or less stable, more or less exhaustive, and which can be learned.

Looking at principle two, for instance, it becomes hard to state with certitude that in itself it will get us any further. Not only is the street work of rank-and-file officers practically unreviewable due to the lack of on-site supervision (Lipsky 2010) – which turns the police into a very peculiar organization as we have said earlier; we also have seen that instructions 'from above' can differ completely from one another. It is not as if superordinates per definition have a more favourite perception of minorities. With respect to the problem of the 'unreviewability' (Levin 1989) of officers' street work, principle three can make a difference. Non-governmental organizations such as the Open Society Justice Initiative (2012) have suggested the use of stop forms in order to make transparent if, and if so, how and where, ethnic minorities are disproportionately stopped and searched. However, the intention of the then minister responsible for the Dutch police agency is to reduce rather than increase the amount of paper work (Opstelten 2012). His perspective on accountability, and the paper work that it requires, is crystal clear (see Chapter 2).

With respect to principle six it can be established that the way the organization is governed (in relation to our topic), has little to do with

abiding rules. Guided by the framework of professional freedom and autonomy (cf. Maravelias 2007), individual officers are ‘liberated’ from rules and encouraged to explore their own path and to solve their own problems. Ayse is a good example. Instead of stipulating rules and regulations against discrimination, her superiors invite her to engage in conflict mediation; an instrument to professionalize her and her colleagues and to improve interpersonal relations. Similarly, HR procedures are ignored in the case of Mo, because he is the man for the job. In the light of Wilson’s (1968) classification of the police professional (see, again, Chapter 2), Mo certainly proved to be one. He maintained good community relations, took a broad view on his role, exercised initiative and independence, appreciated his discretion and learned his beat and to work with the people living in the area. However, spatially, his jurisdictional area overlapped with his own area of residence, which made it very difficult for him to escape from work. He was stuck right in it; fully embedded. As a consequence, there were no ‘structures of responsibility,’ to speak with James Ferguson (2012); responsibility was laid completely on his shoulders. The same was obviously true for Abder.

An important topic in Anthony Giddens’ *The Consequences of Modernity* (1990) has to do with the way trust is organized in modern society. One of the defining features of modern society is that trust is not personalized but institutionalized: ‘Trust is not vested in individuals but in abstract capacities’ (p. 26). He discusses money as an example:

‘Everyone who uses monetary tokens does so on the presumption that others, whom she or he never meets, honour value. But it is money as such which is trusted, not only, or even primarily, the persons with whom particular transactions are carried out.’  
(Giddens 1990: 26)

The cases that have been analysed in this chapter make plausible that what counts within the Dutch police organization is trust vested in individual officers; not in a police institute that is to administer a certain form of justice. Aziza’s trust in the institution clearly eroded and so did the trust of Karin and Ayse. Trust was vested in Mo (by neighbourhood residents and the team management) and in Abder (by the protesters). Put differently, trust becomes a ‘post-organizational’ thing.

Let there be no confusion; that efforts are made to turn it into such a thing does not mean that it actually is so. I hope that the previous cases have made it clear that ‘individuality’ (which in this case should live out its days in inverted commas) is an organizational construct. People are forced to act as individuals and learn not to count upon institutional back-up. Even worse, as we are going to see in the next chapter, they operate in the presence of security networks that increasingly force them to police in a migrant-hostile way. Here, migrant-hostile policing has literally become post-organizational, as extensive networks of private, semi-public and public organizations have evolved into a determining factor of migrant-hostile policing. Let us turn to it.

**Note**

<sup>1</sup> See <http://meldpuntoverlast.eu/nationaliteiten/polen/>





## 5 Thickening Borderlands

The price of silence is paid in the hard currency of human suffering.

*Zygmunt Bauman, Globalization, The Human Consequences, 1998*

Once upon a time, with his fists to his ears and his eyes pinched shut in ecstasy, this creature too floated in a woman's womb.

*J.M. Coetzee, Age of Iron, 1990*

- Municipal official 1: Who can forward this to the alien police?  
Police officer 1: That's just a matter of calling them. You can do it, I can do it.... Police. Check. When did it [his residence permit] expire? June 16? I can ask it during the break, then we have it uh....
- Youth worker: [Sarcastically] Oh, we have a party today, it's his birthday!
- Police officer 1: Today is his birthday?  
Youth worker: Yes, he is turning 18!  
Police officer 2: So, he can just scram. He wanted to go to Bosnia anyway, he said. We can speed things up for him.
- Coordinator municipality: It is no longer in a state of war.  
Police officer 2: Nope, nothing wrong there.  
Municipal official 2: Our approach is working.  
Police officer 1: We have a new item on the agenda: making a birthday calendar. We can visit them at home. Happy birthday!
- Coordinator municipality: Congratulations with your eighteenth.



## From police to policing

In recent years a body of literature has developed in which it is argued that discriminatory policing is becoming part and parcel of the policies of the police as well as the networks in which they are intertwined and the politics by which they are instructed (e.g., Leerkes et al. 2012a; Leerkes et al. 2012b; Loftus 2015; Van der Leun and Van der Woude 2011; Weber and Bowling 2004 and 2008; Weber 2011). On both sides of the Atlantic migrants are deliberately being targeted for control by a growing number of government agencies, semi-public bodies and private companies operating together to counteract the presence of migrants. What Weber and Bowling (2004: 195) called the ‘policing of migration’ is characterized by a blurring of boundaries between criminal and administrative measures ‘in the sense of direct police involvement in the enforcement of immigration laws and the control of “immigrant” communities’ and, reversely, in the sense that ‘police-like activities of immigration authorities and other agencies are acquiring new coercive powers’.

In many respects the Dutch are at the frontier of this so-called ‘policing of migration’. Not only if it comes to specific measures can the Dutch approach be described as ‘cutting-edge’ – such as the pledge to meet specific deportation targets (already existing in this country), efforts to criminalize illegal stay (proposed and disputed) or the introduction of mobile biometric devices for police officers to check on the spot the residence status of migrants who are suspected of illegal residence (which already have been tested). Increasingly, we also see a diversification of agencies by which migrants are policed as well as a proliferation of sites at which this can occur. I therefore concur with Hallsworth (2006) that, in order to understand discriminatory *policing* (the practice) one has to look carefully at *the police* (the institution) as well as behind it.

This chapter unfolds as follows. Firstly, inspired by the ‘sites of enforcement’ framework of Weber and Bowling (2004), I will offer a critical take on a number of policy developments in the Netherlands with regard to *external* and *internal* border control. The emphasis will be on the latter, but both forms of migration policing are discussed in order to demonstrate the zeal in Dutch migration policing and the increasing risk of inequitable treatment of migrants who are in – or planning to come to – this country. Secondly, I will give a detailed discussion of empirical

material obtained during fieldwork in Tilburg. Although the key focus of my research has been on the role of the police institution in the policing of migrants in the Netherlands, I have assembled material from a variety of sources – including a number of public, semi-public and private organizations that are engaged in migrant-related activities and work together with the police. Because empirical research and reflection on the internal policing of migrants is scarce (Leerkes et al. 2012b; Loftus 2015), this section is quite detailed. I hope to respond to Loftus' (2015) call for sustained empirical examination of the inner world of border policing by discussing in-depth how Somali immigrants in Tilburg are confronted with internal border policing. Thirdly, I will discuss anthropological work on 'thickening borderlands' and call for a synergy between this work and criminological work on the policing of migration.

### **The policing of migration: Dutch 'pioneers'**

While it continues to be so that the power to stop, frisk, interrogate and physically remove people from certain places makes the police what Manning (2010) called 'the immediate face of government', this control function no longer lies in the hands of a single or a couple of organizations (e.g., the three C's: 'cops', 'courts' and 'corrections') but in those of an entire network of organizations. Being frequently subjected to control may antagonize the relationship between the controller and the controlled. Due to a 'pluralization of governance' and the rise of 'networked policing', such relationships may now be experienced in contact with a whole range of state and non-state actors.

This holds increasingly true for migrants who have come to (live in) liberal democracies, as fluid and nodal strategies of policing have now permeated the world of migration control (Loftus 2015). As a result, the policing of migrants is reaching beyond physical borderlines. Although the development of new borderlands is not visible to all, it can be highly influential in the lives of some. As Rumford wrote: '[B]orders exist at multiple sites within and between polities [and] mean different things to different people, and work differently on different groups' (2012: 894). For instance, the fact that many rights do not accrue to the undocumented in countries such as the Netherlands, Belgium and Germany

– which indicates a ‘hardening’ of attitudes towards migrants – means that a marginalized and vulnerable population is actively created that is ‘beyond the pale of protection’ (Zedner 2010: 394).

From the ‘sites of enforcement’ framework (Weber and Bowling 2004: 202, but see also Bowling and Sheptycki 2012: 103) it becomes clear that borderlands are expanding both inwards (through ‘in-country enforcement’) and outwards (through ‘pre-entry controls’). I will briefly discuss various modes of external and internal control over Dutch territory and mobility in(to) the Netherlands to shed light on the current state of Dutch migration policing. The Netherlands is an interesting country to scrutinize because of its pioneering and aggressive role in the policing of migration. Whereas in countries such as the United States new forms of migration policing have been answered by massive support for immigrants’ rights – think of police officers checking the status of anyone who resembles the profile of an illegal immigrant, the targeting of criminal aliens, prolongation of the period of ‘probationary citizenship’ for legal migrants, rising detention rates, and proposals to make illegal stay a felony (Coutin 2011) – none of that kind of protest has occurred in the Netherlands in response to comparable policymaking. Unsurprising therefore is the increasing diffusion of immigration law enforcement, now including a wide range of parties such as asylum officials, immigration officers, the Border Police, the Aliens Police and regular police departments, but also transport companies, private security companies, the Labour Inspectorate, employers, local officials, school administrators, landlords, social service workers, and housing companies – all of them becoming increasingly responsible for checking the residence status of migrants.

### **External border control**

A good example of external border control is the delegation of responsibilities to private transporters, such as airlines, which have taken over core tasks from immigration and customs officers. By means of carrier sanction legislation governments have enabled a sort of ‘remote control’ that has shifted away from their own physical border (Bosworth and Guild 2008; Scholten and Minderhoud 2008). By imposing financial penalties upon private transport companies who take people with ‘inadequate documentation’ on board, governments have taken an important step in the privatization and de-territorialization of migration

control ('de-territorialization' because this sort of control does not take place on their own territory). In the Netherlands, carriers' obligations have been firmly laid down in various forms of legislation, such as the Aliens Act 2000, the Aliens Decree and the Alien Regulation (Scholten and Minderhoud 2008).

A completely different example of external border control is the 'pre-departure integration strategy' (Bonjour 2010; Groenendijk 2011). At this point too, we see that the Netherlands is vigorously trying to immobilize or 'ground' certain categories of migrants. In 2005, the Dutch government was among the first in the world to impose integration requirements on family migrants from certain countries outside the EU (Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the USA, Japan and South Korea are exempted), which they need to meet before they can even come to the Netherlands. The Dutch Law on Civic Integration Abroad stipulates that passing an integration test is a prerequisite for family migrants to being admitted to the Netherlands.

With regard to asylum seekers and refugees tactics of externalization are also deployed and have helped governments to distance themselves both legally and geographically from immigration control (Scholten and Minderhoud 2008). The Dutch Advisory Committee on Aliens Affairs advised the Dutch government in 2003 to adopt a border management strategy that is modelled on the idea of 'concentric circles' rather than the classical borderline (Scholten and Minderhoud 2008). In this model, inner circles (e.g., the Netherlands or the EU) are to be protected by outer circles or 'buffer zones' (e.g., Turkey, North African countries, etc.) to which asylum procedures can be outsourced (in so-called Transit Processing Centres), to which asylum seekers can be readmitted when a so-called safe Third Country was part of their migration trajectory, and where refugees can be located so that they stay in their regions of origin rather than seek refuge in an EU country (Andrijasevic 2010; Fekete 2005; Weber and Bowling 2008).

### **Internal border control**

Leerkes et al. (2012a) distinguish two types of internal border control. One pertains to all practices intended to trace, apprehend and deport migrants from state territories; the other aims to exclude migrants from societal institutions and public provision.

While detention and deportation were for a long time considered secondary techniques to police immigrant populations, they are now ubiquitous in liberal democratic countries such as the USA, the Netherlands and the UK (Gibney 2008). Throughout Europe detention facilities have sprouted in which people are localized in light of ‘pre-admission detention, pre-deportation detention, detention for the purpose of transfer to a safe third country, detention for the purpose of transfer to the responsible state under the Dublin Convention and criminal detention linked to illegal entry/exit or fraudulent documentation’ (UNHRC 2000, quoted in Broeders 2010: 175). Facilitated by this wide carceral archipelago of detention centres (Walters 2002), each year around 100,000 immigrants are detained in Europe (De Giorgi 2010).

On this point too we can establish that the Netherlands is particularly migrant-hostile. The political discourse on migrants in the Netherlands is influenced by politicians who desire special stop-and-searches for Antillean juveniles and deportation of convicted criminals with a Moroccan nationality (see Van der Leun and Van der Woude 2011). At the time of writing these lines, MP Geert Wilders (leader of the Dutch Freedom Party) had caused a stir at a local election rally in The Hague when he asked his supporters if they wanted more or fewer Moroccans in the Netherlands. In response they chanted ‘fewer’, to which Wilders replied: ‘We’ll organize that’ (also see the previous chapter). When we combine this with the specific measures that target migrants for control (see my earlier remarks), we may come to understand that law enforcement officials are increasingly pressured to select on the basis of race, ethnicity or nationality.

Compared to other EU countries the length of detention is very long in the Netherlands. In fact, it has no fixed duration and immigrant detention of up to 18 months is not exceptional (Broeders 2010). Moreover, in 2010 6,100 migrants were detained for an average of 76 days without charge or process (Ombudsman 2012).<sup>1</sup> The capacity for immigrant detention has risen from 45 places in 1980 to 3,320 places in 2006, and its share of total prison facilities has equally risen from 9.1% in 1999 to 18.1% in 2006 (Broeders 2010). The number of asylum applications in the Netherlands has dropped more significantly than in other western European countries, from 43,560 in 2000 to about 10,000 in 2003 (Fekete 2005). International institutions like Human Rights Watch, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, the European

Court of Human Rights and the European Court of Justice have recurrently denounced the Dutch government for systematically violating the human rights of asylum seekers (see also De Leeuw and Van Wichelen 2012). This may not come unexpected considering the fact that the Dutch government reached, for instance, a readmission agreement with Iraq (Fekete 2011). Also, in December 2005 news came out that the Dutch Immigration and Naturalization Service (IND) had made it a standard procedure to deliver information gathered during interrogations of asylum seekers from Congo to the Congolese authorities when these asylum seekers were sent back to Kinshasa. Something similar has taken place in the case of asylum seekers from Syria. Whether or not these people survived deportation is unknown. Weber (2002) argued that such mistreatments of asylum seekers may be described as state crime.

Because the enforcement of migration laws is still an administrative rather than criminal justice matter (although this may change soon enough in the Netherlands), it may not be considered an obvious concern for police scholars. However, migration policing is increasingly attaining a 'criminal-justice-like' status (Weber 2002) and the measures that are taken become more and more punitive. In the Netherlands, for example, the conditions in immigrant detention centres are often worse than in regular prison facilities (Broeders 2010). Aside from that, regular Dutch police departments are an integral part of migration policing (see below) and have ample juridical mandates to apprehend migrants who are reasonably suspected of illegal residence (Leerkes et al. 2012b). This makes the line between administrative and criminal justice policing of migrants very thin in this country.

With regard to the second type of internal border control referred to by Leerkes et al. (2012a), we can establish that the Dutch government is equally zealous. Entitlement to public services (social security, housing, health care, etc.) and access to societal institutions (e.g., the labour market or public education) is severely restricted for undocumented migrants, who only have access to legal assistance, emergency health care and education in the case of children under 18. The Netherlands was one of the first countries in the world to make undocumented migrants ineligible for social services and to exclude them from the labour market (Leerkes et al. 2012a). A crucial piece of legislation is the *Koppelingswet* – literally translated as the Linking Act – which has been implemented in 1998 and has amended the Aliens Act and 25 other acts (Minderhoud

2000). It obliges public and semi-public agencies (welfare departments, housing associations, etc.) to check the residence status of their clients, which is registered in the Aliens Administration System of the Aliens Police. Research in the Netherlands has demonstrated that increased vigour in exerting this kind of internal control has pushed undocumented migrants towards subsistence crime and drug-related crime (Leerkes et al. 2012a).

As the opening of this chapter reveals, the two types of internal control that we have distinguished can get merged in practice. As I have observed during my ethnographic study, the very same agencies that are involved with the police in migrant-related activities to regulate the access of migrants to certain services and provisions can also in very unobtrusive ways be involved in dispelling activities. This has to do with the partnerships that exist with the Dutch police, which have a remarkable position if it comes to migration control. Just like for instance the Australian state police (Weber 2011), the Dutch police hold wide-ranging powers with regard to the policing of internal borders. In contrast to many other countries (including the United States), all police officers may apprehend undocumented migrants, regardless of whether they are suspects of a particular crime. Since the early 1990s all police departments have access to the Aliens Administration System. Consequently, between 1997 and 2003 a majority of the apprehensions of unauthorized migrants (in total 107,322) was conducted by the regular police (57% versus 24% by the Aliens Police and 19% by the Military Police; see Leerkes et al. 2012b).

The objective of the next section is to show how different agencies work together to police internal borders on the basis of sustained and thoroughgoing collaborations. An increasingly diverse spectrum of agencies (e.g., housing companies, social service, police, municipalities, youth workers and welfare organizations) are working together and form a microscopic systems of control that uses pervasive surveillance techniques (O'Neill and Loftus 2013). In these 'multi-agency networks' (Weber 2011) or 'constellations of social control professionals' (O'Neill and Loftus 2013) hoards of personal information are shared about people, which extends and intensifies the policing of internal borders.



## Somali immigrants in Tilburg

The particular neighbourhood where my research in Tilburg took place regularly attracts attention from the local and national authorities as well as the press, because of the high percentage of people with a Somali background living in this area (6% versus around 0.6% in the whole city of Tilburg and around 0.15% in the Netherlands; see Vliet et al. 2010). In the papers, this neighbourhood is sometimes framed, rather gracelessly, as the ‘Gaza Strip’ of the Netherlands, because many people living there adhere to Islam. Of the 31,237 Somalis living in the Netherlands, the majority resides in cities like The Hague, Rotterdam, Amsterdam and Tilburg (De Jong and Van der Veen 2011, statistics for the year 2011). However, a remarkable demographic trend can be observed. It is estimated that between 10,000 and 20,000 Somali immigrants have left the Netherlands for the UK since 2000 (Van Liempt 2009). On the basis of narrative interviews with Dutch Somalis in Leicester and London, Van Liempt shows that this might very well have to do with feelings of insecurity and the lack of protection that is experienced by Somali refugees in the Netherlands. One of her interviewees told her about the vulnerability of Somalis in the current political climate of the Netherlands:

‘I really felt at home in the Netherlands, but it is the political climate, the whole country has changed, they keep bothering you about your identity, it is always you, you Muslim, you Somali, they always point at you... It started with September 11, then there was the famous column of Paul Scheffer, what was it called? The multicultural drama, and then it went from one thing to the other, Ayaan Hirsi Ali, Pim Fortuyn, I thought my life is short and I don’t want to be involved anymore, enough is enough. The Netherlands was not the country I knew anymore (quoted in Van Liempt 2009: 259).’<sup>2</sup>

In 2012, I attended a meeting at a community centre in the neighbourhood that involved a group of Somali women and representatives of the police, the municipality and a welfare organization. The police officer who I followed at that time was invited by the municipality to address

security-related matters and discuss them with the women. Although Somali immigrants in Tilburg are not prone to have careers in crime, they are neither seen as useful partners by the police since they almost never report crimes or testify in court. Insofar as police officers find guidance in frames about citizens as partners in the securitization of society, they deem Somali immigrants of relatively little use. This matter was addressed during the meeting. The police department in the neighbourhood is used to framing this distance as a consequence of the cultural attributes of ethnic minorities. During the five months I immersed myself among colleagues of that particular team, it became clear that the distance between the police and Somalis was framed as a problem related to the 'collective culture' of Somalis, who are alleged to easily retire to their communal life when difficulties (e.g., crime) occur. During the meeting, however, another story came to the fore. It turned out that the reluctance of Somalis to make contact with any organization in the criminal justice system had everything to do with traumatic life histories of war and violence; it had nothing to do with cultural characteristics. The majority of these women continued to suffer from the atrocities in their homeland. Their traumatic histories had taught them two lessons for life. Being a witness carries with it the risk of being next, and contacting the police can simply enhance this risk. The way they are treated by the Dutch police had not changed anything, so far, in their experience. In the words of one Somali woman: 'We're already scared if we hear the word police' (interview in 2013).

As stated above, this might also have to do with feelings of being underprotected. For instance, in September 2001 a Somali man was 'beaten up in a bestial manner' by three men in the western quarter of Tilburg (see case file ECLI:NL:RBBRE:2002: AE0485<sup>3</sup>). The next morning around one a.m., they came to his house, blocked the entrance and set the house on fire. The mother of the man survived, but the man himself suffocated from carbon monoxide poisoning. The front of the house was plastered with racial slogans ('White Power') and with Sig Runes (a Nazi symbol). These concrete and symbolic forms of violence had a far-reaching impact on the Somali community in and around Tilburg – not because the culprits were not convicted (they were), but because none of the parties in the criminal justice system would acknowledge that this was an act of racist violence.

While it may be argued that such consternation about racism is a matter of being unduly sensitive, please consider this. When I joined a community officer, John, on the beat in the winter of 2012, we encountered the brother of the murder victim – a homeless and undocumented man who has been lingering in the streets of Tilburg for more than twenty years. We found him half asleep on the sidewalk in a very bad condition, on the threshold of death, so we called an ambulance. When it grew chilly and a light drizzle began to fall, we helped the man to seek some shelter. While waiting for the ambulance to come, the officer asked me not to mention anything in the presence of the ambulance personnel about the man's previous run-ins with the police (he has a substantial police record mainly due to subsistence crimes and misdemeanours, which John framed as a problem related to his homelessness rather than his lawlessness). 'In case they'll find out, they'll leave him on the streets; it has happened before,' he said, implying that with this knowledge in mind, the ambulance personnel would deem the man unworthy of hospital treatment. The ambulance came and I sealed my lips, partly because I wished the man well and did not want to aggravate his condition, but also because I was stunned by what my companion had just told me.

I had no inkling then that the attitude of the ambulance personnel was widespread among police officers in that area. The following reveals something of their punitive mentality. Back at the station I stood transfixed when a police student said: 'Yeah, I know that guy. We sometimes push him in the back of our vehicle and throw him out in the industrial areas' (at the outskirts of Tilburg). A Senior Constable recounted to me in a separate conversation: 'Last time we did this, he managed to get back to the neighbourhood quicker than we did. And we had a car!' Then a Sergeant chimed in: 'They are just waiting for him to die, so that he can no longer cause any trouble or cost any money.' He shrugged his shoulders and walked away. According to the grapevine, these sort of 'micro-deportation' (my term) are a habitual sort of thing.

The recurrent character of this sort of ruthless behaviour was recently confirmed in the news (case file ECLI:NL:RBROT: 2012:BY5955). The case: Two officers from the Rotterdam police receive a message from the operator that a homeless Polish migrant is causing nuisance. When they arrive, the man is sleeping on the grass. The officers decide to wake the man with their clubs, to put him in their vehicle, and to drive to a dead-

end street at the border of the police district where the woods begin. One officer stays to watch over the car and to have a smoke, while the other escorts the Polish man into the woods with a shovel in his hands. Expelling ‘undesirable migrants’ to the outskirts of the district has become a habitual practice within the police unit both officers worked for – it is even known to their superiors. However, this time things seem to take longer than normal. The officer who stayed behind starts looking for his colleague and has to go deep into the woods to witness what the papers now call a ‘fake execution’. His colleague is standing behind the Polish man, who is kneeled to the ground with the shovel in front of him, and holds him at gunpoint. Apparently, it was all for show to make sure that the Polish man would never return to ‘their district’. (More than three years later, the criminal charges that were brought against the two officers resulted in jail sentences of several months).

These men are framed as ‘social junk’ (Spitzer 1975), that is, as good-for-nothings not even worthy of sparing a glance. The Somali man was seen as someone who has fallen through the cracks in the social system and who can be categorized as a source of nuisance upon which strictures and repressive measures can be imposed, apparently without constraints. ‘Fallen through’ may still sound a bit too passive – in many ways the system, as discussed in previous sections, is exactly designed to deprive undocumented migrants of rights and services and to discourage them from staying on Dutch soil, even to the point that some start to ‘self-deport’ (see Coutin 2011).

That is, just like some of the relatives of the women I spoke with in the community centre, the mother of the Somali man (and the murder victim) fled the country and started a new life abroad. She is one of the 10,000 to 20,000 Dutch Somalis Van Liempt (2009) referred to, who left the Netherlands for the UK. Her experiences may relate closely to what Weber (2002) called a ‘second exile’, which asylum seekers may experience in the country where they seek refuge when they go through the things described above. We should be alert to the possibility that such experiences may be induced by Dutch ‘discouragement policies’ (Minderhoud 2000) that are translated in increasingly zealous forms of migration policing and that fuel migrant-hostile discourses (at the Aliens Police and the DT&V immigration officers carelessly spoke about ‘fortune hunters’, ‘Liegerians’ and ‘asylum shoppers’).<sup>4</sup>

### **Internal border control all around**

The previous subsection already demonstrates that different organizations can get involved in street-level policing of internal borders, a form of policing that may have palpable effects on those who are policed. People who are perceived as deviant, poor and marginal become unworthy of medical treatment, easy targets for ‘micro-deportation’ and are framed as cultural others who are to be kept bay. The involvement of multiple organizations in the policing of internal borders does not only come about spontaneously; increasingly it is orchestrated. We will return to the homeless man of the previous subsection to illustrate this. For convenience, we will call him Abdi.

Abdi was born in Ethiopia in 1957 and had lived for years in Somalia. He arrived in the Netherlands in 1992 and applied for asylum. In July 1997, he appeared on a list of the IND as a candidate for deportation to Somalia (people who are, are given the status *verwijderbaar*, that is, ‘removable’). He was on it until October 1997, but the deportation never occurred. For October 2004 another – this time escorted – deportation was planned to Somalia, and Abdi got detained a few months earlier. In September 2004, the court decided that he had to be immediately released and had right to a financial compensation of 1,600 euros. After this event he made several attempts to get hold of a residence permit, but without success. On 27 July 2006, he is declared to be an ‘undesirable foreigner’ and is again detained. Almost a year later, in June 2007, he is released again for there is no prospect of deportation because of the unstable situation in Somalia and the psychoses from which he suffers. His run-ins with the police start in 1993, mainly because of subsistence crime and misdemeanours. Because of his illegal status he has no rights to any kind of public assistance and is barely able to subsist.

Indicative of the pervasiveness of contemporary surveillance methods is the fact that the previous information comes not from Abdi himself but from a report titled ‘Problem Approach in Security Networks: Project [Abdi]’. This report, which is specifically about Abdi, was written by a police officer who distributed it among several network partners with whom she intended to collaborate in order to tackle ‘the problem [Abdi]’ (literal citation). These partners are the municipality, a regional mental health care institution and the so-called Care and Security House of Tilburg (*Zorg- en Veiligheidshuis*, a collaboration of 20 partner organizations in the public and private sector). Such security networks have

emerged throughout the Netherlands and are best described as what O'Neill and Loftus (2013) call 'constellations of social control professionals'. Through these partnerships hoards of private information and personal data about specific individuals and families are collected and shared to intensify surveillance and, sometimes, policing. For example, a senior employee working for *Bemoeizorg* (best translated as 'Meddle-Care', a collaboration of four welfare and health care organizations that 'meddle' in people's private lives if they disturb the public order but refuse to accept help) said in an interview:

'We are often visiting [people at home] in pairs with external partners [like cops] and use the "good-guy/bad-guy principle." The other one is exerting pressure in the sense of, if you don't do this then you are evicted from your house, you lose your entitlement to social benefits, you get locked up and so on. And then we come: "Perhaps I can help you to do this or that."' (interview 2013)

Similar tactics were used on Abdi. In the report 'Project [Abdi]' we can read that the initial attempt to put pressure on him was by overwhelming him with financial penalties. It reports on an interaction between a patrol unit and Abdi on the streets, which was registered in the Police Information System (BVH):

'[The unit encountered Abdi with beer cans] We asked him if these were his, to which he answered "no". When we attempted to dispose of the cans he shouted "fuck you police". We handcuffed him... At the same time some shoppers from the shopping precinct headed in our direction. To our surprise they supported us and were glad that something was done against the nuisance [Abdi] is always causing... Unfortunately, [Abdi] had nothing on his name. He was sent away with a bunch of other *mini's* [police language for petty criminals].'

When it turned out that this strategy was not working because Abdi often simply could not pay off unsettled fines, we read in the report, the network decided together with the Public Prosecutor that fines were to be more swiftly converted into an irrevocable restraint on freedom. One of the arguments given is that by fixating his location it becomes easier to

administer his medication. Prison is the only intramural facility where this is possible, it is argued, because none of the mental health care organizations is willing to admit Abdi. Medication is seen as key to the solution of ‘problem Abdi’ because – in the words of the author of the report:

‘Even though he will still have to scrape out a living, he will no longer fall into a psychosis and start screaming to and spitting on people and grabbing them and chasing them.’

In an outstanding article about the sociolegal aspects of Law and Order, Bauman argued that ‘spatial confinement, incarceration of varying degrees of stringency and harshness, was at all times the prime method of dealing with the unassimilable, difficult to control, and otherwise trouble-prone sector of the population’ (2000a: 208). However, in what he calls the ‘post-correction age’, prisons increasingly become factories of exclusion rather than places for correction and rehabilitation. In the poignant example of Abdi, this is pointedly demonstrated. Seemingly, the majority of the ‘professionals’ working with Abdi really don’t care about his destitution, but only about his troublesome behaviour and what it does to ‘innocent’ others. Isolating him from ‘the innocent’ is deemed more important than working on the legal and economic conditions that obviously make rehabilitation a sheer impossibility.

Bauman states that order maintenance is increasingly occurring by resort to a paradigm of exclusion, a paradigm in which mobility (immobility) has become a key indicator of inclusion (exclusion). It is evident that Abdi ranks lowest at what Bauman (1998) calls the ‘hierarchy of mobility’. Not only does he have no place to go and finds himself in a legal limbo (he cannot be deported to Somalia, nor can he legally reside on Dutch territory or move on to other European countries due to the Dublin Agreement); he has also spent many years of his life in jails and immigrant detention facilities, waiting for others to decide about the course of his life. So, that spatial confinement varies in degrees of stringency and harshness, as Bauman argues, is indeed clear. In the case of Abdi, several kinds of laws play a role. Immigration laws *de facto* make sure that his life is enclosed by the boundaries of the Dutch state and criminal laws are regularly enforced to enclose his life with prison walls.

But more is going on still. We will – by way of concluding this section – also look at the role of by-laws.

Somali immigrants in Tilburg are known to occupy their time chewing Qat in public places such as parks.<sup>5</sup> Qat is a mild drug that has a sedating effect but also causes insomnia, apathy, ill temper and stress (De Jong and Van der Veen 2011). At the time of this research Qat was an illegal product almost everywhere in Europe but not in the Netherlands. It was only in 2013 that Qat was added to the opium list by the Dutch Minister of Security and Justice and had become an illegal product in the Netherlands (*Staatsblad van het Koninkrijk der Nederlanden, Jaargang 2013, nr. 1*). However, in the neighbourhood in Tilburg where I conducted my field research, it was already forbidden by means of a local zoning ordinance. This ordinance had imposed severe restrictions on the trade and consumption of Qat in this area, forcing traders and users to conduct their business at the industrial compounds surrounding the neighbourhood. (Notably, these are the same compounds Abdi was expelled to by police officers. We could wonder whether their minds were set by these sorts of policy interventions).

Such a zoning ordinance is yet another example of internal border control, a form of control that draws boundaries by dispelling ‘unwanted others’ to areas that are largely invisible to law-abiding folks. And again, we see that multiple parties are involved in the exertion of control: citizens, the municipality and the police. Here is why the ordinance was implemented several years ago. A group of Somali men had assembled in a park in the neighbourhood to chew Qat and to socialize. Abdi was present too and, since he is homeless, defecated in public. This event was photographed by a group of (native Dutch) neighbourhood residents, who forwarded the photos to a district manager working for the municipality. Via this district manager the photos reached the mayor, who was already at that time known to be severely opposed to Qat (he called it a ‘noxious product’ according to a municipal official who I interviewed) and not particularly circumspect about his views on migrants (in 2010 he resigned and became Minister of Security and Justice, a position that enabled him to implement many of the migrant-hostile policies discussed in the previous section). Soon thereafter the local zoning ordinance was effectuated. According to a police officer, the mayor regularly called with the police department to make sure that officers would vigorously crack down on Qat-related activities in their neighbourhood. Such a strict



policy is remarkable for a country that is known for its liberal drugs policies.

A case like this not only reveals new forms of vigilantism that are encouraged by the local authorities through all kinds of citizen-participation initiatives and that may have a serious impact on internal borders, as we see. It also shows the profound impact of by-laws on how in this case Somali immigrants experience their ‘right to the city’ (Harvey 2012) and communal life within it. Regretting its past housing policies that brought together large families (which Somali immigrants in Tilburg generally have) in particular neighbourhoods, the municipality is now actively dispersing migrant groups (interview with municipal officials in 2013). The local ordinance banning Qat may have had exactly this function. De facto it counters group formation of Somalis in the neighbourhood *and* simultaneously gives police officers an extra reason to stop and frisk them. If the stop reveals that the person lacks legal status, this may even result in what Dutch police officers call a ‘by-catch’ – a coincidental apprehension of an undocumented migrant (Leerkes et al. 2012b).

## **Thickening borderlands**

The preceding has made it clear, I hope, that tense relations between the police and migrants cannot so easily be reduced to the intrapsychic misrepresentations of migrants by individual police officers. At least not in the Netherlands, where officers work in a web of relations that is spun by a wide range of agencies, including their own, who have come to behave in increasingly migrant-hostile ways and are deeply involved with the policing of internal borders. This renders the response of the senior management of the Dutch police to the Amnesty report about ethno-racial profiling inadequate and problematic. By way of concluding this chapter I wish to point at potential synergies between criminological and anthropological work on the policing of migration and the policing of internal borders.

The best of anthropological work on this topic is distinguished by a sincere concern with what De Genova (2002) calls the experience of illegality and ‘deportability’ in everyday life, that is, the palpable sense

that deportation is always a possibility. For some people boundaries are virtually everywhere because mundane activities such as working, learning, driving, residing, or traveling are turned into illicit acts due to a person's illegal status. As a result, physical and social mobility are severely restricted because deportation becomes a possible risk in every sphere of life (De Genova 2002). This signifies a form of captivity for which prison walls become unnecessary. In the words of De Genova, it 'reproduces the physical borders of nation-states in the everyday life of innumerable places throughout the interiors of the migrant-receiving states' (2002: 439).

Whereas in the present chapter we have mainly looked at the agency perspective, excellent anthropological works such as Gonzales and Chavez (2012) and Willen (2007) have focused on the experiences of undocumented immigrants in, respectively, the United States and Israel, who have been deprived of fundamental rights and rudimentary social entitlements and lack any protection from the law. Gonzales and Chavez have scrutinized what they call the biopolitics of citizenship and governmentality that works through 'surveillance, immigration documents, employment forms, birth certificates, tax forms, drivers' licences, credit card applications, bank accounts, medical insurance, car insurance, random detentions, and deportations' (2012: 255) and that frustrate the lives of 1.5 generation Latinos in Orange County through physical and social immobilization. As a consequence, they live 'liminal lives' that unfold *in* the nation but are deemed unworthy to *be part of* the nation. Just as Abdi's, their lives are literally 'on hold'. Similar conclusions have been drawn by Willen (2007) who conducted 26 months of field research in Israel on undocumented West African and Filipino migrants in Tel Aviv. She tells the stories of the undocumented who live underground lives and try to hide their bodies from what they perceive to be an omnipresent gaze.

To capture these experiences in academic language, Rosas' (2006) concept of 'thickening borderlands' may be preferred to the notion of 'internal borders'. On the basis of ethnographic research in the Mexico-US borderlands, Rosas insists – very much in line with the policing of migration/internal borders literature – that the border can no longer be seen as geographically fixed (see also Rosas 2012). But in my view, his notion better captures the embodied experience of (in particular, but not exclusively, undocumented) migrants who are immobilized and stuck in

their locality. Their lives become slow, inert and sclerotic under pressure of an increasingly thickening control apparatus that keeps them in check and in place. For example, Gonzales and Chavez as well as Willen report about people who dare not come out of their dwellings, too afraid of being captured.

For those of us who wish to understand this notion of thickening borderlands, a collaboration of criminologists and anthropologists can be beneficial. Traditionally, anthropologists have always been equipped with the necessary research instruments and conceptual tools to understand how the broader processes of marginalization, abjection and disconnection become operational and are experienced in the everyday lives of people, often in palpable forms of physical and emotional harm (e.g., Rodgers and O'Neill 2012). An authoritative example of this is the special issue on 'infrastructural violence' in the journal *Ethnography* (see Ferguson 2012; Rodgers and O'Neill 2012). Its contributors compellingly show how destitution and deprivation often come about through exclusion from important infrastructures (at a subsistence level, including things such as water, electricity, wires, pipes and buildings, but also at a more advanced level, such as exclusion from the infrastructures of the city's public places). For homeless and 'illegal' people like Abdi, it is exactly through the working of such infrastructural violence that thickening borders become operational and palpable. Because of the physical closeness to their informants, anthropologists are in a good position to 'remind us that social suffering is often experienced in material terms' (Rodgers and O'Neill 2012: 405).

Criminologists and sociolegal scholars on the other hand can make important contributions by showing how a certain infrastructural order that develops in the thickening borderlands, is held in check by legal apparatuses. To be able to do so, it is important to remember that migrant 'illegality' is in fact a legal production. As De Genova writes: "Illegality" are constituted and regimented by the law... with a considerable degree of calculated deliberation' (De Genova 2002: 424). Understanding the sociolegal and historical contexts of these deliberations is important to counter naturalized and reified notions of 'illegality'. I believe that when criminologists and anthropologists combine their work on this topic, this can make for a powerful synergy.

This synergy is badly needed. Allow me to finish this chapter by way of briefly discussing a case that came to my attention during fieldwork in Amsterdam (see also Mutsaers 2014d).

During my time in Amsterdam West, I was told by a Superintendent about one of his darling projects for which he'd managed to secure a substantial budget from the Ministry of Security and Justice. 'PsyCops,' as the project was named, is a play on the military term PsyOps (Psychological Operations). PsyOps, as Ben Anderson (2011: 217) observes, is a known military strategy that weaponizes information and aims at 'cultural symbols that elicit intense emotional reactions in audiences that are important within the target society (achievement, power, affiliation, intimacy, unity) to express the desired message.' It's a strategy of indoctrination and manipulation which is simultaneously used to gather new intelligence. It has been frequently applied by armed forces in war-torn countries such as Iraq and Afghanistan.

The Superintendent defended the idea that PsyOps was also applicable in the officers' own backyard. Amsterdam West has one of the highest percentages of non-western ethnic minority residents in the Netherlands. Many of these residents, according to the Superintendent, are 'trouble-prone' and overrepresented in crime statistics (in his experience – it is not a standard procedure in the Netherlands to link crime statistics and ethnic background of suspects or delinquents). Contacts between the police and ethnic minority juveniles are highly problematic (as we have seen in the previous chapter), with police brutality and ethno-racial profiling as features of daily life in the neighbourhood. In an interview, the Superintendent told me:

'I want to know everything about them. Knowledge is power. So, for instance, I have a Moroccan target group. I want to know: where do their parents come from, exactly? Which specific areas? What kind of religion do they adhere to? Who has contact with whom?'

In his desire to know all about kinship ties, political networks and the innermost aspects of the lives of these people in order to optimize policing, he started to collaborate with the army and military personnel was sent into the neighbourhood to observe the four 'target groups' in the area: people originating (and presumed to be originating) from Morocco,

Turkey, Surinam and the Dutch Antilles. In an official document (the ‘Plan of Action’) I accessed through my research, it was stated that information (‘intelligence’) needs to be gathered about kinship ties, political affiliations, cultural values, religion, race, gender, age and so forth. Such information was deemed necessary to determine what ‘lines of persuasion’ would be most successful to ‘influence target groups psychologically.’ Subsequently, an analysis is made of the ‘weaknesses’ – ‘lost integrity’ is given as an example – of a target group, which is also deemed to be useful information for such kind of manipulation.

In short, what we’re facing here is a full-blown psychological operation, jointly executed by the police and the military, against non-western minorities in a Dutch neighbourhood. It’s obvious that this boils down to nothing less than a thickening of borderlands. The instruments at hand are so indoctrinating that those who are inflicted feel that their whole body, spirit and mind are together, watchful, and that their awareness is *on* all the time (Tali 2014).

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> Immigrant detention is regulated by administrative law in the Netherlands. Weber (2011: 15) warned long ago that ‘administrative law is said to occupy a “hybrid space” which can provide “unprecedented powers” to agencies under a fiction that they are not engaged in criminal investigations but administrative actions.’ The 6,100 immigrant detainees referred to were not brought to court because they fell beyond the bounds of the criminal justice system.

<sup>2</sup> Some of these names may require explication for those who are not familiar with the changing political climate in the Netherlands. Paul Scheffer is a Dutch publicist and member of the Labour Party (PvdA) who is famous for his newspaper column *Het Multiculturele Drama* (‘The Multicultural Drama’, 2000) which signalled a more generalized enthusiasm for the dissemination of national awareness, meant to reinforce Dutch culture and nationalism as a prerequisite for dealing successfully with migrants in the Netherlands. Former MP Ayaan Hirsi Ali (VVD) became a controversial subject of debate in the Dutch press after she released a short film, *Submission*, with Theo van Gogh (a controversial filmmaker and columnist who was murdered in 2004 by a radicalized Muslim) about the submission of Islamic women. Pim Fortuyn was a famous politician who acquired fame and popularity due to his anti-immigration politics. He was murdered too, in May 2002.

<sup>3</sup> The court file can be found at <http://uitspraken.rechtspraak.nl>.

<sup>4</sup> DT&V is the Dutch Repatriation and Departure Service. The word 'Liegerians' was first recorded during an interview with the Aliens Police. It merges the words 'lie' and 'Nigerian' and is used broadly to imply that migrants from the African continent generally lie about their descent to lessen the risk of being deported.

<sup>5</sup> The official name of Qat is *Catha Edulis*, a chewing tobacco from the Horn of Africa and the Arabian Peninsula.

## 6 Craftsmanship

The question is not whether men-in-general make perceptual distinctions between groups with different racial or ethnic characteristics, but rather, what are the specific conditions which make this form of distinction socially pertinent, historically active. What gives this abstract human potential its effectivity, as a concrete material force?

*Stuart Hall, in Race Critical Theories: Text and Context, 2002*

‘On the 16 of July 2009, Cambridge, Massachusetts police Sergeant James Crowley arrested Harvard professor Henry Louis Gates Jr, a prominent African-American scholar of race, literature and history who serves as Director of the W.E.B. Du Bois Institute for African and African-American Research. Sergeant Crowley, although white and named after an Irish militant nationalist, identified strongly with new post-racial professional norms and was described as a leader in implementing anti-racist reforms within a racially integrated police department. In fact, Sgt Crowley had been promoted by a black mayor of Cambridge; and a black police chief of Lowell chose the Sergeant to lead a training course on ending practices of racial profiling within the police, which he had done since 2004. But at Professor Gates’ front door, the achievements of decades of police reforms around race seemed to evaporate.

In an emergency call to the police, a neighbour had reported seeing two men possibly attempting to open the door to Gates’ house. In fact, the men in question were Gates and his driver, who were simply prying loose a screen door that was stuck. The cautious neighbour had not reported the men as black and had underlined that they might, in fact, be residents of the home. But when the

police operator relayed the message to the officers on duty, the operator raised the urgency level by misstating that the neighbour had reported two black men breaking in. When Sgt Crowley arrived, Gates was already inside and settled in his own home. The officer demanded to enter and ordered Gates to produce his identification. Gates complied, but also angrily demanded to see Crowley's identification and badge number. Crowley refused to comply and decided to punish Gates for his pride. Crowley did not, it would seem, draw upon his own sensitivity training and the new values of anti-racist professionalism that he had taught others for so long. Crowley arrested the professor in Gates' own home, charging him with a baseless disorderly conduct charge that was dropped after Gates spent a few hours in jail.' (Amar 2010: 575-576)



This short narrative on what can easily be imagined to have been a disconcerting event in that particular location in the United States, can be found in Paul Amar's contribution to a special issue in the journal *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, titled *New Racial Missions of Policing: International Perspectives on Evolving Law-Enforcement Politics*. I was led back to it for another reading right after the fatal shooting of the 17-year old Rishi Chandrikasing by a police officer at a railway station in The Hague (November 24, 2013). This railway station borders with a neighbourhood (*de Schilderswijk*) that is known for its multi-ethnic population (it consists for more than 85% of non-Western ethnic minorities; CBS 2012b) and is notorious for the tense relations between the police and ethnic minority residents. A regional news agency which had interviewed police officers who had quit working at the police station in this area, reported on disproportionate police violence directed against ethnic minority juveniles. When it was broadcasted in 2013, the mayor of The Hague responded by saying that he saw no need to further investigate this matter and assured the Commissioner at location that he could count on his full support.<sup>1</sup> The officer who pulled the trigger – while Chandrikasing was running away after being ordered to nail his feet to the ground – was acquitted after being charged by the family of the young boy for murder. A police controversy was born.



Just like Sergeant Crowley, the officer who shot the young Chandrikasing must have had excellent training in ‘post-racial professional norms’ and ‘values of anti-racist professionalism’, since all Dutch police officers receive ‘multicultural craftsmanship’ training (see Chapter 2). In fact, among other public sector institutions the Dutch police stand out in terms of the amount of time, money and energy that is spent on sensitivity training, awareness training and other sorts of diversity training. Apart from the multicultural craftsmanship training that has become an integral part of the curriculum offered at the Police Academy, all of the police forces in which I have worked have developed diversity trainings on their own initiative. In addition to the LECD, regional and local diversity expert groups have mushroomed in the third millennium.

The point of introducing professor Gates’ ordeal in combination with the shooting of Chandrikasing is to draw Amar’s argument into the Dutch context. He argues that, paradoxically, racial and ethnic distinctions become increasingly salient in policing at a time that ‘diversity and anti-racial profiling campaigns [have] become central to defining norms of police professionalism’ (Amar 2010: 578). According to Amar this is so for a significant part due to the nature of sensitivity and awareness trainings, which focus on the cognitive and psychological aspects of race and ethnicity only. Such a unilateral focus is highly inadequate, as we have seen in previous chapters, because they neglect the context factors (the background expectancies, the frames) that fuel ethnic boundaries in policing. In this chapter we will take his argument one step further. Not only are these cognitive and psychological trainings inadequate as solutions; they may be core to the problem because they tend to dissolve the boundary between officers’ private lives and their lives at work. They blur distinctions between selves and roles, personality and officialdom, and draw officers’ personal lives into the core of the organization. Correspondingly, they may in fact fuel the ventilation of personal prejudice and ill-temper at work.

We will first briefly turn to the notion of craftsmanship and then analyse one particular multicultural craftsmanship training which took place in the police district of Tilburg.

## **A few notes on craftsmanship**

It is misleading, writes Richard Sennett (2008), to suggest that craftsmanship is a way of life that waned with the advent of industrial society. He defines craftsmanship as ‘an enduring, basic human impulse, the desire to do a job well for its own sake’ (2008: 9) and sees the craftsman as someone representing ‘the special human condition of being engaged’ (2008: 20). The possibility of doing work like a craft is by no means bound to a particular historical period – and to speak of craftsmanship in relation to a present-day working environment (such as the contemporary Dutch police), cannot automatically be disqualified as speaking about a misplaced anachronism. What’s more, there are all kinds of craftsmanship. Sennett (2006) adds among others ‘mental’ and ‘social’ craftsmanship to the common notion of it as a manual thing. If ‘doing a job well for its own sake’ would be the only standard, a police officer who does so could be considered a (social) craftsman.

It is, however, not the only standard. C. Wright Mills described a fully idealized model of craftsmanship on the basis of six major features:

‘There is no ulterior motive in work other than the product being made and the processes of its creation. The details of daily work are meaningful because they are not detached in the worker’s mind from the product of the work. The worker is free to control his own working action. The craftsman is thus able to learn from his work; and to use and develop his capacities and skills in its prosecution. There is no split of work and play, or work and culture. The craftsman’s way of livelihood determines and infuses his entire mode of living.’ (1951: 220)

It is obvious that according to these standards, police work cannot and should not be seen as craftsmanship. Salaried policemen and women can never meet its ideal. Granted, they too can develop themselves on the job and such self-development can be the cumulative result obtained by devotion to and practice of certain skills. There is a dialectic between doing and learning. And yes, in certain ways police officers are always on duty, even if their official workday is over (although, in general, they need to sell their services in order to subsist). To a certain extent they even

bring to their non-working hours the values and prestige of work. But by no means can we state that police officers are free to control their own working conditions and are free to work according to their own plan. This would boil down to nothing less than a privatization of violence. It is clear that police officers administer a justice that they do not invent themselves. In that sense, conception and action are far removed from one another (for the craftsman they entwine). Finally, for all kinds of reasons officers *should* experience a split between work and play, office and home. This does not only protect officers (see the cases of Mo and Abder in Chapter 4); it also protects the public (see the previous chapter).

And yet, it has been exactly the intention of the Police Academy of the Netherlands to blur such boundaries. Sjiera de Vries, former Reader in Multicultural Craftsmanship & Diversity at the Police Academy, has persistently argued in favour of an ‘inclusive identity’ in the sense that officers are encouraged not to shut out their personal and cultural identities when coming to work (De Vries 2010). In line with the ASPIRE-model discussed by Haslam et al. (2003) in the *Journal of Occupational Psychology*, it is argued that:

‘By leaving room within the organizational culture to social and personal identities and the corresponding expressions, involvements and interests, chances for a successful organization are optimized.’ (De Vries 2010: 78)

In the next section we will see how this works out.

### **Cultural sensitivity trainings: *Qui bono?***

On March 4, 2013, I find myself in a community centre in Tilburg, where I join a group of police officers for the first day of the training Multicultural Craftsmanship and Honour-Related Violence. Around 20 to 25 officers and a police manager partake in the sessions of this day and the next (the training is given to four groups from the same police unit – each coming together for two days – to keep the number of participants per group small enough to allow for meaningful interaction). It deserves note that the training was given by three police officers. Be it also said in

passing that the instructors work for the same police unit as the course participants.

The training equates closely with a training that Belgium police officers received more than twenty years ago and upon which Blommaert and Verschueren (1993) commented in their outstanding article *The Rhetoric of Tolerance or, What Police Officers are Taught About Migrants*. Both trainings aimed to ‘provide useful practical information on how to “deal” with migrants constructively’ and to ‘heighten the awareness of and appreciation for difference’ among police officers (Blommaert and Verschueren 1993: 51). Just like the Belgium training, however, the training that is presently under scrutiny suffered from an internal contradiction in the sense that an incongruity existed between the professed intentions of the instructors and the overall message that was conveyed. Exposing this contradiction is done by subjecting the data (in total 16 hours of training) to a content analysis from the perspective of presentation and response, just like Blommaert and Verschueren did.

The training took place on March 4 and 5, 2013. A carnival of activities, both serious and relaxed, were organized, such as a general introduction in cultural theory, a visit to a Mosque, a film, an introduction in honour-related violence, a multicultural lunch, a card game, a lecture about ethnic profiling, and several visits from youth workers and a welfare organization. Discussing all these activities is beyond the scope of this chapter. I will concentrate on the two that I deem most important: the introduction in cultural theory and the lecture about ethnic profiling. Chapter 8 will bring us to the part about honour-related violence.

On Monday morning the female instructor kicks-off with an introduction into culture (or ‘cultural theory’):

‘Well, the first part, “explaining culture,” that’s what I am going to do. Our goal for today is to come to an intercultural approach. Well, that word says a lot and that’s why I added this picture of a helicopter [to the PowerPoint slides]. Because the goal of this course, what we hope you will learn, is to oversee a certain situation. You hang above it like a helicopter and become aware of your own situation, your culture, what you bring to it [the situation]. And that you become aware “okay, what sort of culture is this with which am I about to engage?”... First, we are going to look at a film. It’s an old film about a primary school in The Hague, in the

*Schilderswijk*. A neighbourhood with a lot of allochtonous persons just like in this neighbourhood. We shall talk a lot in this course about Middle-Eastern culture and Arabic culture. Why? Because these are the cultures that simply are the furthest removed from us.'

What struck me immediately was the haphazardness of the instructor's talk. Within one minute she talked about intercultural approaches, a film project in The Hague, 'Middle-Eastern culture', 'Arabic culture,' and helicopters. What's more, when she talked about how she came to the particular sort of 'cultural theory' she deemed appropriate for the training, haphazardness was again the first word that sprang to mind:

'We went on the internet to google culture and I can tell you, you'll find a lot. A lot of people the world over have said something about culture. It really depends on what you choose, things that suit you, things you want to say something about. I've chosen Geert Hofstede, because I think this is the easiest way to understand culture. We begin with a definition. First, culture is a system of values and norms that changes over time. Values and norms are very important, which is why we have a separate slide about them. [...] For people, culture is often subconsciously guiding their behaviour. You only become aware of your own culture once you are confronted with another. This is why we will talk extensively about Middle-Eastern culture and Arabic culture, because they are the furthest removed from us. Much more than for instance Oisterwijk and Hilvarenbeek [two surrounding villages]. Well, what Hofstede says is that culture is a mental programming of a group of people, which distinguishes them from other people. What I think he means with this programming is that in the first seven years of your life, culture is programmed in your brain.'

During a preparation talk that I had with the three course instructors before the course started, it became clear to me that all three of them had an inexorable drive to put ethnic profiling, and migrant-hostile policing more generally, to an end in order to do justice to the individuality of citizens. Despite my attempts to warn them that their cultural theories were dated and might in fact be foreordained to counter their objectives,

they went through with it nonetheless. They paid me no heed. They wanted to counter ethnic profiling, but tried to do so by using generalizing, static and essentialist culture theories that have been set aside by anthropologists as the kind of ‘culturespeak’ (Hannerz 1999) or ‘cultural essentialism’ (Grillo 2003) that has done more harm than good in the sense that they have actually fuelled ‘groupist thinking’ (Brubaker 2002). The statements of the female course instructor about ‘Arabic culture’ and ‘Middle Eastern culture’ make this very clear. The premise of this kind of ‘culturism’ (Schinkel 2010) includes an ‘apriorism’ (cf. Blommaert 1996) that makes culture an important factor in any kind of situation (thus, independent of the circumstances in which it emerges). Blommaert suggested almost 20 years ago that these sort of intercultural trainings are to be approached as ethnicization strategies that provoke a heightened awareness of cultural identities. It comes as no surprise then that officers take culture to be always relevant in their interactions with minorities. In response to the course instructor’s account, one officer (white, in his fifties) said:

Officer: ‘The problem [with minorities] is insoluble and we should leave it like that.’

Instructor: ‘An insoluble problem that we should leave like that? Why is it insoluble?’

Officer: ‘Because you have two cultures that will never seek the rapprochement we would like them to seek... Those people have a completely different background. You can live with it, but you can’t solve it.’

The instructor made several attempts to show that the officer was fundamentally off base, but did not succeed to convince him or the others because of the inbuilt limits of the course itself. What the officer said was already pre-packaged for him by the instructor, who had lumped together an immense variety of people under the name ‘Middle Eastern’ or ‘Arabic culture’ and had created a stark opposition between ‘them’ and ‘us’. Despite the fact that she was obviously agitated by the (unexpected?) response of the officer, she continued with her general introduction in cultural theory by juxtaposing ‘we cultures’ (where the social fabric is all-important) and ‘I cultures’ (where personal development is primary). In line with Hofstede’s cultural dimensions (e.g., Hofstede and Bond 1984),

‘Middle Eastern’ and ‘Arabic cultures’ were pitted against ‘Dutch culture’ on the basis of several indices. For instance, the former were said to score high on the power distance index compared to the latter. ‘Middle Eastern’ and ‘Arabic cultures’ were portrayed as highly collectivistic; ‘Dutch culture’ as individualistic. Allegedly, those belonging to the former have a short-term focus whereas those belong to the latter are more interested in long-term achievements. By combining these indices (no actual scores were ever used; the outcome was simply taken for granted) an explanation was eventually given of the criminal behaviour of Moroccan-Dutch youngsters in the Netherlands. They steal because they have a short-term focus and do not think about the future, and they are all prone to do it because of the collective nature of their culture (another ludicrous comparison was made with Turkish-Dutch people who do have a long-term focus, because they tend to start their own business).

After the problems with ‘Moroccan youth’ (which is an umbrella term often used by police officers to denote people who seem to come from North Africa – Amsterdam police officers use the rather derogatory term ‘NAFer’, that is, *Noord Afrikaan*) was cast in an extremely generalizing mould, it was up to one of the other instructors to actually counter stereotypes. Playfully, the instructor started with a PowerPoint slide on which the participants saw a picture of Wally (from the series of children’s books *Where is Wally*). According to the instructor this (searching for Wally) has a lot of resemblances with everyday police work. He asked the participants to list a number of traits of their ‘usual suspects’.

- ‘Drives a dark Volkswagen Polo.’
- ‘Between 15 and 25 years old.’
- ‘Wearing a hood sweater or a cap.’
- ‘Coloured skin.’
- ‘Moroccan.’
- ‘African.’
- ‘Run away when we come’ (laughter).
- ‘Scooter.’
- ‘Indifferent facial expression.’

Obviously, the instructor had opted for this method to make people aware of the fact that they were involved in stigmatic framing activities

and that things ought to be done differently. To reinforce his message, he shared some of his own experiences (as a Turkish-Dutch police officer). One day when he was working for a specialist unit dealing with habitual offenders, he had lunch with a colleague, both being dressed in civilian clothes. Another colleague, who both officers did not know personally, was telling about a bicycle theft. When he (the instructor) was pressing for details, he was told that it was none of his business. He was not recognized as a colleague. His interlocutor thought he had come to repair the elevator. Another event. Our instructor and John, who appeared in the previous chapter, arrived at the precinct station to pick up a suspect. Both officers came in civilian clothes. The desk officer frowned upon John when the latter informed whether the suspect had already arrived. The desk officer pointed to our instructor, saying that he was standing right behind him. The instructor to his public:

‘And that’s all right. We are all people. We all have assumptions. That’s all fine, this is just about raising awareness. A little while ago there was a symposium about ethnic profiling [October 11, 2012, in Amsterdam]. An Antillean colleague who works and lives in Rotterdam, and drives a Volkswagen Polo, had been checked 1200 times by Rotterdam police officers when he was off-duty, in six years! Gradually it came to a point that he considered this to be very irritating. He went to his Commissioner of Police, who advised him to buy another car and to move to another neighbourhood. Which he did. What are your thoughts on this?’

A male police officer:

‘Recognizable. We do it all the time with our roadblocks, by saying to some people “you can go through, because you don’t belong to our target group.”’

Most of the course participants nodded in assent. To my surprise the instructor answered again in a very mild and understanding way:

‘And that’s okay, as a policeman you have to start somewhere. I’m not saying that this is good or bad.’



It was one of the course participants, not the instructor, who stressed that not all was good under the sun:

‘Yeah, okay, but sometimes Moroccan youngsters are treated like animals.’

Since the officer who made this claim was young and was recently transferred from another police force, the instructor asked other young colleagues how they experienced this.

‘Sebastian, when you came here, how did you do things?’

‘Well, I worked with the wrong people and we just stopped and searched people for the sake of it (*gewoon controleren om te controleren*).’

‘So [said the instructor] this is about taking your own responsibility.’

As I stated a few pages back, all three instructors had an inexorable drive to counter ethnic profiling and migrant-hostile relations in policing more generally. When I joined them for an informal course evaluation at the end of the second day, they turned out to be very upset about all the things that went awfully wrong during these two days and about the fierce resistance that they had met. Their drive was not the problem; the problem could not be reduced to individual motivations or psychological strength. Rather, their troubles were of a substantial, organizational, and interactional nature.

We can go back to Blommaert and Verschueren (1993) to understand the substantiality of the problem. There was a clear discrepancy between the intentions of the instructors (countering groupism) and the overall message that they conveyed (which in fact consolidated groupism). This had to do with the kind of cultural theory that was made available as a framework for officers to work with; a framework in which the mental programming of cultural groups takes a central role. From there it is just a small step to arguing that ‘Moroccan youth’ steal because they are mentally programmed as cultural members to be short-term oriented and therefore incapable of envisioning a long-term future. This is a sub-

stantial problem that persists as long as improvised diversity trainings are given that are based upon cul-de-sac theories which are extracted from the internet.

Secondly, we can identify an organizational problem. Evidently, the selection of poor cultural theory, which furthermore conflicted with the overall aim of the course, had much to do with the poorly coordinated and decentralized way in which the training had come about and was organized. Three people from the executive field of policing, who lacked insights in cultural theories and experience in training or coaching, sat together for a couple of times and put together a two-day training without much reflection upon the coherence of it all. When I spoke with the instructors after the training, they complained about the total lack of organizational anchorage.

Allow me to offer an example. At the end of the training, a list was compiled of a number of traits that street officers should have to attain a fairer and more neutral style of policing. It was up to the participants to compile this list. They came up with things such as ‘professionalism’, ‘reliability’, ‘honesty’ and ‘transparency’. When the list was completed in the eyes of instructors and participants, two responses came from the public that I consider to be characteristic of the training. A female officer:

‘We already have such a list; it’s called Code Blue. The thing is, however, that we keep these codes in mind for two weeks, after which we forget them. It simply doesn’t work because it has no priority.’

A male officer added:

‘I’m not gonna do it again. I simply refuse that.’

To which the female instructor answered:

‘No, of course, if you don’t want to do it, that’s your right. It is not obliged; that is not what this is about.’

From there the discussion turns into a conversation about different personalities and different situations and how these, together, account for different styles of policing. A male officer:

‘None of this is strange. If you look at our education, it’s full of modules about personal development and the like.’

In the end, the female instructor had no other option than to conclude the training with these words:

‘We didn’t have the illusion that things would be all different for you after this training. We simply wanted to mention it again. Do what you think you have to do.’

The great negative of the training, according to the instructors, was that it had led to distrust and suspicion, in particular of the two Turkish-Dutch instructors who had come, in the eyes of some participants, to tell their white peers about ‘all that multicultural bullshit,’ as one participant had called it to me a few weeks before the training started. All the more so because the two Turkish-Dutch instructors had chosen a more autobiographical approach; more at least than the Dutch instructor who presented herself as a somewhat distanced expert on cultural theory. In Chapter 8, we will see that one of the Turkish-Dutch instructors taught about honour-related killings by telling an autobiographical story on how he once had almost killed a family member to protect the honour of the family. The two had chosen an autobiographical approach and initially felt at ease with it because they were under the impression that they were fully backed up by the team management, who had authorized the course and made it mandatory to the whole crew. However, and this brings us to the third dimension of the problematic nature of the training, the instructors eventually felt that institutional back-up was completely lacking. They described the *laissez-faire* leadership style of the team managers, who had decided to let things run its course, as profoundly disturbing. This mismatch in expectations made the instructors feel very insecure. As a result, they hesitated to clarify that their critical perspective on migrant-hostile policing was not open to voluntary reception but was indeed binding.

The instructors longed for support from their superiors but did not get it. Their views on ethnic profiling, which were supposed to be widely shared in the organization and supported by means of institutional anchorage and strong leadership, remained exactly that: *their* views. At best, the training had no consequences. At worst, the cognitive distur-

tions (mental programming?) of officers had become more pertinent because of the salience that was given once more to ethnicity as a locus of group affiliation. Although immune to direct empirical observation (cf. Reskin 2003), the training may have increased the likelihood that race and ethnicity are constantly on the minds of officers. Was this too the problem of Sergeant Crowley? We can only wonder.

### **Cosmetics on the face of ethnic profiling, or worse?**

The main goal of the training that has been under scrutiny in the present chapter was to motivate trainees to inhibit the mindless use of stereotypes when interactions occur with ‘different others’. However, available research in the field of organizational diversity has cast doubt on the ability of awareness trainings to increase the intended trainee awareness (e.g., Kulik and Roberson 2008). This is particularly so when there is a serious lack of extrinsic motivation (e.g., sanctions, legal penalties, career consequences) to be aware and to act consciously. On the basis of a solid review of the literature on the effectiveness of diversity initiatives of the kind described above, Kulik and Roberson argue that the ‘vast majority of diversity training programs lasted a day or less, and today’s trainers continue to express concern about what can be delivered in a stand-alone half-day workshop’ (2008: 301). That such a concern is valid becomes clear from the materials we have assembled and discussed in this chapter (one might argue that this particular training is exceptionally – dare we use the word? – unprofessional, but unfortunately it gives a good impression of the average diversity training that is given at the Dutch police).

More central to our problem is, however, what Souhami (2014), following Wight (2003), has called ‘methodological individualism’, that is, the systematic tendency ‘to see everything social as a result of individual actions, driven by nothing more than subjective beliefs, desires and wants’ (Wight 2003: 707). The instructors were unable(d) to deflect attention away from a narrow definition of police discrimination as a matter of individual cognition and behaviour. Instead of concentrating on the background frames, organizational practices and policies, institutional configurations, let alone wider socio-political structures and trends, a

‘quasi-psychological’ approach was adopted to change individual officers’ attitudes and beliefs. As a result, nothing was effectuated.

If ‘no effect’ is the outcome of a training like this, we should stop fidgeting and get on with it. But I don’t believe that it is. Although stereotyping is behaviour at its most commonplace, we have reason to argue with Blommaert and Verschueren (1993) that trainings of this type make ethnic and racial distinctions more pertinent. Not only because they set people’s minds to it, but also because they blur boundaries between private and public, self and role, personality and officialdom. They turn police officers a bit more into the craftsmen that they shouldn’t be; the craftsman who is free to control his own working action and who experiences no split of work and private thoughts (the two recalcitrant officers were entitled to their opinions, seemingly regardless of the consequences they have). Introducing craftsmanship to the police further increases the leeway that they have when on the beat.

If it comes to race or ethnicity police officers should not be concerned with a person’s place in the social scheme of things. A small dose of bureaucratic indifference to human difference may be good in the case of police work and may even contribute to the eradication of discrimination. In the next chapter we will learn about some developments within the organization that are diametrically opposed to this. We will see that psychological experts have set foot in the organization who have argued in favour of police craftsmanship and a ‘humanization’ of labour relations.

## Note

<sup>1</sup> See <http://www.omroepwest.nl/nieuws/16-10-2013/oud-agenten-haagse-politie-gebruikt-buitensporig-geweld-tegen-allochtonen>



## 7 Psycho-technicians

Freedom which we take for granted in all political theory and which even those who praise tyranny must still take into account is the very opposite of 'inner freedom', the inward space into which men may escape from external coercion and *feel* free. This inner feeling remains without outer manifestations and hence is by definition politically irrelevant.

*Hannah Arendt, Between Past and Future, 1961*

### Psychologism

Life at work is increasingly rendered intelligible through psychological language, rationalities, strategies and technologies. It is indeed true, as Rose (1989) wrote, that organizational life has taken on a psychological hue. Psychological expertise has become an ever more important factor in matters such as selection, promotion, job evaluation, performance appraisal, work design, job enrichment and the like. The popularity of this expertise has induced curiosity and critical reflection across academic disciplines (e.g., Costea et al. 2008; DiFruscia 2012; Miller and Rose 1988, 1994; Shields and Grant 2011; Tucker 1999).

It is not a new phenomenon of course, but it has recently received new scholarly interest. Back in the 1960s and 1970s critical work had already appeared on the psychological turn in labour management, such as Loren Baritz's *The Servants of Power* (1960) and Peter Anthony's *Ideology of Work* (1977; see Grey and Willmott 2005 for an insightful reader). They were one of the first to seriously open the discussion about the politics of psychological techniques and expertise in the workplace. This discussion on the politics of psychology (we remember that the personal is political) was essentially a discussion on the politics of freedom. Was it to increase the freedom of workers or the freedom of managers and what kind of

freedom was this exactly (relevant to our case is an inquiry into the effects of street officers' 'psychological freedom' on the public)? Baritz and Anthony held a perspective on this matter that left no room for opacity. Baritz had suggested that industrial psychologists had put themselves on auction to the power elites by giving managers even more nuanced and effective means to control employees. Similarly, Anthony never concealed his ideas about the laws of psychology being put at service of management to inculcate workers with certain beliefs and expectations. Theirs was a critique on ideology, that is, on the belief that the worker's self-actualization and self-fulfilment (the psychologist's boost of the 'humanization of work', to use a hackneyed phrase) and more efficiency in work processes are not mutually exclusive but mutually stimulating. This was dismissed as false knowledge at best, manipulation at worst.

Such ideology-critique could itself be criticized from at least two angles. First and foremost, in certain ways it could be seen as an individualization or even personalization of the problem ('servants of power'), despite its fierce Marxist critique on the obsession with the individual that was said to characterize the psychologist's profession. Second, such ideology-critique merely focused on psychological expertise in the negative, as something that adjusted workers to exploitative conditions or further caught them in hierarchical relations of domination and subordination. Rose (1989) and Miller and Rose (1988 and 1994) argued against this and discussed how various 'psy'-disciplines and knowledges, as they call them, have acquired the capacity to render themselves *technical*. That is, they have enabled themselves to produce an effect that is not only negative, but is stimulating subjectivity, shaping desires, and creating new knowledge<sup>1</sup>.

In this chapter, I seek to offer my own take on this debate by centralizing the role of the technician in police management. In light of the previous debate this is a complicated matter. Baritz and Anthony, and Rose and Miller worked with different definitions of the technician. The perspective of Baritz was that technicians are not concerned with the problems outside the delimited sphere that is assigned to them and are concerned with means only, not with ends, which prevents them from taking upon themselves a critical role in society. Baritz quoted Coxe (1940: 96-97) who had suggested long ago that the technician should begin with an 'analysis of [his] own place in [his] present-day social



organization' and should start worrying about his 'responsibility for the use to which the results of his work are employed.' Peculiarly, from this viewpoint it is exactly their withdrawal from politics that turns technicians into political servants. Rose and associates (e.g., Barry et al. 1996) on the other hand argued against the relation between the technical and the political as an explicit opposition. Technology itself is political, they said, because it carries with it a certain directive capacity.

I would like to take up this notion of directive capacities and build two arguments around it in the present chapter. First, the technicians discussed here – who work in the tradition of the 'psy-disciplines', thus it makes sense to dub them 'psycho-technicians' – often do not oversee or cannot image the consequences of the directive capacities of the management instruments that they provide, because their expertise is oftentimes used in governance or management at arm's length (something that is not foreign to Dutch police managers, as we have seen earlier). Such modes of ruling disconnect the substantive authority of expertise from their actual uses in real-life settings and can thereby be distinguished from more embedded forms of governance, which take local contexts more seriously (Rose 1996). Second, this lack of imagination is a lack of 'sociological imagination' (Mills 1959), which makes it hard to understand peoples' personal troubles at work as public issues, that is, as situated in a broader social fabric with its particular structural problems that cannot be addressed from a distance and cannot be solved by a singular focus on the individual. In respect to the Dutch police, this much has become clear in Chapters 4 and 5. In this chapter, we will see that the imposition of such a distanced focus on the individual while obscuring the larger social landscape occurs under the aegis of psycho-technicians and leads to what Mills called 'psychologism' (or what Wight, referred to in the previous chapter, called 'methodological individualism'). The contribution of psycho-technicians to freedom at work is therefore a contribution to a particular form of freedom, which is best captured by Rose (1989: viii-ix), who wrote that the psy

'has come to celebrate values of autonomy and self-realization that are essentially psychological in form and structure... human subjects... are "obliged to be free" in this psychological sense. That is to say, however apparently external and implacable may be the constraints, obstacles and limitations that are encountered, each

individual must render his or her life meaningful as if it were the outcome of individual choices made in furtherance of a biographical project of self-realization.’

## **Psycho-technicians at the Dutch police**

Psychology is not something that is foreign to the Dutch police organization. All recruits are psychologically tested in the Netherlands before their training at the Police Academy can start. And for good reason, as these recruits are about to wield the monopolistic powers of legitimate violence. Once they become operational and start their beat, psychology may still be relevant to street cops. For instance, a considerable number of them may have to see a psychologist to be treated for post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Police work is psychologically burdensome.

However, this sort of psychology is not likely to be qualified as psychologism the way Mills defined it. Yes, such treatments and tests centralize the individual, but no, they are not pretended to be diagnostics or treatment of social troubles that go beyond the individual. It is acknowledged that the larger social landscapes cannot be dealt with. For instance, it is largely out of the hands of a police organization when a, say, poverty-induced burglary leads to a gunfight that involves an officer who is subsequently diagnosed with PTSD. The individual officer can be treated, but the deeper causes of the gunfight cannot – at least not by a police organization alone.

We have made the argument before that the psychology of discrimination is particularly vulnerable to being accused of psychologism. This holds true for the psychologization of perpetrator *and* victim. The previous three chapters have uncovered the dangers of reducing police discrimination to the intrapsychic domain of officers. Equally, they have criticized the responsibility that is conferred upon victims of discrimination who, however apparently external and implacable the constraints may be (Rose), are obliged to have the mental resilience that enables them to ‘role with the punches’ (Ayse’s case is most poignant). This is a pattern in my field data. Each and every time, ethnic minority officers’ experiences with discrimination are framed as personal troubles they ought to manage themselves in order to become empowered and

gain self-assertiveness (i.e., to set themselves free). At best, they are offered empowerment courses or therapeutic talk sessions to work on their resilience. This is in line with official policy.

In 2008, I conducted an interview with members of a committee that was much endorsed and fostered at that time by the senior management of police. The Diversity Steering Committee (DSC) was charged with the task to manage the range and depth of human variety within the organization. In the interview I elicited the interviewees' response to the recent reforms of the organization's diversity policies, which no longer framed diversity as a 'social issue' but as a 'business case'. This metamorphosis had occurred under the auspices of the LECD, whose former director (mentioned in Chapter 3) had written an advocacy of the business case of diversity:

'Formerly, diversity was animated by the unions and by politics. From these viewpoints diversity was about the quality of labour and about political correctness. From this period comes the enforcement of diversity through percentages. The surplus value of diversity for the organization was insufficiently recognized and, furthermore, the notion of diversity as a social issue triggered the idea in certain police forces that target groups were sad... Diversity as a business issue entails the pursuit of diversity driven by the organization's self-interest: surviving and maintaining efficiency in a changing environment.' (Poelert 2006)

He then continues discussing some, in his eyes, formidable examples from the private sector, such as banking and insurance (remember, this was at the eve of the global financial crisis). Two years later the DSC members had fully embraced this new policy:

'... is interesting to have a conversation with certain allochtonous colleagues: "The world is unfair and rights are taken away from me." Well, that is all very interesting, but I don't go along with that. Yes, the world is unfair and that unfair world does not stop at the boundaries of our organization, but what do you need as an individual member of this organization to stay active? That doesn't relieve us of the task to intervene when things happen that we don't like, but we are not there day and night. So people need enough

resilience to deal with these things. And what you see is that those colleagues who are prepared to invest a bit more – no matter how unfair that is (that is not even an interesting question to me) – are doing well... This has something to do with professionalism.’

This new diversity policy is demarcated by three important parameters. First, with the abolition of a conception of diversity as social justice we witness an abdication of the effort to intervene in case of injustice or inequality. ‘That is not even an interesting question to me,’ said one of the DSC members. Moreover, the LECD director experienced the meddling of unions and politics in the matter of diversity at work as burdensome and bad for business. Second, unionism and orchestrated action for minorities are dismissed because they are considered political, whereas individualization (‘you as an individual member’) and the business case for diversity (‘the organization’s self-interest’, ‘surplus value’, ‘efficiency’) are depoliticized. And third, when all politics are ostensibly gone, we see an *en passant* reframing of professionalism. A professional is someone who can stand his or her ground out of the sight of his or her superiors (the notion of discretion returns again). A professional is resilient in the face of unfairness, continuously active, autonomous (not leaning on others) and willing to invest a bit more. This definition of professionalism is consonant with the current reshaping of police work by the responsible minister and the upper strata of the police (see Chapter 2). These reforms are intended to give individual officers more discretionary authority and ‘professional freedom’. However, throughout the life of my study I noticed that the fruits of such freedom do not accrue to ethnic minority officers. In fact, as we have seen and will continue to see, they have to take the brunt of *laissez-faire* management styles and have to fight an uphill battle all by themselves.

In the remainder of this chapter it will become apparent that these three parameters ostensibly form a technical – and thus depoliticized – agenda for diversity management (DM from hereon), but bring politics back in when enacted in real-life situations. It is important to note in this light that both the LECD director and the DSC members are executive managers who come from the operation, but that their ideas and statements (which are metonymic for the organization’s diversity policies at large; e.g., LECD 2006) show a great deal of interdiscursivity with DM

texts produced by experts who have no direct relation to the operation and are able to shape managerial activities from a distance.

Before we can continue discussing the empirical materials of this chapter, we need to have a look at this notion of interdiscursivity and the way it is analysed in this chapter.

Key in my project is what I have elsewhere called ‘itinerant diversity management’ (cf. Mutsaers and Trux forthcoming) in the sense that police managers in the operational forces almost never produce DM techniques themselves. The ‘production site,’ so to speak, is often the preserve of technicians who are either in-house diversity experts or external consultants and often work in a relatively detached and dispassionate manner (in that sense is the previously discussed course on multicultural craftsmanship the exception, rather than the rule). Their services then trickle into the organization and with each and every transfer (e.g., between a subcontracted diversity consultant and an in-house expert) a new step in the process of entextualization occurs, with entextualization pointing towards ‘lifting text out of context, placing it in another context and adding metapragmatic qualifications to it, thus specifying the conditions for how texts should be understood, what they mean and stand for, and so on’ (Blommaert 2001: 18). It is exactly because of this itinerant character that DM technicians can hardly imagine the consequences of their own services – particularly in a huge organization such as the Dutch police. It is the critical analysis of these traveling devices and their ‘domaining effects’ – the effects which occur when a certain logic (or constellation of various concepts, i.e., a semantic cluster) associated with a particular domain migrates to another domain where it receives new operational power, often with unanticipated consequences (Shore and Wright 1999, 2000) – that gives this chapter its critical punch.

I deliberately do not speak of a crossing of domains in the analysis as ‘intertextuality’ – which implies a directionally neutral comparison of texts (Silverstein 2005: 7), but as ‘interdiscursivity’, which immediately points to the strategic use of texts and which connects nicely to the notion of directive capacity discussed earlier. It is because of this strategic use of and directive capacity in textual productions that we need to take into account both the origin/production and the uptake/use of the discursive management techniques under study in this chapter (Blommaert 2013a; Cameron 2000). Particularly in institutional communication processes

we see a lot of shifting of texts between contexts of production and contexts of use, and it is exactly this shifting that involves crucial questions of power (Blommaert 2001). As we will see, language may appear devoid of power in certain domains (e.g., the domains of HRM, policy and research) but can become severely styled, policed, codified or regimented in other domains (e.g., at the work floor).

At the time of my research it was the NSvP, the *Nederlandse Stichting voor Psychotechniek* (Dutch Foundation for Psychotechnics) that was one of the most influential external partners of the police with respect to diversity management. This organization presents itself as a capital fund that invests in activities at the intersection of consultancy and academics and concentrates on applied sciences such as HRM and organizational and industrial psychology. It was taken over in 2001 by a leading and international occupational psychology company, SHL (see Campbell and Roberts 2007) and has multiple connections to the Dutch police. For instance, NSvP associates regularly conduct DM research at the police (e.g., a Multicultural Personality Questionnaire was developed by an NSvP expert who distributed it among police officers) and the endowed chair on Multicultural Craftsmanship at the Police Academy (mentioned above) was held by an NSvP member for a couple of years.

The NSvP has fully embraced the business case of diversity and on their website DM texts feature key words such as ‘resource optimization’, ‘innovation’, ‘success’, ‘entrepreneurship’, ‘surplus value’, ‘productivity’, ‘customer satisfaction’, ‘competition’, ‘effectiveness’, ‘image improvement’, ‘flexibility’, ‘competence’, and ‘excellence’<sup>2</sup>. What’s more, a very strong and manifest intertextuality exists in terms of mutually approving links between various NSvP texts (with different authors), both regarding vocabulary and grammar. The grammatical mood in these documents is declarative, lacking hedging expressions or modality: ‘diversity is part of a business case’ and ‘diversity *offers* opportunities to increase the innovative capacities of the organization’. This lexico-grammatical stance implies that we only have to measure to what extent diversity is profitable and competitively advantageous.

## Dialogue, inner search and authenticity

A few years ago, I attended a conference in Amsterdam on DM that was organized by the NSvP. The day was opened by an NSvP expert who at that time held the endowed chair in Multicultural Craftsmanship at the Dutch Police Academy. She introduced five new DM methods that were about to be presented separately in workshops. After several minutes a critical listener (it wasn't me) raised the question: 'are we all supposed to go into therapy now?' The setting did indeed remind of what Costea et al. (2008) had called a 'therapeutic habitus'. In the manuscript that was distributed at the end of the conference, dialogue was presented as the bedrock of the five DM methods:

'[Dialogue is a] special form of conversation that is focused on inner search. Not the solution to a problem is central, but a quest to find the essence of a problem. Dialogue is self-exploration that you go through together.' (De Vries 2010: 8)

These DM methods were thus translated into management techniques of which inner search and self-exploration constitute the quintessence. Not the solution of a problem is central, but the way we understand and govern ourselves. 'Liberation therapies' that offer a sort of 'social vaccine' to keep the self-governing individual healthy and productive (Cruikshank 1996).

Let us now turn to a case at the Rotterdam police, to Ayse, who already appeared in the fourth chapter. Let me recap what happened to her. During the early morning briefing she collided with two colleagues, who attacked her for being a Muslim (the collision was triggered by a newspaper article about enduring conflicts between Muslims and Christians). They threatened to show her some violence and even snapped that KKK attributes needed to be brought back in business. Meanwhile the team leader stood there and watched expressionlessly. He did not have the guts, desire or authority to intervene. Ayse clammed up and had no rebuke, no riposte. She filed an official discrimination complaint, but did so in vain as it was not processed. She left, sick, and stayed at home for a long stretch of three months. Eventually she was invited for conflict mediation, a dialogue session involving her and her two

colleagues. She declined because she was convinced that such an engagement would only aggravate things. This was deemed unacceptable and Ayse was forced to leave the team. It was argued that she had a deficit of openness, flexibility and assertiveness; competences considered necessary to stand your ground as a professional police officer.

There is no doubt that this case can be assessed in the optic of NSvP discourses on dialogue as a technique for inner search and self-exploration rather than an interactional device that can be used to solve a problem that is much broader than personal troubles between individuals. It is a clear instance of psychologism in which the most central 'going concern' (Hughes 1984) of a (any) police institution is simply forgotten or ignored: security. It is very easy to impute a wide range of imperfections upon individuals, whose personalities or biographical backgrounds may be seen as the cause of the emotional release in a dispute. It is more demanding, however, to realize that this it can be problematic to leave a dispute like this to private recourse when it stems from a significant going concern (security) that guides the course of collective action in a particular institution like this and works as an important backdrop to the troubles that we have recorded. Ayse felt insecure due to the demeaning treatment she had received and this feeling was magnified by the particular context in which it developed.

As my ethnography advanced I came to realize that ethnic minority officers have to endure structural discrimination that often penetrates the organization as migrant-hostile discourses in Dutch politics and the media, which are then copied and reproduced by officers at work. As we have seen in Chapter 4, Ayse's case is certainly not a singular case; it is part of a patterns that is characterized by migrant-hostility, hostility that is often left unchallenged by police managers who do not or dare not intervene. The reasons of individual police leaders need not all be malignant; in fact, I prefer not to contribute to such an individualization of the problem. The outcome of many interviews on this topic suggests that some police managers too feel constrained by these (relatively) new discourses on leadership and management, such as those which develop under NSvP aegis. Others do indeed believe in the ameliorative and emancipatory potential of mediation/dialogue as inner search. However, such techniques need radical rethinking after they are put to a test in practice. The question needs to be begged, because it will otherwise go unasked: what to make of the business case of diversity when a victim of



overt racism gets victimized for a second time when she is harassed out of her job on the basis of psychological qualifications such as open-mindedness, flexibility, and assertiveness? Ayse was indeed 'obliged to be free', to speak with Rose (1989): free to engage in a verbal competition with her colleagues. And this freedom was essentially perceived as psychological in form and structure.

There was a deficit of sociological imagination in the case at hand, the sort of imagination needed to understand that this was a clear matter of intertextual asymmetry (Blommaert 2007: 8), that is, a case in which some people are burdened with particular forms of intertextuality and others are not. Blommaert gives the example of the term *slavery*. When uttered in a classroom it triggers different intertextual worlds for Afro-Caribbean children than it does for Anglo-Saxon British children. Such terms operate at different scale-levels for different people. Phrases such as 'you Muslims', 'attacking the Turkish consulate' or 'white cone hats' were momentary phrases for Ayse's colleagues, but they immediately invoked categorical, collective and transcontextual images for Ayse. It is no wonder therefore that she fell back upon her 'old life' (see Chapter 4) and upon group-thinking ('your own culture'; 'Turkish people live for their honour'; 'this is unthinkable for a Dutch person'). In this light we can understand that it was all the more difficult for Ayse to partake in the individual change efforts proposed by her team leader. She was well aware of the fact that she did not lack the *capacity* to communicate (a psychological understanding) but that she was *incapacitated* to engage (a contextual and sociological understanding). During our interview she indeed struck me as a potent communicator, very talkative. It was her colleagues' aggression that had rendered her mute and voiceless.

This brings us to a final issue that I want to mention briefly; that of pretextuality and pretextual gaps. Pretextuality is defined as the 'preconditions for communication that influence communicative behaviour', and pretextual gaps refer to the 'difference in such preconditions between participants in communication' (Maryns and Blommaert 2012: 12). Of course, Ayse did communicate. She filed an official discrimination complaint, but that was not the kind of communication that was expected from her. This would turn the whole thing political and obstruct a 'professional' solution (remember the standpoints of the DSC members and the LECD director). But of course, the fact was obscured that the intertextual asymmetry discussed above had already politicized

the situation in the sense that the preconditions for people to participate in communication (the mediation) were uneven. It is exactly this kind of unevenness in real-life situations that is missed by technicians who contribute to management-from-a-distance and who do not get involved in the intricacies of everyday life at work.

The previous case shows a high level of regimentation of communication that is at odds with the liberation technique that dialogue – as defined above – is taken to be. Dialogue is de facto turned into what Du Gay called a ‘discourse register’ – ‘a particular, institutionally sanctioned way of talking’ (Cameron 2000: 14), in which talking is not seen as an activity that involves at least two interlocutors, but as an individual or even psychological capacity or skill (and it is certainly not seen as an interaction between people who have access to various intertextual worlds – and to whom these words mean different things – and thus to various sources of power). The team leader valued his employees in proportion to their communication skills, from which it follows that Ayse’s problems would automatically begin to recede if she would be willing to improve these skills, to professionalize. This brings us to the notion of ‘soft skills’ (e.g., Urciuoli 2008), particularly to a soft skill that is highly esteemed within the police; authenticity. Let us turn to two text fragments, the first coming from a dissertation that was supervised by an NSvP board member (and published on their website) and the second coming from an official employers’ statement by the national HR division of the Dutch police.

‘Accommodating authenticity allows for individual differences and ‘being different’ and creates possibilities to experience these differences and let them co-exist, rather than disappear... More specifically, in diverse working contexts, research shows that when group members give recognition to the unique qualities of other group members, this recognition moderates the relation between diversity and performance... Creating a working climate that stimulates authentic behaviour is contingent upon authentic leadership. Authentic leadership means that managers are a reflection of themselves and are in contact with all dimensions of their self.’ (Raaijmakers 2008: 92)

'The police organization pursues diversity and this requires a variety and authenticity of leadership in the police organization... Leaders coach and impassion employees in order to let them excel in the things they are good at; this gives employees a chance to act in accordance with their own views... Leaders must be capable of touching upon the authenticity of employees.' (Werkgeversvisie Politie 2008: 77-78)

The mainstay of the argument in favour of authenticity as a relevant factor at work is that, if managed (accommodated) in a proper way, it allows for diversity and 'being different' in a team, which in turn improves performance and stimulates employees to excel (the business case of diversity again). And this works at different levels in the organization in the sense that authentic leaders are needed to 'touch upon the authenticity of employees'. Again, we are going to observe what happens when certain ideas in the domains of HRM, policy and research trickle down to the work floor, where they entwine with everyday complexities. This time the notion of soft skills (a category to which authenticity certainly belongs) as 'strategically deployable shifters' (SDSs) is central to the analysis (Urciuoli 2008). Urciuoli characterizes soft skills on the basis of two semiotic properties; denotational indeterminacy and strategic indexicality. They are hard to describe and cover a range of disparate practices, but at the same time easily invoke images of corporate success, mission, vision, strategy and the like (also see the NSvP key words listed above). The combination of these two semiotic properties turns them into SDSs. Urciuoli (2008: 214) explains: terms that are related to soft skills are semantically variable and therefore become strategically useful linguistic elements that have 'no context-independent lexical meaning' because they 'can only be fully interpreted in terms of the speaker's position in a specific place, time, social context, or some combination thereof.' SDS's 'semantic value seems obvious yet hard to pin down.'

In the autumn of 2011, I shadowed a District Commander (DC) for a couple of weeks and at a certain point I joined him in a personnel review, a meeting that is periodically held by the DC and his HR advisor to discuss the career developments of personnel as well as other HR-related issues. That day the two of them discussed a job interview they and a team leader had had the other week with a Superintendent who had applied for a job as deputy team leader. During the personnel review they

were finalizing their decision to reject the candidate, Surinam-born Dinesh, because it was judged that he lacked authenticity and was therefore considered unfit as a team leader. When I asked at the end of the meeting what they meant with authenticity, how it could fit the job profile and could be assessed, they felt somewhat uncomfortable. The HR advisor felt ashamed to confess that it is mostly a gut-feeling and that authenticity is applied as a criterion in various ways in the force. However, in separate interviews I conducted afterwards with the DC, the HR officer and the applicant, a different story came to the fore. The HR officer had regained confidence when I posed the same question:

‘Leaders must be themselves, that is, authentic... In a job interview you are primarily looking for the true self of a person. And you know what... an answer is not right or wrong – I mean, substantively right or wrong. No, it’s about how you come to it. This means that you look for who someone really is.’

When I raised the same question in a separate interview with the DC, he superimposed another category on authenticity, that is, ‘assertiveness’, here defined as the courage to stand up against superiors. He did not refer to himself, but to the Turkish-Dutch team leader Dinesh would come to work for. I had a lengthy conversation with this team leader and it turned out that her employment record contained a number of ethnic conflicts, which had her expelled from another police district. According to the DC, Meryem (the same Meryem who appeared in the first chapter of this book, where I described my Australian adventure) has a ‘strong personality’ and ‘needs to be brought back into balance’. He was looking for an authentic person who can ‘seriously counterweigh [Meryem]’. In his eyes, Dinesh was too much institutionalized in the sense that his style of communication during the interview gave away his subordinate position relative to the team leader.

I had met Dinesh a few years earlier, in 2008. At that time he was already keenly aware of the fact that the organization is increasingly looking at ‘who you are’. He seemed fairly neutral about it. This time (in an interview in 2011, a couple of weeks after the application procedure was closed) he was more critical. He did not protest against authenticity as a criterion for the job, which he considered valid, but against the slippery and shifting use of it. As a result, he experienced the whole thing

as alienating. He felt it would alienate him from himself and from his colleagues:

- Dinesh: 'I am not willing to change my whole personality...  
And I said that to the committee. If you're looking for  
someone who bangs his fist on the table, that's fine.  
But that's not who I am.'
- Paul: 'You don't want to change that?'
- Dinesh: 'No, because I want to be myself.'

The shifting that had occurred was a shifting of expectations about personal and institutional registers, something which has been extensively studied by Celia Roberts (e.g., Campbell and Roberts 2007) in relation to job interviews as gatekeeping encounters that exclude candidates with an ethnic minority background from certain positions. Once again, we see the conversion of a psychological technique from a putatively liberating device (which gives people the freedom to 'be different', to have 'unique qualities', and to 'act in accordance with your own view') to a prescription, in this case of a synthesis of personal and institutional registers that is not even clearly envisioned by the DC and the HR officer and remains a matter of guesswork for the applicant. Dinesh apparently tilted the balance too much to the institutional side, whereas Meryem was judged to make things way too personal. Notions such as authenticity as used in this particular encounter therefore contribute to what Fairclough (1992) calls 'synthetic personalizations': 'Strategically simulated constructions of identity, which are called up in appropriate moments of [in this case] the interview, and which present a... version of the self that is entirely consistent with organizational values and the institutional regime of the job interview' (Campbell and Roberts 2007: 250).

### **The ideology of intimacy**

I will now try to cast the problem in more general terms and will continue with the notion of synthetic personalization. I believe the general problem is what Richard Sennett once called the 'ideology of intimacy',

that is, the belief that ‘social relationships *of all kinds* are real, believable and authentic the closer they approach the inner psychological concerns of each person’ (1974: 259, my italics). The italicized part is important here. With regard to the particular setting that is central here – the workplace – it appears that with the advent of psychological expertise at work, things such as authenticity, inner search, self-actualization and the like have been turned into absolutes that matter not only outside the workplace (in the private sphere) but also within it (in the public sphere). As stated before, the psychological turn in labour management is blurring the boundary between life at work, where people adopt social roles that have a certain function, and the private sphere, where they have a personality that ought to be relatively free from the dictates of use value and function.

Such blurring may amount to reparation of the unity between personal life and work life, or minimally encourages its interpenetration. If pushed through far enough it culminates into the unitary life of a craftsman. Although craftsmanship of all kinds persists in our present-day societies, we know of course that it was with the rise of modern institutions – of which bureaucracy can be seen as the prototype (see Du Gay 2005) – that separate, enclosed and protected spheres of life were constructed that were to remain relatively independent from one another (Berger 1973; Walzer 1984). What Walzer called the ‘liberal art of separation’ he considered to be the prime factor distinguishing modernity from pre-modernity. Its function: it builds a world of walls, each creating a new liberty. Walzer writes therefore that ‘under the aegis of the art of separation, liberty and equality go together... Society enjoys both freedom and equality when success in one institutional setting isn’t convertible into success in another, that is, when the separations hold’ (1984: 321). This inconvertibility did not work for Dinesh. Although he was very *sincere* about his social role (adopting a subordinate position in the presence of superiors in a hierarchically organized law enforcement agency seems to be in tune with the social role), more was expected from him. The modern distinction between private and public spheres was discarded when Dinesh was requested to bring his private self and to show his *authentic* features (see also the useful remarks on sincerity and authenticity of Berger [1973] and Trilling [1971]). But of course, these authentic features had to be congruent with managerially defined objective – hence the relevance of Fairclough’s accent on *synthetic* per-

sonalizations. The psychological turn in labour management appears to tolerate workers' personalities, but really, these personalities become highly regimented once they become salient in the workplace (see also Mutsaers and Trux forthcoming; DiFruscia 2012).

It is important to stress that Walzer saw the art of separation as something that is to attain institutional rather than individual separateness. The lines we draw under liberal aegis are not drawn to secure and protect the freedom of the solitary individual but to attain institutional integrity through which individuals can become free without being separated from one another. This institutional integrity was clearly underdeveloped in Ayse's case. As a remedy, solutions were sought in the individuality of each involved. In her essay *What is Freedom?* Hannah Arendt (1961) argues that such a 'retreat to an inner sense of freedom is not a solution but merely a response to a lack of freedom in intercourse with others' (Bell 1996: 89). The case of Ayse makes this painfully clear. Freedom, according to Arendt (1961: 144), is not 'experienced in the dialogue between me and myself', and the very idea around it is distorted when transformed from 'its original field, the realm of politics and human affairs in general, to an inward domain.'

NSvP experts and their followers (e.g., the LECD director and DSC members) ostensibly take the political out of labour relations. Psycho-technicians, as discussed in this chapter, present their work as a-political, value-free and neutral. They claim to stimulate freedom in every sphere of life. Dialogue as inner search and self-exploration sets all free (employees and employers alike) to find out who they are, apparently unconstrained by any form of external control. The same seems to hold true for authenticity as a key competence for leaders and led. But the psycho-technician's conception of freedom takes a very particular direction; it is to be psychological in form and structure or else it is nothing. This oxymoronic 'obligation to be free' in a psychological sense (Rose 1989) implicates that freedom cannot be organized by anything external to the self. I believe that Rose was quite on the mark when he described 'advanced liberal' governance (which is different from 'liberal' governance) as a formula of rule that has managed to strip away the self-evidence of social governance – that is, a form of 'embedded' governance that revolves around the social roles people adopt in the particular social or institutional settings in which they work and build a life – and has replaced it with a form of governance by experts who seek to govern not

through the social but through individuals, ‘now construed as subjects of choice and aspirations to self-actualization and self-fulfilment’ (1996: 41; see also Rose’s chapter in Sharma and Gupta 2006 for an anthropological reader). I believe that the profession of the psycho-technician described in this text fits quite well into this category of experts.

The psycho-technician is the kind of expert that Gershon describes as someone who is entrusted with the ‘reflexive role of explaining to *other* autonomous entities how to manage themselves more successfully’ (2011: 542, my italics). Again, the italics are important. Just like they see workers, experts look at themselves as autonomous entities – and so are employers looked at for that matter. Rose speaks of advanced liberal governance, but Gherson prefers to describe this as the neoliberal perspective. That is, a perspective that overlooks differences of scale and flattens all kinds of social entities (in our case workers, employers and psychological experts) inasmuch as all are seen as corporate individuals who are, on top of that, misrecognized as equivalents. This leaves us with a particular form of freedom, or agency for that matter – one that encourages agents to negotiate with other agents who are either seen as partners or competitors (Gherson 2011). This is what Gershon aptly calls ‘neoliberal agency’.

That the different ‘agents’ in the cases discussed in the previous section are not equivalent, do not have the same scalar positions and are not connected through symmetrical relations is clear enough. After all, Dinesh could not change the careers of his superiors and neither could Ayse relocate hers. Secondly, the intertextual asymmetries Ayse felt would be further consolidated during the conflict mediation, made the verbal competition between her and her colleagues anything but a fair play between equals. And thirdly, being disembedded from the particular contexts in which they drop their packages and move on, NSvP experts can permit themselves to transcend the intricacies of daily life at work and to walk away from responsibility in case things go awry. They only deliver the instruments and are not responsible for how these are implemented, nor for the potential malpractices that may result. Moreover, it is precisely because they work in such a detached or disembedded way that they can only see individuals *down there*, rather than the complexities and hazards of social organization that people struggle with and that require social governance (e.g., the stipulation of anti-discrimination regulations Ayse appealed to).



This brings me to a final point, that of psychologism and its diametric opposite – sociological imagination. Anthropologists have frequently turned to a sociological imagination, Gershon writes, to parse neoliberalism, to reveal its vulnerabilities and to help people understand their personal troubles as more widespread issues that are shaped by broader institutional and structural forces which cannot be understood through neoliberal perspectives on agency or introspection of the psyche. It is imperative to cross these levels of scale and to interrogate how they affect each other (Gershon 2011), in order to understand that a certain personal agony may be in fact the agony of an entire organization. While neoliberalism and its bedfellow, psychologism, have the power to flatten the nuances of scale, it is the task of the ethnographer to bring these nuances back into the analysis. Only then are we able to understand that personalized policing by ‘authentic’ officers who hold on to a craft ethic and police according to their own norms and values may be in fact obliged to do so by their employer.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> This debate soon spilled over to other (sub)fields and Human Resource Management (HRM) was one of them, as it was clear from the outset that ‘psychological expertise is vital for the maximization of the use of human resources in institutional life’ (Rose 1989: xxviii). In her landmark book on the rhetorics and realities of HRM Legge (1995: xvii) positioned HRM in a broader political-economic context (as did others, e.g., Thompson 2011) and deconstructed it ‘as a phenomenon whose importance lies largely in its existence as a rhetoric and discourse that serves the interest of a range of influential stakeholders who have an interest in hype-ing the extent and depth of its facticity.’ She concurred with Braverman (1974) that human relations and industrial psychology experts were the ‘maintenance crew for the human machinery’ (Braverman 1974: 60 and Legge 1995: 18). At this terrain too we find critique on the ideology-critique, and it is spearheaded by Watson (2004 and 2010b) who has consistently dismissed Legge’s critique on HRM as an ideological apparatus that simply masks the antagonisms in capitalist society for being too much about appearances.

<sup>2</sup> See <http://www.innovatiefinwerk.nl>



## 8 Greedy Institutions

There's a lot of rot talked about the sufferings of the working class. I'm not so sorry for the proles myself... The prole suffers physically, but he's a free man when he isn't working. But in every one of those little stucco boxes there's some poor bastard who's never free except when he's fast asleep and dreaming that he's got the boss down the bottom of a well and is bunging lumps of coal at him.  
*George Orwell's character Mr. Bowling, Coming Up for Air, 1939*

### Confessions

The previous chapter offered a critical take on the use of psychological techniques on police officers. In this chapter, I will detail the careers of two Turkish-Dutch police officers in Tilburg (Fehim and Halil) while discussing several other techniques of that kind. But before I will do so, a few preliminary remarks are in order that emphasize the differences between this chapter and the previous one.

We have already seen in the previous chapter that different applications of psychology are now more esteemed and more insistently mobilized in organizations such as the Dutch police. Already 25 years ago Nikolas Rose wrote in his *Governing the Soul* that

'There has been a correlative growth in the practical involvement of psychological expertise in the enterprise, the organization and the labour market, with psychologically trained functionaries carrying out such tasks as selection, promotion, job evaluation, performance appraisals, work design, job enrichment and so forth, either as permanent employees or through the mechanisms of consultancy.'  
(1989: 57)

Labour management and practice increasingly solidify around the idea that the employee's soft characteristics (e.g., attitudes, character traits, predispositions, emotions) are key to organizational success. Hence 'the expansion and intensification of demands on the self to become ever more involved in work with its whole subjectivity' (Costea et al. 2008: 672). However, several authors have warned that the psychologization of work may easily result in an intrusion into employees' very existence and experience. Shields and Grant (2010) argue that the classification, measurement, and manipulation of employees' traits, values, attitudes, and emotions – what they call 'psychologizing the employee-subject' – is the most systematic means to control labour and turn the worker into a resource object. Others – mainly in the field of critical management studies – have understood this in terms of identity regulation (Alvesson and Willmott 2002). Barbara Townley (1993: 528-529) claimed that personality tests and attitude measurements are 'arrangements for ranking', which 'provide a grid of codability of personal attributes', placing individuals on 'comparative scalar measures.'

However, the disadvantages of psychological management for employees are effectively obscured. The psychologization of labour often carries the allure of incorporation rather than exclusion, of melioration rather than coercion, as we have seen in the previous chapter. Personal fulfilment becomes a social obligation, writes Cruikshank (1996) with a critical note, as it benefits both the individual employee and the organization. Employees and employers are on the same page, have the same expectations, the same desires. We have seen in the previous chapter that this is what DiFruscia (2012) describes as an 'anti-conflictual fable'. In her article on work rage she argues that an 'HR logic systematically identifies the cause of work rage as the nature of problematic individuals,' while simultaneously negating its structural causes (2012: 93). Evidently, this obscures the antagonistic character of labour relations (since both employer and employee benefit from an adequate healing process), but there is more to it. DiFruscia gives a description of a workshop on preventing workplace aggression, in which participants (HR professional) played a game in which they simulated work rage in the workplace:

'During the exercise... one HR manager... was particularly enthusiastic in her interpretation, going so far as to spit on her fictitious

colleagues before dropping to the ground, where she rolled into fetal position. Once all the turbulence had been enacted, our leader informed us that the exercise “is very useful when practiced in the work team.” The manger from the hospital then suggested, “because it allows everyone to let off steam? It’s true, it feels good!” The leader replied in the negative that this type of simulation, seemingly just for fun, was in reality an excellent window of observation for an HR professional.’ (2012: 95)

In other words, what we have here is a fine-tuning of labour control in the sense that employees have to disclose or reveal themselves in order to open their psyche for interceptions, evaluations, and manipulations by superiors. It is at this point that a psychologization of labour obviously articulates with Foucauldian techniques of confession (cf. Covaleski et al. 1998; Towley 1993). Allow me to quote Rose once more:

‘In compelling, persuading and inciting subjects to disclose themselves, finer and more intimate regions of personal and interpersonal life come under surveillance and are opened up for expert judgment, normative evaluations, classification and correction.’ (in Towley 1993: 536)

Now, my interpretation of a series of events in the police district of Tilburg, presented below, confirm what has been established in the previous chapter, namely that a belief system is produced that, in the words of Lane (2011: 151), ‘privileges individual agency while obscuring the role of broader social, political and cultural forces in shaping individual lives.’ Once more we will witness a serious lack of sociological imagination. However, in addition we will find out that (1) within the Dutch police organization the impact of psychology becomes particularly visible through the organization’s encouragement of confessions, which put the inner life of police officers on public display and make them more vulnerable to fine-grained control; (2) these confessions bring competition among co-workers to the next level (that of the ‘psyche’, ‘inner life’, ‘cultural values’, etc.); and (3) there is a lot of risk-taking involved for those who have a minority position in terms of identity matters, that is, for ethnic minority police officers.

The remainder of this article combines empirical and theoretical registers to support these statements. It highlights the careers of two Turkish-Dutch policemen; Fehim and Halil. I will reconstruct the last six years of Fehim's and part of the last three years of Halil's career by using a variety of ethnographic methods and materials – including participant observation, interviews and informal conversations with both men and relevant others (their colleagues and superiors), Fehim's autobiographical notes (he kept a journal on his experiences with discrimination at work, which he shared with me in 2013), Fehim's personal development plan (a sort of career portfolio in which employees write about their career aspirations, steps to take, personal development of talents/abilities/skills, etc.), one of Fehim's job evaluations, and e-mail exchanges with Halil. I have assembled all these data around two persons, not to proceed by way of synecdoche, where a part (this part) is allowed to stand for the whole, or to selectively package the data to exemplify certain things while leaving out others, but simply to do justice to the details of complex cases such as these. The chapter ends with a discussion which locates more exactly the theoretical criticism that I wish to put forward.

### **2007-2009: Beaten on a track**

Exhausted from commuting every workday between his hometown and the police station in Utrecht and passing one of the bottlenecks of the Dutch highway system, Fehim felt relief when Meryem invited him to apply for a position in Tilburg, in the province where he lives. After 11 years of service in Utrecht Fehim was relocated to Tilburg in October 2007, at the encouragement of Meryem who was working as a Superintendent during that period. She brought to Fehim's attention the reorganizations that were on-going at that time in Tilburg. These could offer a chance for him to reinvigorate his career as prospects looked good for Fehim to become a community officer, something he had aspired for a long time.

Having worked in his new surroundings for about half a year, he made his first move toward community policing, but his application was denied due to administrative and financial difficulties. His Superintendent –

Frank – considered him right for the job, but advised him to wait for austere times to pass. ‘He said it was good that I had applied and that I had proven to be *entrepreneurial*’, Fehim wrote in his journal (which he gave to me in 2013). Fehim’s job evaluation at that time reads:

‘[Fehim] shows a certain calmness while doing his job. He adapts quickly to his new working environment... He does well in spotting new work that needs to be done. He takes on new cases on his own initiative and supports colleagues in their work. He is a good colleague with good social skills. He is customer-oriented and maintains good contacts with civilians... For the sake of financial management, it is not desirable that Fehim leaves the job and accepts another position.’ (job evaluation on June 6, 2008)

About a year later Fehim informed Frank about another job opening, but Frank urgently advised him not to apply, ‘because that would seriously jeopardize [his] career track.’ ‘I was not aware of such a track,’ Fehim wrote. ‘Only much later I found out he referred to my PDP’ [Personal Development Plan]. Fehim was perplexed about the fact that, apparently, a PDP had been started without notification. This was the first of many incidents that would cause him to feel subjected to a sort of personalized rule (i.e., that his lot within the organization was determined by one or two superiors), a feeling that was about to be perpetuated and intensified.

The only track Fehim was familiar with at that time was the ‘TeMPo Track’ – an abbreviation of the *Turken en Morokkanen Politie* (Turks and Moroccans Police) project, which was a special recruitment and selection program to attract Turkish and Moroccan migrants, including Fehim, to the organization. Fehim had joined this program in 1996. It seems evident that the word ‘tempo’ was not chosen randomly. It can be interpreted as a reference to the speedy progress of migrants within the organization, who were trained and prepared in the 1980s and 1990s in all kinds of special programs at special locations. A particular training camp in which migrant police students would have to walk around with nametags saying Police and Allochtones was not uncommon in this period, as I learned from interviews about ethnic diversity policies within the organization. It was only much later that some, but certainly not all, policy makers and diversity managers became aware of the fact that large segments of the workforce considered these initiatives inappropriate.

Affirmative action (AA) programs – giving (putative) members of ethnic minority groups an edge over ethnic majority officers/aspirants – continued well into the new millennium under the aegis of Labour Party Minister of Internal Affairs Guusje ter Horst (2007-2010).

People's experiences with these AA programs were not one-dimensionally positive or negative. What came out of the dozens of conversations I conducted with migrant police officers on this topic was that they felt stigmatized by the policy-induced ethnic boundaries that developed and portrayed them as incompetent. 'They are the ones who need extra attention,' colleagues said to me. Yet, by other measurements there were also positive evaluations of such programs. People also experienced support from fellow 'co-ethnics'. They managed to organize into collectives and thereby preserved some degree of solidarity in an otherwise highly competitive and individualized organization. At the beginning of my fieldwork, I was rather taken aback by the numerous mundane conversations officers have about who does and who does not make it into *het arrestatieteam* (the special squad), about who is the most effective biker, or who has the widest network. It gradually became apparent that ethnicity-based networks of solidarity serve to mitigate some of the cutthroat competition, which is widespread in the organization. Looking back in 2013 during an interview, Fehim said that 'everybody is on his own of course, but the contacts between allochtonous colleagues are a bit thicker and warmer.'

During the interview Fehim was sitting calmly in an armchair in one of the rooms at the police station. He is a middle-aged man, known for his tranquil and avuncular features. Always respectful to others, never offensive or rude, he is the kind of police officer one would be glad to have around in an undesirable situation. From his armchair he carefully measured his words and endorsed both perspectives on AA. He too experiences the collateral damage of AA programs, that is, running the risk of being deprived of occupational pride, but also finds much support within the collective boundaries that they have created. Such policy-induced 'groupist thinking' (there we have it again) has motivated Turkish and Moroccan migrants in particular to create strong support networks within the organization, both formally in special support groups and more informally during lunches, drinks, etc.

Although Fehim is keenly aware of these advantages, as a good cop he is well accustomed to screening potential risks. For instance, after we



discussed this groupist thinking and its resultant group solidarity, he immediately started wondering whether it was also the cause of his superior's suspiciousness of his contacts with Meryem, who got him into the district in the first place. Reflecting on his second attempt to apply for a job as community officer in Meryem's team, Fehim says: 'I think, I mean it's just a suggestion, I feel that [this superior] thought, "if he goes there, he is likely to be hired by Meryem" ', implying that this would be something unthinkable and unpalatable for his superior. At this point, he already felt discriminated, but he had a hard time proving it. We know Meryem's history (the ethnic conflicts, the relocations, etc.) and Fehim knew well that she was considered a menace by his own superiors and that the emphasis put on her ethnicity was a strategy to outcompete her. He knew too that in combination with the solidarity among 'co-ethnics' referred to above, his ethnic identity was considered to be coterminous with Meryem's, both being enclosed within a common boundary (that is, their Turkish identities immediately became salient when they were seen together). This seriously curtailed Fehim's potential to join Meryem's team.

Fehim and I wondered during the interview whether the solidarity between migrants at work was also the reason for Fehim's superiors to confront him with various individualizing techniques, such as PDPs and several other psychological instruments that we will discuss later on. Could these actually be interpreted as splintering techniques, employed by management to scatter a fairly strongly organized collective? This question admits to no easy answer. It is certainly not strange to toy with the idea of a PDP as a psychological technique equal to those discussed in the previous chapter. Having had the opportunity to screen various police PDPs, I noticed a dominant concern with the intrapsychic domains of the employee. Personal development is seen as something the individual employee is fully responsible for, without any regard to the broader institutional, social or organizational context.

Self-development programs, with all their paraphernalia (such as PDPs), have been interpreted by DiFruscia (2012: 91) as pseudo-therapeutic techniques that are part of an 'HR paradigm [that] has helped [to] make a drastic change in how work relations are perceives.' Such techniques are not about 'assaying the nature of work', to paraphrase Braverman (1974: 20), but about 'the degree of adjustment of the worker'. They help to avert eyes from labour conditions (issues such as

workload, payment, fringe benefits, scheduling, etc.) that are the ideal locus of attention for collective entities (e.g., groups of migrants, in this case) in order to improve life at work. In their stead comes a singular focus on the individual and his or her 'psychometric profile', which can fragment the workplace into individual atoms that are in competition with one another. We have already, several times, pointed at the risks of such competition and personalization for police work on the streets.

Competition clearly became important when Fehim talked about his own PDP and somewhat jealously compared it with a colleague's PDP, which got the latter promoted to community officer. I received both PDPs, which were almost similar except for the fact that Fehim's colleague added to his profile the desired identity traits that were in vogue at that moment within the organization. They distinguished personality types on the basis of a colour scheme, somewhat similar to a management instrument, Spiral Dynamics, that police managers use to identify personality traits of team members with certain colours (if you're red, you're powerful and dominant; blue means conventional and orderly, etc.).

In 2009, Fehim was again requested to re-write his PDP in order to make it possible for him to do an internship that would prepare him for community policing. 'As I revised my PDP, others were promoted without a PDP' (wrote Fehim in his journal).

'My PDP was said to be too brief, so I had to revise it again, I did so immediately and resubmitted, but I received no feedback. This gave much delay, at least six months. After this, I was said to wait for the annual personnel review, even though my team leader had promised me this wasn't necessary.'

Toward the end of 2009 he was finally allowed to start his internship. Despite the fact that he had made great strides in that year – he was applauded by most colleagues I spoke with – and had successfully completed his internship, he was not promoted to community officer. After presenting for the district management team a project that he had started and which had substantially reduced burglaries in his neighbourhood, his supervisor concluded he lacked a 'sparkling attitude' (*bruisend*, in Dutch). This course of events was not a demotion in the strictest sense – a promotion would first be needed for that – but brought him back to the

*status quo ante*. He had to start from scratch all over again. After these events, Fehim confessed in the interview that he seriously toyed with the idea to quit his job. He had communicated this to his superiors in an e-mail, but had received no response. This e-mail (copy-pasted from his journal), which he had sent to the entire team and his superiors, ended like this:

‘I thought that integrity, fair play, honesty and righteousness were highly appreciated within the police, but these things are far gone in my view. There is an atmosphere of nepotism. Colleagues are promoted *en masse* to get to certain positions. When I ask for something, nothing is possible. I feel ridiculed, mocked and played. I have no longer any trust in the police organization and feel like being harassed out of my job.’

Not much later he found himself transferred to another post doing one of the most unrewarding routine jobs within the organization, that is, simple and routine investigation work – a punishment for someone who prefers streetwork rather than deskwork. Fehim was caught with a feeling of oceanic solitude. All these events combined to have a substantial impact on this mental health, which caused a period of absence in 2010.

Herein lies the rub: by sending this e-mail, Fehim did what he thought was expected from him, that is, disclosing himself and opening up about the more intimate regions of his life. This was in line with the expectations of his PDP (and other psychological applications that are discussed in the next section), in which he eventually would come to write:

‘I shouldn’t be too modest; I should step in the limelight. Need to be more extrovert. This takes away the impression that I don’t dare to say certain things. I shouldn’t be self-effacing. Need to stand out.’

For all he knew, personal development was about the acknowledgement of and reflection on your actions and thoughts, the ways you deal with disappointments, regrets, etc. (cf. Townley 1993). It is at this point that we come to the statement on risk-taking in the previous section. Those who refuse to open up to psychological discourses may forgo opportu-

nities, but those who embrace them put themselves immediately at risk. As such, Fehim and the HR professional in DiFruscia's article (see previous section as well) faced a similar situation. The autonomy of the act is violated, we could say via Goffman (1961), because individual agency gets immediately surrounded by punitive structures once anything out of the ordinary tends to occur, that is, once the individual's actions or thoughts diverge from managerial ideas on proper psychological discourse. This notion of risk-taking will reappear in the next section in an even stronger way.

### **2010-2013: the autobiographical climax**

In 2010, I sat together with a deputy District Commander (DC) for an informal conversation about the progress of my research. Enthusiastic as always, the DC openly shared her knowledge about the topic of my research and told me about a 'fireplace session' she had recently conducted with five Turkish-Dutch (male) colleagues at a fancy restaurant in an idyllic village close by. These sessions take place in comfortable settings – 'we have our feet on the table and sit by the fire,' said the DC – and are intended to encourage employees to open up about troubles at work. This time she had invited those five men, because time and again they did not succeed in getting promoted to Sergeant, the rank that gives access to community policing in the Netherlands. Their careers were stalled, even though their work performance was perfectly up to standards (this was confirmed in their job evaluations according to the DC). Toward the end of the session the DC concluded that all five of them did a great job (by qualitative and quantitative measurements) but lacked the communicative and personal skills to make this known to others. They were advised to work on their entrepreneurship, open-mindedness and flexibility, as these had become key competence within the organization, the DC claimed.

She was right on that count. Two years earlier a new diversity management expert group had made its entrance into the organization and many of its activities centralized the five core competences of the Multicultural Personality Questionnaire – cultural empathy, open-mindedness, social initiative, emotional stability, and flexibility (cf. Van

der Zee and Van Oudenhoven 2001). The questionnaire was developed by a member of the NSvP, Karen van der Zee. Van der Zee had applied this questionnaire in her police research. It was distributed among police officers in the south of the Netherlands in order to measure officers' multicultural personalities. Moreover, the expert group had designed a program that propagated these multicultural personality traits as the *sine qua non* of police leadership. Since the five officers pursued a position that involves leadership, the DC's advice makes sense at first blush.

In the winter of 2012-2013, I was doing fieldwork in the district and joined one of the fireplace session participants, Halil, for several weeks, although I was unaware at that time that he had been in fact one of the participants. Things fell into place when Halil, during one of our joint car patrols, shared his concerns about the career-related hardships that ethnic minorities have to endure within the organization. He said that he was disappointed about the fireplace session since nothing had been done with it afterwards. Nobody had received feedback, there was no follow-up, and almost three years later none of the participants had been promoted to Sergeant. 'I had the feeling I was forced to sell myself, which I am unable to do. Perhaps I should go to a marketplace or something for some time', Halil complained about the self-commodification (Gershon 2011; Urciuoli 2008) he felt was imposed upon him. Coincidentally, at the end of the month we spent together, Halil was in fact promoted to Sergeant, although it remained unclear to him whether this was a result of the large-scale roadblock that he had prepared for several months and brought to a successful end ('the best one we ever had,' according to a colleague) or the empowerment course ('you're the director of your own life') in which he had recently enrolled. This course was originally intended for ethnic minority police officers only, to help them become (feel) empowered.

At first it was an imponderable to me that Halil became so enthusiastic about the course, in which he was taught the exact same things he resented before – things that were also encouraged during the fireplace session. Here are some quotations from the course material, a book written by the course instructor himself (Chrifi 2010). 'Liberate yourself from all constraints, which only exist in your head, and learn how to use your power to become happier and more successful. Take matters into your own hands. Only you are responsible for your own life' (2010: 10). 'Dare to show yourself and to be vulnerable' (2010: 20). 'In

order to succeed you only have to be open and willing to change' (2010: 23). 'You can turn yourself into anything you like, but you have to choose (200: 58).

Only much later it dawned on me that Halil's case can be seen as a prototypical example of what Gershon (2011; see previous chapter) calls 'neoliberal agency'. Within the course of a month he had turned himself into the archetypical self-reliant career manager (Lane 2011) who 'epitomize[s] the neoliberal enterprising self' (Lane 2009: 683). 'This concept of agency requires a reflexive stance in which people are subjects for themselves,' writes Gershon (2011: 539), and this is what happened to Halil. In the end, it was perhaps neither the roadblock nor the empowerment course alone that gave Halil his promotion. It is feasible that his participation in the empowerment course indicated his willingness to open up to neoliberal agency and that the organization of the roadblock was a realization of it. Unfortunately, Halil's positive vibe did not last long. Several months later I received an e-mail from him in which he complained he felt burned out. This made me think again of Shield and Grant's (2010) comment on the employee as a resource object. Halil was optimally used as a human resource for a while, but eventually got exhausted; he burned out (see also Blommaert, Mutsaers and Siebers 2012).

More than two years would go by after the fireplace session before I learned that Fehim had been one of the other participants. Just like Halil initially did, Fehim too felt misled and betrayed and talked about it as unidirectional ('there was no sympathy for our feelings of exclusion; it was just a one-way street,' he said in an interview). The DC only had absorbed her subordinates' personal information but had given nothing in return. The cosy setting was just a farce to Fehim, a décor to make him and his colleagues feel at ease and reveal as much as possible from their inner selves. His experience might be interpreted as a submission to some sort of Foucauldian confession technique (cf. Covaleski et al. 1998; Campbell and Roberts 2007) that enticed him into confessing his deepest feelings and emotions, allegedly to get things off his chest and to rebuild his persona. But his whole life was opened up and he got nothing in return other than several comments about how to improve his psychological profile. Arguably, these comments go directly against the aims of the Multicultural Personality Questionnaire they resonate with, provided that such a questionnaire is designed to actually improve diversity at

work and to allow for diversification in the higher echelons of the organization. Curiously, the various measures of this questionnaire were used against officers with an ethnic minority background (these are some of the items that are included in the questionnaire: 'is inclined to speak out', 'takes the lead', 'is often the driving force behind things', 'takes it for granted that things will turn out right'; see Van der Zee and Van Oudenhoven 2001). It is rather difficult to make conclusive statements about the motivations or intentions of the DC. For all we know she really believed these five men would score low on these items and were thus not up for the task of supervision. Perhaps she was even right on that count, but that is not what must concern us. The problem is that the DC omitted, or was incapable, to understand their personal troubles as public issues, that is, she failed to take seriously the structural impediments they faced.

It may help to revisit Bauman's *Liquid Modernity* (2000b) and interpret these confession techniques as auxiliaries to what he terms 'life politics'. Central to his analysis of life politics is the observation that people who live in this historical form of human cohabitation (liquid modernity) feel constantly coerced to share intimacies (see also Richard Sennett in the previous chapter). 'When public politics sheds its functions and life politics take over,' Bauman warns, the public sphere is likely to be excavated except for 'the site where private worries are confessed and put on public display' (2000b: 51-52). No matter how humanizing and liberating management techniques such as fireplace sessions or other methods of 'participatory management' or 'follower-oriented leadership' are supposed to be, Fehim simply experienced them as another effort to turn invisible the discriminatory forces that already weighed him down and impeded his career advancement. For him, they were mere cosmetics.

Despite his fierce resistance, Fehim nonetheless hewed to the psychological discourses that circulated within the organization. In the numerous conversations we had, he constantly stressed he felt the urge to reveal himself and to bring in his personal life as a way to come across as authentic (see also the earlier quotation from his PDP). This culminated in an autobiographical climax in March 2013, when together with a Dutch and Turkish-Dutch colleague (Els and Serkan) he taught the course discussed in Chapter 6. As stated before, it struck me from the outset that Serkan and Fehim had chosen a more engaged and auto-

biographical approach, while Els presented herself as a somewhat distanced expert in cultural theory. The autobiographical climax to which the subtitle in this chapter refers to came when Fehim turned towards his own life history to explain to the participants the ins and outs of honour-related violence. I was completely taken by surprise – as was almost everybody else in the room – when he opened up about the pressure he once felt to end the life of his sister-in-law who got remarried, through an arranged wedding, three months after Fehim’s brother had died from a traffic accident. He had approached her with a knife with the intent to kill and would have actually done so if it weren’t for his father’s last-minute intervention. During the course Fehim elaborated with many intimate details about the events that preceded and followed the averted attack, and explained to the group how these all revolved around the *namus*, the honour of the family. But no matter how nuanced his story was, the only thing that made a lasting impression was the knife and all his colleagues talked about while having a smoke outside during the break was their shared disbelief. A few weeks later I conducted an interview with one of the course participants who confirmed that Fehim had raised suspicion in many quarters.

I had an informal course evaluation with Fehim and the other instructors afterwards. While discussing Fehim’s part in the program, he was complimented by the other course instructors for his courage to openly share with the group some of the most vulnerable episodes of his life. When I asked him if he had given any thought to the potential risks of his approach, his answer was affirmative, but he stressed that beyond and above his fears he felt the urgency to expose himself openly to his colleagues: ‘I wanted to show all of me.’

It is at this point that we can bring the interrelation of neoliberal agency and risk-taking into our analytical ambit, via Gershon (2011: 540):

‘According to the neoliberal perspective, to prosper, one must engage with risk. All neoliberal social strategies centre on this. Neoliberal agents are responsible for their own futures – they supposedly fashion their own futures through their decisions. By the same token, regardless of their disadvantages and the unequal playing field, actors are maximally responsible for their failures.’



Fehim's was a risky enterprise because he had created a field so mined by designators of group affiliation (by discussing Turkish people who feel the urge to defend their family honour, in the context of a course on ethnic profiling, criminality and ethnicity, group thinking, etc.) that it became well-nigh impossible for him to appropriate psychological discourses that prioritize the individual (e.g., ethnicity as an individual, not a shared group property). He had to give it a shot, but it misfired. He was now one of them, inextricably bound up with criminal migrant groups. When his colleagues started to mistrust Fehim, his superiors did not intervene. It was his decision, he missed the mark and was made maximally responsible for this own 'failure'.

### **Against greedy institutions**

'When desire for wholeness leads to an enlistment in greedy institutions, it may end in an obliteration of the characteristics that mark the private person as an autonomous actor... Commitment to greedy institutions requires that the autonomy gained by men who stand at the intersection of many circles is relinquished, and is replaced by heteronomous submission to the all-encompassing demands of organizations that greedily devour the whole man in order to fully fashion him into an image that serves their needs.'

This piece of text comes from Lewis A. Coser's landmark book on 'greedy institutions' (1974: 16-17). I consider it useful to better grasp the psychologization processes that we have critically discussed in this chapter and the one preceding it. The police department under study is de facto a prototype of what Coser called a 'greedy institution'. Not in the sense used in Chapter 2 (work is infinite) but in the sense that it demands undivided commitment of the 'whole person' and usurps the private spheres of its members. Four key words can be extracted from the quotation: (1) wholeness; (2) organizational needs; (3) submission; and (4) autonomy. By linking these four key words to the four statements that were introduced in the first section of this chapter (on belief systems, confessions, competition and risk-taking) we can further our under-

standing of the cases at hand and locate more precisely the theoretical criticism taken here.

PDPs, fireplace sessions, empowerment courses, autobiographical imperatives, and the role of personality profiles in assessments have in my view caused the loss of contour in labour control, in the sense that much more than officers' life at work is now under surveillance. They have de facto turned the police into a prototype of a greedy institution, as they demand the undivided commitment of the whole person. They usurp the private life. This is primarily done through the encouragement of confessions (the PDP, the journal, the e-mail, the training, and the fireplace session).

The ethnographic cases show that opening up the finer and more intimate regions of personal and interpersonal life can hardly be said to contribute to personal fulfilment or happiness. Both Fehim and Halil declared they were exhausted and Fehim admitted he had thought about quitting his job altogether and called in sick for several weeks (just like Ayse and many others I've spoken with). The various psychological applications are in place to 'produce the appropriate individual' who is 'deemed congruent with managerially defined objectives' (Alvesson and Willmott 2002: 619). In other words, they are there for organizational needs. And it worked. Halil had organized one of the most successful roadblocks in the district's history and Fehim's course participants had gained deeper insights into honour killings, insights they would not have without Fehim's confessions. The appropriate individual is the self-managing, self-reliant career manager with his 'decidedly neoliberal leanings' (Lane 2011: 162) who is in competition with everyone else. This notion of competition emerged when Fehim confessed to be jealous several times and wanted to outcompete his colleague on the basis of his PDP.

I emphatically agree with DiFruscia (2012: 96) who states that

'While HR discourse and psychologization practices require workers to be "authentic", to "reveal themselves", and to "be themselves at work" in order to "uncover their full potential", this authenticity and freedom must adopt a form the employer dictates... When "being transparent and authentic" means that workers are revealing their disagreement with the organization's higher purpose, or showing stress or malaise, or simply disturbing the

scrupulously manufactured work environment, suddenly these “authentic selves” are viewed as pathological, and the therapeutic-managerial apparatus steps up its vigil.’

Just like DiFruscia’s informants (e.g., the HR professional), Fehim was puzzled. He was allowed, encouraged even by his superiors and the other two instructors, to ‘reveal himself’ during the course on honour-related violence. This revelation had instrumental value to the organization. But when he disclosed his feelings of dissatisfaction with the way he was treated as an employee (something he hoped to be instrumental to his own career) the managerial apparatus indeed stepped up its vigil and side-tracked him.

This brings us back to the statement on risk-taking and connects it to Coser’s ideas on heteronomous submission. In two instances, Fehim took tremendous risks and was rendered submissive: first (the e-mail) by his superiors and then (the course) by his colleagues. Whatever he did, Fehim had to take the brunt of psychological discourses. This wickedness, so to speak, also applies to the various identity profiles or ‘soft skills’ discussed in this chapter and the previous (‘sparkling’, ‘entrepreneurial’, ‘flexible’, ‘open-minded’, etc.) and which we nowadays find amassed in job profiles (Urciuoli 2008, 2010). As Urciuoli has demonstrated superlatively well, these soft skills can be easily manipulated and used at will. They can be deliberately used to leave matters up in the air. ‘What do they mean with sparkling?’ Fehim must have wondered, and how does it relate to my ability to be a good police officer? It is because of this blurring boundary between personality and competency, that the allocation of jobs not only becomes dependent upon the personal taste of superiors (the ‘personalized ruling’ referred to earlier), but also that criteria are used which are not even remotely connected to the job that needs to be done. Perhaps this is the more up-to-date version of what Harry Braverman (1974) meant with the degradation and de-skilling of work. We have busted that crook... and we did so with a sparkling attitude.

This denotational vagueness in job criteria we have talked about before, does not have arbitrary (non-discriminatory) effects on the workforce. On the contrary, the use of fuzzy and ambiguous criteria in assessment procedures has been widely documented to fuel ethnic inequality in work settings (e.g., Campbell and Roberts 2007; Moss and

Tilly 1996; Siebers 2009a and 2009b). The argument advocated by Siebers is that fuzzy criteria exacerbate ethnic inequality because they calibrate and evaluate employees' qualities on the basis of subjective judgment rather than objective criteria, and thus allow for unequal treatment. This argument is in vein with Moss' and Tilly's (1996) who

'show that "soft skills" requirements... leave much room for majority selectors' subjectivity in their assessment whether a candidate disposes of such skills, due to the vague and fuzzy nature of soft skills.' (Siebers 2009a: 65)

Because non-ethnic diacritics are used, one can never be sure whether or not discrimination has occurred (which leads to the fact that many charges of discrimination which I have come across within the Dutch police have either been dropped or have failed to bring to light any wrongdoing). This uncertainty is also shown by Fehim's hedging, as demonstrated in the preceding, when he talked about his superior's reluctance to let him join Meryem's team: 'I think, I mean it's just a suggestion, I feel that...' Again, he felt discriminated, but could not prove it.

This observation brings us to the final statement, on the belief system, and connects it to Coser's remark on autonomy. Most of the psychological applications discussed in this chapter are deployed in a general fashion and address police officers with all kinds of backgrounds. However, as my ethnography advanced I started to notice a pattern in the sense that these techniques were more often used negatively in the case of officers with a migration background. In cases when others were given more latitude, Turkish-Dutch or Moroccan-Dutch colleagues were monitored more strictly and were more often confronted with coercion. This brings me to the following issue. As the analysis of the government of psychological life as an enterprise has become an expanding frontier in neoliberal governmentality studies (see Binkley 2011; Cruikshank 1996; Miller and Rose 1988; Barry et al. 1996), it has become clear that it is generally assumed that such psychological governance takes place in a positive fashion (see also the previous chapter). That is, personal fulfilment and organizational performance are said to co-evolve linearly. What is good for the individual is good for the organization and vice versa. As such, we have begun to capture the ways in which 'regulatory practices and

techniques have come to operate, not through a crushing of wills or a subjugation of desires but through the promotion of subjectivity, through investment in individual lives' (Miller and Rose 1988: 172). A whole range of organizational forms and technical methods are deployed nowadays to extend the field of freedom (Maravelias 2007), practices in the form of enterprise, choice and autonomy (Rose 1996). These insights stem from what Foucault had to say more than forty years ago:

'In defining the effects of power as repression, one adopts a purely juridical conception of such power, one identifies power with a law which says no, power is taken above all as carrying the force of prohibition. Now I believe that this is a wholly negative, narrow, skeletal conception of power, one which has been curiously widespread... What makes power hold good, what makes it accepted, is simply the fact that it doesn't only weigh on us as a force that says no, but that it traverses and produces things, it induces pleasure, forms knowledge, produces discourse.' (Foucault 1972: 119)

Its fruits do not, however, accrue to Fehim or Halil nor to many other ethnic minority officers who I have met over the years. They are captured by a belief system that privileges autonomy and individual agency – or better, neoliberal agency – and that obscures the broader institutional, cultural, political or organizational factors that shape their lives. This belief system became very real to Fehim when he was left to his own devices when things went awry after the course, that is, when he was not backed-up by superiors when the mistrust of his colleagues had grown. Intervention was considered the enemy of individual energy and initiative. That labour control didn't reveal itself as an external force does not mean that it wasn't there. It had simply been turned invisible. It still had a hand in managing the internal labour market. Inaction shares its ontological status with action.

In conclusion, I can accept that the power effects of the psychological applications under scrutiny in this chapter derive from their *tendency* toward prescription and production, rather than prohibition and repression. I do believe, however, that we need to make a distinction between their use and their function and keep our eyes open for their potentially repressive and prohibitive dimensions in certain cases and in

certain contexts. That is, ethnic minority and majority police officers alike are confronted with the same techniques, but these techniques often function differently – in most cases at the detriment of migrants. I say ‘often’ because it would be an exaggeration to state that this is the case without exception. This wouldn’t do justice to variation across contexts. Nonetheless, I consider monitoring the heterogeneous effects of these psychological applications a central task for a critical anthropology of work in general and a public anthropology of policing in particular.

## 9 Reclaiming the public in policing

We have started this book by cataloguing the inadequacies and omissions of the anthropological discipline related to its public role, value and presence, and we made a case for a public anthropology. Three aspects of a public anthropology were emphasized.

First, we stressed that it needs to be accessible and available and that much more attention ought to be paid to a wider dissemination of anthropological work. Recent events (think Ferguson, think Charlie Hebdo) cry out for anthropological analysis. We have much to offer to a broader public (e.g., Erickson 2014; Karpiak 2015; Manning 2014; Mutsaers 2015), but we need to make more of an effort to reach out. Initiatives such as the online forum *Anthropoliteia* – which offers publically available anthropological analyses of police, security, crime, law and punishment around the world – are good examples. Texts that are published for a wider public ought not to be adorned with scientific jargon. In the present book I have therefore attempted to entwine empirical and theoretical registers in order to avoid lengthy theoretical accounts that are only interesting for seasoned anthropologists or sociologists.

Second, a public anthropology needs to be transparent about its procedures. Anthropological productions cannot be presented to the reader as just-so-stories, written up by omniscient scientists who presume to have the capacity and capability to shed light on an objective truth. Milestone publications such as *Writing Culture* (Clifford and Marcus 1986) and *Time and the Other* (Fabian 1983) have dealt summarily with this presumption. Within anthropology, forces have gathered to argue for a democratic formation of knowledge. One of the forerunners has hitherto been unmentioned in this light: Dell Hymes (e.g., 1996). Throughout his work, Hymes called for ethnographic knowledge to be shared, democratic and open to all. Hymesian ethnography has everything to do with the distribution of voice, the maintenance of intimate and long-term relations with informants and the creation of democratic knowledge (see also Mutsaers et al. forthcoming). He saw his work as a

collaboration and ethnographic practice as a 'learning environment for those who were the target of inquiry, bringing ethnographic and ultimately ethnological knowledge back to the community that had provided it' (Blommaert 2013b: 127). What Hymes called 'ethnographic monitoring' consists in essence of three basic steps: consulting informants to identify issues that concern them most; observing behaviour relevant to that issue; and, finally, feeding back the findings to informants and thus committing to a fair construction of knowledge that balances and checks different views and interpretations thereof (see also Van der Aa and Blommaert 2011). As much as I could, I have followed these steps to give equal weight to people's voice throughout the project.

Third, a public anthropology should address issues that matter to people – 'frontline issues', issues that have public value – and do this in such a way that alternatives are offered to mainstream thought and action. *Verfremdung*, defamiliarization, looking at things quizzically, thinking along unfamiliar lines, resisting dominant discourses. In the introduction we alluded to the parallels between public anthropology and *parrēsia*. Here I borrow from Thomas Hyland Eriksen, who argued in his *Engaging Anthropology* (2006: 38) that an engaging anthropologist, very much like the *parrēsiast*, is speaking 'against received wisdoms and representations that are dominant in a way that entails a certain personal risk.' In 1982-1983, Michel Foucault dedicated over two months of lecturing at the Collège de France to the word *parrēsia*. In the published version of his lectures, *Governing of Self and Others* he writes that

'One of the original meanings of the Greek word *parrēsia* is to "say everything", but in fact it is much more frequently translated as free-spokenness (*franc-parler*), free speech, etcetera.' (2010: 43)

Another dimension of it, already mentioned above, is subversion. Foucault takes as an exemplary scene of *parrēsia* a man who stands up to a tyrant and tells him the truth. If subversion and speaking out against power is the second dimension of *parrēsia*, risk-taking automatically follows as a third. Foucault tells us that

'what precisely makes the statement of its truth in the form of *parrēsia* something absolutely unique among other forms of ut-



terance and other formulations of the truth, is that *parrēsia* opens up a risk.’ (2010: 63)

It is obvious then that looking at the public anthropologist as a *parrēsiast* does not make the job any easier. It means breaking conventions, stepping on people’s toes, going against the mainstream. Such an enterprise is indeed full of risks. Didier Fassin, now Professor of Social Science at the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton, personally experienced this (see 2013a, 2013b). Between 2005 and 2007 he joined an anticrime squad operating in an under-privileged Parisian suburb. He gave vivid descriptions of the interrelations of destitution, police brutality and social hierarchy. In his book *Enforcing Order* he reflected upon the risks of anthropology going public. When Fassin started to appear in the media on a regular basis to shed light on his work, he ‘came up against a ban on the continuation of his work’:

‘A ban couched in ‘civil’ terms, but imposed with a persistence that left little doubt as to the determination to prevent me from completing a study that had been initiated under the best auspices. My ‘discovery’ of the censorship that prevails around law enforcement will not surprise experts in the field who know that, in reality, secrecy and opacity are the rule, disclosure and transparency the exception.’ (2013a: 13-14)

As stated before, this is not something that I have experienced so far, despite the fact that the conclusions which are drawn in this book (and the various publications available before it) go directly against the grain of contemporary police policies and practices in the Netherlands. Let us now turn to this discrepancy as a way of concluding and, while doing so, discover one more way in which we can understand the anthropology of policing as a public anthropology.

### **‘Biocracy’ and the triumph of the private over the public**

Let us summarize some of the empirical materials of the previous chapters in one paragraph. A Superintendent (Dinesh) is not promoted to

team leader because his superiors consider him unauthentic. Another one (Meryem) is side-tracked for being too assertive. A Senior Constable (Serkan) is framed as psychologically weak. A Sergeant (Ayse) and a Superintendent (Aziza) are aggressively approached by their colleagues because of the religion they adhere to in their private lives, and the Sergeant gets relocated to another division because her psychological profile is deemed inappropriate (she defended through withdrawal and silence after her call upon bureaucratic help yielded nothing). Due to his ethnic background, an Inspector (Abder) is viewed as similar to unwanted 'ethnic others' in the district and finds himself isolated. A community officer (Sergeant Mo) is encouraged by his superiors to blur all boundaries between his public role and his private life. He works in plain clothes, does not have to show up at briefings, distributes his cell phone number among neighbourhood residents, knows everybody in the community because he lives in the police district where he works, etc. He brings life to work and work to life. A Senior Constable (Fehim) feels so much pressure to show who he really is that he makes a confession *en public* about a tragic episode in his life. Another one (Halil) enrolls in an empowerment course to bring the best out of himself, instead of hiding behind a role.

The various cases that we have discussed in-depth throughout this book help us understand what Peter Fleming (2014a, 2014b) means to describe with the concept of 'biocracy': a method of ruling that 'encourages the "whole person" in the workplace, with individual difference, diversity and "life" more generally becoming key organizational motifs' (Fleming 2014b: 878). Biocracy can be seen as the opposite of bureaucracy, which was explicitly designed to demarcate the myriad individual traits and personal features of the office holder. 'Weber would be shocked,' says Fleming (2014a: 23), 'by the sheer personality expressed in the modern corporation.' Under pressure of a come-as-you-are ideology and the ubiquitous psy-frame, officers are increasingly asked to show who they really are and requested not to hide behind public roles. The latter is considered to be phoney.

It may seem farfetched but I dare to claim that we have witnessed the beginning of a collapse of boundaries between the private and the public sphere in favour of the former. The separateness and complexity of different domains of social reality that was upheld by bureaucratic forms

of organizing is giving way to one-dimensionality. I agree with Richard Sennett who wrote in *The Fall of Public Man* that

‘confusion has arisen between public and intimate life; people are working out in terms of personal feelings public matters which properly can be dealt with only through codes of impersonal meaning.’ (1974: 5)

We have seen the disastrous effects of this confusion for ethnic minority employees within the Dutch police organization, despite the fact that it results from intentions to ‘humanize’ the workplace. For good reasons Sennett (1974: 260) raises the question: ‘is it humane to form soft selves in a hard world?’ It isn’t – certainly not when these soft selves are moulded by a more ‘holistic type of power’ (Fleming 2014a) that is not only based on disciplinary (bureaucratic) techniques but on biopolitical (biocratic) methods as well. As Fleming correctly observes, biocracy infinitizes the otherwise finite register of work and must be seen as an extension of regulation rather than its repose (2014a: 30).

But let us bring into the picture the specificity of a law enforcement agency. Phenomena such as biocracy, the ruling of the psy-disciplines and psychological ways of framing labour (relations) that have only recently come to the fore in academia, have often been studied in regular work contexts, as the various references in Chapters 7 and 8 indicate. From a critical labour perspective it makes sense to criticize such phenomena as the ‘new enclosure movement’ (Fleming 2014a: 23) that usurps more and more of social life at the service of corporate life and that turns life itself (bios) into an essential human resource to be exploited. It is the overburdening of the private domains of the employee (summarized by Fleming [2014b] as non-work put to work, private time put to work, and unpaid labour put to work) that is problematic for the average worker. In a police context, however, it is the emptying of the public domain and the retreat of the public aspects of police work (that is, the other side of the coin) that are problematic. They are problematic for those who are ‘served’.

It is the disintegration of the public character of police work that makes it possible for street cops to allow prejudices and stereotypes to play a role on the job – certainly when their cognitions are influenced by the migrant-hostile conditions discussed in Chapter 4 and 5. The micro-

deportations described earlier (in Tilburg and in Rotterdam) are a despicable and scandalous but at the same time explainable result. It is also this disintegration that must account for the fact that a whole department considers it normal to penetrate the private worlds of entire subpopulations – ethnically defined – and spy on them. Operations such as PsyCops result from the conflation of private and public spheres and show us that such one-dimensionality invites totalitarian inclinations. When the public character of police work disintegrates, law enforcement necessarily becomes a more subjective and arbitrary enterprise. We are insufficiently aware of this danger.

Despite the power of psy-frames it remains obvious that officers operate as social beings in a multi-frame reality. Even discretion – that part of police work where the law doesn't reach – is a socialized rather than an individualized thing. In that sense, all police work is social work. But this doesn't mean that it is public. Conflating privatization and individualization is based on misapprehension. It is in that sense that we must understand the reclaiming of the public in policing. I hope it is clear by now that this book calls upon officers to correctly fulfil a public role. 'Humanizing' intentions are underscored in psy-frames, but we should be careful and take our lessons from Trilling (1971: 18): 'a false good is more dangerous than actual evil.'

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# Tilburg Dissertations in Culture Studies

This list includes the doctoral dissertations that through their authors and/or supervisors are related to the Department of Culture Studies at the Tilburg University School of Humanities. The dissertations cover the broad field of contemporary sociocultural change in domains such as language and communication, performing arts, social and spiritual ritualization, media and politics.

- 1 Sander Bax. *De taak van de schrijver. Het poëtische debat in de Nederlandse literatuur (1968-1985)*. Supervisors: Jaap Goedegebuure and Odile Heynders, 23 May 2007.
- 2 Tamara van Schilt-Mol. *Differential item functioning en itembias in de cito-eindtoets basisonderwijs. Oorzaken van onbedoelde moeilijkheden in toetsopgaven voor leerlingen van Turkse en Marokkaanse afkomst*. Supervisors: Ton Vallen and Henny Uiterwijk, 20 June 2007.
- 3 Mustafa Güleç. *Differences in similarities: A comparative study on Turkish language achievement and proficiency in a Dutch migration context*. Supervisors: Guus Extra and Kutlay Yağmur, 25 June 2007.
- 4 Massimiliano Spotti. *Developing identities: Identity construction in multicultural primary classrooms in the Netherlands and Flanders*. Supervisors: Sjaak Kroon and Guus Extra, 23 November 2007.
- 5 A. Seza Doğruöz. *Synchronic variation and diachronic change in Dutch Turkish: A corpus based analysis*. Supervisors: Guus Extra and Ad Backus, 12 December 2007.
- 6 Daan van Bel. *Het verklaren van leesgedrag met een impliciete attitudemeting*. Supervisors: Hugo Verdaasdonk, Helma van Lierop and Mia Stokmans, 28 March 2008.
- 7 Sharda Roelsma-Somer. *De kwaliteit van Hindoescholen*. Supervisors: Ruben Gowricharn and Sjaak Braster, 17 September 2008.
- 8 Yonas Mesfun Asfaha. *Literacy acquisition in multilingual Eritrea: A comparative study of reading across languages and scripts*. Supervisors: Sjaak Kroon and Jeanne Kurvers, 4 November 2009.

- 9 Dong Jie. *The making of migrant identities in Beijing: Scale, discourse, and diversity*. Supervisors: Jan Blommaert and Sjaak Kroon, 4 November 2009.
- 10 Elma Nap-Kolhoff. *Second language acquisition in early childhood: A longitudinal multiple case study of Turkish-Dutch children*. Supervisors: Guus Extra and Kutlay Yağmur, 12 May 2010.
- 11 Maria Mos. *Complex lexical items*. Supervisors: Antal van den Bosch, Ad Backus and Anne Vermeer, 12 May 2010.
- 12 António da Graça. *Etnische zelforganisaties in het integratieproces. Een case study in de Kaapverdise gemeenschap in Rotterdam*. Supervisor: Ruben Gowricharn, 8 October 2010.
- 13 Kasper Juffermans. *Local languaging: Literacy products and practices in Gambian society*. Supervisors: Jan Blommaert and Sjaak Kroon, 13 October 2010.
- 14 Marja van Knippenberg. *Nederlands in het middelbaar beroepsonderwijs. Een casestudy in de opleiding Helpende Zorg*. Supervisors: Sjaak Kroon, Ton Vallen and Jeanne Kurvers, 14 December 2010.
- 15 Coosje van der Pol. *Prentenboeken lezen als literatuur. Een structuralistische benadering van het concept 'literaire competentie' voor kleuters*. Supervisor: Helma van Lierop, 17 December 2010.
- 16 Nadia Eversteijn-Kluijtmans. *"All at once" – Language choice and code-switching by Turkish-Dutch teenagers*. Supervisors: Guus Extra and Ad Backus, 14 January 2011.
- 17 Mohammadi Laghzaoui. *Emergent academic language at home and at school. A longitudinal study of 3- to 6-year-old Moroccan Berber children in the Netherlands*. Supervisors: Sjaak Kroon, Ton Vallen, Abderrahman El Aissati and Jeanne Kurvers, 9 September 2011.
- 18 Sinan Çankaya. *Buiten veiliger dan binnen: in- en uitsluiting van etnische minderheden binnen de politieorganisatie*. Supervisors: Ruben Gowricharn and Frank Bovenkerk, 24 October 2011.
- 19 Femke Nijland. *Mirroring interaction. An exploratory study into student interaction in independent working*. Supervisors: Sjaak Kroon, Sanneke Bolhuis, Piet-Hein van de Ven and Olav Severijnen, 20 December 2011.
- 20 Youssef Boutachekourt. *Exploring cultural diversity. Concurrentievoordelen uit multiculturele strategieën*. Supervisors: Ruben Gowricharn and Slawek Magala, 14 March 2012.

- 21 Jef Van der Aa. *Ethnographic monitoring. Language, narrative and voice in a Caribbean classroom*. Supervisors: Jan Blommaert and Sjaak Kroon, 8 June 2012.
- 22 Özel Bağcı. *Acculturation orientations of Turkish immigrants in Germany*. Supervisors: Guus Extra and Kutlay Yağmur, 3 October 2012.
- 23 Arnold Pannenburg. *Big men playing football. Money, politics and foul play in the African game*. Supervisor: Wouter van Beek, 12 October 2012.
- 24 Ico Maly, N-VA. *Analyse van een politieke ideologie*. Supervisors: Jan Blommaert and Sjaak Kroon, 23 October 2012.
- 25 Daniela Stoica. *Dutch and Romanian Muslim women converts: Inward and outward transformations, new knowledge perspectives and community rooted narratives*. Supervisors: Enikő Vincze and Jan Jaap de Ruiter, 30 October 2012.
- 26 Mary Scott. *A chronicle of learning: Voicing the text*. Supervisors: Jan Blommaert, Sjaak Kroon and Jef Van der Aa, 27 May 2013.
- 27 Stasja Koot. *Dwelling in tourism. Power and myth amongst bushmen in Southern Africa*. Supervisor: Wouter van Beek, 23 October 2013.
- 28 Miranda Vroon-van Vugt. *Dead man walking in Endor. Narrative mental spaces and conceptual blending in 1 Samuel 28*. Supervisor: Ellen van Wolde, 19 December 2013.
- 29 Sarali Gintsburg. *Formulaicity in Jbala poetry*. Supervisors: Ad Backus, Sjaak Kroon and Jan Jaap de Ruiter, 11 February 2014.
- 30 Pascal Touoyem. *Dynamiques de l'ethnicité en Afrique. Éléments pour une théorie de l'État multinational*. Supervisors: Wouter van Beek and Wim van Binsbergen, 18 February 2014.
- 31 Behrooz Moradi Kakesh. *Het islamitisch fundamentalisme als tegenbeweging. Iran als case study*. Supervisors: Herman Beck and Wouter van Beek, 6 June 2014.
- 32 Elina Westinen. *The discursive construction of authenticity: Resources, scales and polycentricity in Finnish hip hop culture*. Supervisors: Sirpa Leppänen and Jan Blommaert, 15 June 2014.
- 33 Alice Leri. *Who is Turkish American? Investigating contemporary discourses on Turkish Americanness*. Supervisors: Odile Heynders and Piia Varis, 9 September 2014.
- 34 Jaswina Elahi. *Etnische websites, behoeften en netwerken. Over het gebruik van internet door jongeren*. Supervisors: Ruben Gowricharn and Sjaak Kroon, 10 September 2014.
- 35 Bert Danckaert. *Simple present*. Supervisors: Jan Blommaert and Odile Heynders, 29 October 2014.

- 36 Fie Velghe. *'This is almost like writing': Mobile phones, learning and literacy in a South African township*. Supervisors: Jan Blommaert, Sjaak Kroon and Piia Varis, 3 December 2014.
- 37 Nico de Vos. *Lichamelijke verbondenheid in beweging. Een filosofisch onderzoek naar intercorporaliteit in de hedendaagse danskunst*. Supervisors: Odile Heynders and Frans van Peperstraten, 16 December 2014.
- 38 Danielle Boon. *Adult literacy education in a multilingual context: Teaching, learning and using written language in Timor-Leste*. Supervisors: Sjaak Kroon and Jeanne Kurvers, 17 December 2014.
- 39 Liesbeth Hoeven. *Een boek om in te wonen. De verhaalcultuur na Auschwitz*. Supervisors: Erik Borgman and Maaïke de Haardt, 21 January 2015.
- 40 Laurie Faro. *Postponed monuments in the Netherlands: Manifestation, context, and meaning*. Supervisors: Paul Post and Rien van Uden, 28 January 2015.
- 41 Snezana Stupar. *Immigrants regulate emotions in the same way as majority members in the Netherlands*. Supervisors: Fons van de Vijver and Johnny Fontaine, 30 January 2015.
- 42 Jia He. *The general response style from a cross-cultural perspective*. Supervisors: Fons van de Vijver and Alejandra del Carmen Dominguez Espinosa, 4 February 2015.
- 43 Dorina Veldhuis. *Effects of literacy, typology and frequency on children's language segmentation and processing units*. Supervisors: Ad Backus, Jeanne Kurvers and Anne Vermeer, 1 April 2015.
- 44 Harrie Leijten. *From idol to art. African 'objects with power': A challenge for missionaries, anthropologists and museum curators*. Supervisors: Wouter van Beek and Paul Post, 15 April 2015.
- 45 Pelin Onar Valk. *Transformation in Dutch Turkish subordination? Converging evidence of change regarding finiteness and word order in complex clauses*. Supervisors: Ad Backus, Kutlay Yağmur and Massimiliano Spotti, 27 May 2015.
- 46 Paul Mutsaers. *A public anthropology of policing. Law enforcement and migrants in the Netherlands*. Supervisors: Arie de Ruijter and Jan Blommaert, 12 June 2015.