

Seen and Not Heard

Examining the repertoires of resistance employed by Moroccan-Dutch boys to escape criminalisation in Kanaleneiland, the Netherlands



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Abstract

While previously dismissed as an exclusively American issue, in recent years the unequal policing of ethnic minorities has increasingly been recognised as a European problem too. Indeed, in the Netherlands ethnic profiling has become a matter of serious concern, discussed by television hosts and academics alike. Yet, despite this recognition, collective claim making against the use of ethnic profiling in the Netherlands has been minimal. Responding to Tilly and Tarrow's call for further research to be undertaken on the 'oceans of apathy' found in democratic regimes, this research investigates this contradiction. Based on an ethnographic exploration into the everyday interactions between Moroccan-Dutch boys and the police in Kanaleneiland, this research argues that for the boys in this study, criminalisation has become the norm. This is reasoned as a symptom of the move towards a culture of control. While not resisting this criminalisation through the democratic repertoires outlined in the contentious politics framework, I argue that the boys are not apathetic. Rather, they are angry about the injustices they face, yet lacking faith in their potential to effect political change, they dismiss the repertoires expected to be utilised by citizens living in democratic regimes. Instead, they adopt everyday forms of resistance that bare greater resemblance to resistance found in non-democratic regimes. While this phenomenon may deviate from the contentious politics framework as set out by Tilly and Tarrow, when taking into account the boys' unequal experiences of the State and, with this, their perceptions of Dutch democracy, it makes perfect sense. I thus argue for the need to reassess and update the contentious politics framework to consider both citizens' asymmetrical experiences with, and perceptions of, democracy.

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Introduction

It was a warm, sticky Monday evening in Kanaleneiland; made significantly stickier by the fact I was just coming to the end of my weekly Taekwondo class in the neighbourhood's local sports centre. Pumped with adrenaline and accomplishment, having just learnt how to land a swift sidekick, the class came to an abrupt end, as our teacher was cut off mid-sentence by a loud bang. Sensing something was wrong; the class rushed towards the window and peered out at what initially looked like a moped accident. On closer inspection, it became clear that there had been some kind of collision between a policeman on a motorbike and a young boy on a moped. Both bikes were haphazardly strewn across the road outside the gym and the boy who had presumably been riding the moped was handcuffed and ushered into a police car. By this time, a large group of boys had begun to gather and more police cars arrived at the scene. The situation got increasingly tense as more boys arrived and there were heated exchanges between the boys and the police. One boy began filming the incident on his phone, as others looked on. One of the boys argued with the police and was pinned up against the railings, handcuffed, and thrown in a police car alongside the other.

I later found out that the boy on the moped was Youssef. Earlier that evening, there had been a mugging in Kanaleneiland. A woman's handbag had been stolen. In an attempt to chase after the mugger, the woman's husband ran up to Youssef to ask if he could borrow his moped. Unaware of any of this, Youssef panicked as he saw the man running up to him, scared and wanting to avoid any trouble, he drove off. This exchange had been caught on Kanaleneiland's numerous surveillance cameras. Within minutes, Youssef was being chased by three or four police officers. One of the police officers was on a motorbike, without saying anything, he pushed Youssef between two cars. By this point, Youssef was really scared and drove home as fast as he could. On his way home, the police officer on the motorbike came up behind him and purposefully drove into Youssef, knocking him off his moped. Youssef was then taken to the police station where he spent the night in a cell. While Youssef had nothing to do with the original incident, he has been given a handful of fines for running off and for obstruction. The police officer is also claiming that Youssef

grabbed him by his neck. Youssef has denied this, arguing that it was in fact the police officer that grabbed his neck.

Julia, an employee at the local youth centre, reflected on this incident, explaining that Youssef does not have a criminal record. He was just scared, first scared of the man who had ran up to him, and then of the police officer who drove into him. Not only has this incident been incredibly traumatic for Youssef and landed him with a number of fines, his name has now been added into the police's system and thus the chances of him getting in trouble with the police in the future have greatly increased. Karim, a boy from Kanaleneiland who I met at the youth centre, and Julia expressed being heart broken by this incident¹.

While Youssef started off as the innocent bystander of a crime, he ended up as the prime suspect, spending the night in the cell and having his details logged. If Youssef was innocent, you may be asking, “why did he run?” As this research will show, growing up in Kanaleneiland as a third generation immigrant of Moroccan heritage, you learn from a young age that in the eyes of the police, you are always guilty. Thus, frightened and wanting to avoid any trouble, in such circumstances, running is often perceived the most rational option. The story told in this vignette is just one of many and reflects the dangers experienced by Moroccan-Dutch boys growing up in the Netherlands. Labelled as both ‘at risk’ and ‘a risk’ before reaching their twelfth birthday, for the boys in this study, criminalisation has become the norm. This criminalisation involves rendering the boys’ everyday behaviour as abnormal and threatening. With this, the boys are often treated with suspicion, subject to surveillance, and often assumed guilty until proven innocent. The danger of this surveillance is evidenced by the role of the surveillance cameras in the Youssef’s arrest and is a recurrent theme in this thesis. Not only has this incident had a negative impact on Youssef, witnessed by the whole community, for the boys it is just added proof that in Kanaleneiland, you will always be assumed a criminal.

Understanding the impact of this criminalisation on the interactions between Moroccan-Dutch boys and the police in Kanaleneiland is at the heart of this thesis. With this, I will examine how policies aimed at controlling risky populations have led to the criminalisation of Moroccan-Dutch boys in Kanaleneiland. Through the

¹ Author’s field note in Kanaleneiland on 30 May 2018.

² For an overview of the recent steps taken by the police to tackle ethnic profiling;

voices of the boys themselves, I will explore the effect of this criminalisation of the boys' lives and, most significantly, the resistance strategies they have adopted in an attempt to counter the criminalisation they face. To aid in this analysis, I have developed a set of indicators to capture the criminalisation experienced by the boys. To do this, I will build on Rios' definition of criminalisation (2011). Rios defines criminalisation as a phenomenon where "everyday behaviours and styles" are "constantly treated as deviant, threatening, risky, and criminal by adults in the various social contexts they navigated" (Rios, 2011: xiv). I have fine-tuned this definition by developing a set of indicators to encapsulate how the boys in this study perceive their experiences with the police. While context specific, these indicators can potentially be drawn upon in future research on the criminalisation of ethnic minorities, furthering the applicability of the term criminalisation to field research. The indicators I have derived from this research are as follows: Experiencing increased surveillance; Being subjected to regular ID checks; Receiving excessive fines and penalties for minor infractions; Being forbidden from standing in certain public areas; Being penalised for who you hang out with; Being penalised for the actions of your peers through collective punishment; Automatically being assumed a suspect.

While I originally set out to explore the boys' experiences of ethnic profiling, referring to the "use by law enforcement of generalizations grounded in ethnicity, race, religion, or national origin—rather than objective evidence or individual behaviour—as the basis for making law enforcement and/or investigative decisions about who has been or may be involved in criminal activity" (Open Society Institute, 2009:8), when in the field I decided to focus my attention on the effects of criminalisation. Although the lines between ethnic profiling and criminalisation appear blurred, with criminalisation often grounded in racism, in Kanaleneiland, criminalisation presented itself as a more relevant term. This is because the boys in this study are known to the police, their group has been identified and determined problematic. It is not only race that determines their interactions with the police, but also their everyday behaviours, such as their choice of hangout spot and their perceived identification with a group that has been deemed 'problematic'. Thus, while the boys are seen to experience ethnic profiling, and while race appears to play a role in their interactions with the police, I argue that the boys' experiences with the Dutch penal system are best encapsulated by the concept of criminalisation.

Positioning the Research

The tense relationship between the boys and the police in Kanaleneiland can be understood by looking at recent discussions on relations between ethnic minorities and the police in the Netherlands. In recent years, numerous reports and academic articles have evidenced the existence of ethnic profiling in the Netherlands. Ethnic profiling has also dominated the Dutch media, often discussed on evening talk shows, with high profile non-white celebrities reporting being disproportionately stopped by the police. However, despite the recognition that ethnic profiling is a problem in the Netherlands, and recent steps taken by the police to tackle ethnic profiling², it continues to be a “matter of serious concern” (Amnesty International, 2017: 272). So much so that 64% of Muslims stopped by the police in the Netherlands feel that they have been stopped as a result of ethnic profiling. This is 32% greater than the European average (EAFR, 2017: 53). With this, Muslims living in the Netherlands reported the lowest level of trust in the police in Europe (ibid: 56). In fact, tensions between the police and ethnic minorities became so severe in 2015 that riots broke out in the Schilderswijk, a multicultural neighbourhood in The Hague. These riots were sparked by the death of Aruban-born Mitch Henriquez, who died of asphyxiation after the police employed a disproportionate use of force. However, while the death of Henriquez is what triggered the riots, tensions between ethnic minorities and the police in the Schilderswijk had long been brewing³. During this riot, “enraged crowds of young people threw stones at the police, broke windows, plundered a supermarket and demolished the interior of a local theatre” (Kaulingfreks, 2016: 4). The majority of these rioters were young males of migrant descent, living in areas affected by poverty (ibid). However, while the riot was triggered by the death of Henriquez, the rioters made no public statements about their motives (Kaulingfreks 2016). Consequently, the violence was largely dismissed as ‘senseless’ (ibid). In fact, despite the awareness that ethnic minorities experience unjust police treatment in the Netherlands, the country has seen little collective claim making against this injustice. It is the countries’ apparent failure to collectively speak out against the use ethnic profiling that is the catalyst of this research. The significance of this complication will be explored throughout this thesis.

² For an overview of the recent steps taken by the police to tackle ethnic profiling;

<https://controlealtdetele.nl/dossier/kies-een-kant>

³ Author’s interview with Mohammed Ghay in The Hague on 10 May 2018.

While traditionally a subject reserved for academics working in the US, in recent years, literature exploring the use of ethnic profiling in Europe, and also in the Netherlands, has flourished. This body of literature documents a move towards a culture of control in the Netherlands, in which the criminal justice system has been increasingly granted preventative powers to detect and repress risky persons as early as possible (van der Leun & van der Woude, 2011: 444). This increased focus on prevention and repression in the Netherlands has been labelled ‘prepression’ (Schinkel 2011). Taking a tough stance on crime has increasingly become a popular and important tactic in Dutch electoral campaigns. These manifestos call for “more punitive responses, more prevention and early intervention” (Boone and van Swaaningen, 2013: 10). In this political debate, nuisance in the public domain has become a key focus, with the distinction between crime and nuisance increasingly being blurred (ibid).

With this, the Dutch police have begun to engage in what is called ‘proactive policing’ (Çankaya 2012). This approach seeks to prevent crimes from taking place in the future, and, in doing this, categorise the population into those who are likely to commit crime and those who are likely to be victims its victim. According to Çankaya, “young Moroccan-Dutch men with a ‘street look’ and Eastern European men were prime targets of such proactive policing” (Çankaya in de Koning, 2017: 537). In this method, the police are encouraged to note down any behaviour that they deem useful or suspect. This note taking tends to reflect the police officers own racialised ideas about criminals and victims (ibid).

However, de Koning argues that it is not only the police who are tasked with the disciplining and controlling of risky subjects. Rather, in the Netherlands, there is a “broader institutional landscape tasked with security [...] made up of penal and welfare actors” (2017: 535). She terms this collaboration ‘diffuse policing’. Such policing “envelops targeted persons and spaces in a dense web of surveillance, and disciplinary and reform interventions that are hard to escape or challenge” (ibid). With this, a thick institutional landscape focused on youth and security has developed. In this approach, the need for a mix of care and coercion when dealing with “troublesome and criminal youths” is stressed (ibid). A focus on repression and prevention is similarly a hallmark of this method. Founded on the notion that causing ‘nuisance’ in public spaces is a signifier of future deviance, surveillance strategies have been put in place to detect early signs of problematic youth behaviour (ibid).

This is enacted through the Top600 approach developed in Amsterdam in 2011. De Koning further argues that the approach to youths in Amsterdam is not racially neutral, rather “risky populations are most often poor, often non-white, and are assumed to be found in big cities” (2017: 538).

While de Koning’s conclusions are gleaned from research in the Diamantbuurt, a multicultural neighbourhood in Amsterdam, in Kanaleneiland a similar approach to at risk youths has been taken (Kaulingfreks 2015). Taking a more systematic approach, exploring the relationship between neoliberal governance and the security measures directed at ethnic minority youths, Kaulingfreks analysis sheds light on the rationale behind the State’s increased focus on detecting ‘risky’ subjects. With this, she argues a penal panopticon⁴ has developed in Kanaleneiland. Using the work of Foucault, Kaulingfreks contends that in neoliberal societies, mechanisms of surveillance, discipline and punishment are used against those that stray from the norm (Foucault in Kaulingfreks, 2015: 267). In order to normalize those who have deviated from the path of ‘good’ and ‘normal’ citizenship, authorities employ disciplinary and penal mechanisms. Thus, those who fail to display desired civic behaviour face heavy surveillance and interference from the State. This “is intended to both contain the behaviour of deviant citizens and encourage these citizens to assume their own responsibility in participating in society in a productive and accepted way” (Kaulingfreks, 2015: 204). The panopticon described by Kaulingfreks takes on an ethnic characteristic as “risk profiles often reflect social and ethnic divisions and justify strong punitive measures in relation to marginalized groups” (Kaulingfreks, 2015: 271). Further, it is those who are less likely to have economic successes that become the objective of strict punitive measures. She thus concludes, “experiences of injustice, discrimination and repression have not gone away in these times of neoliberal governance, but have often been intensified. The omnipresence of security mechanisms favour certain groups in society, while others become increasingly vulnerable” (Kaulingfreks, 2015: 270). The move towards control in Kanaleneiland will be further explored in subsequent chapters.

Van der Leun (2017) further explores the Netherlands’ increased focus on ‘troublesome’ youth. With this, she argues, “loitering, hanging around and displaying improper behaviour, have increasingly become the target of policies aimed at

⁴ The role of the panopticon in Kanaleneiland will be explored in greater depth in chapter one of this thesis.

reducing fear for crime and insecurities” (Garland in van der Leun, 2017: 1). In line with Kaulingfreks, van der Leun equates this increase with the move towards neoliberalism (van der Leun, 2017: 1). While this focus and approach has now become the norm in the Netherlands, this has not always been the case. In fact, for decades Dutch politicians supported the notion that incivilities and anti-social behaviour should not be dealt with under criminal law “in order to avoid over-criminalisation and escalation”. Yet, thirty years later “criminalisation is seen as an important tool in the combat against incivilities” (ibid). As Çankaya, de Koning and Kaulingfreks argue, this focus is not free from racial bias; rather “problems of incivilities and anti-social behaviour in the streets in the Netherlands are first and foremost associated with young male citizens with an immigrant background in distressed and multi-ethnic neighbourhoods” (van der Leun, 2017: 10).

The shift towards a focus on crime, control, risk, and prevention in the Dutch approach to ethnic minority youths can thus be seen to form part of a general move towards neoliberalism and, with this, a “culture of control” (Garland 2001) in the West. Thus, in order to understand the phenomenon of criminalisation in Kanaleneiland, it is first necessary to briefly explore the rich body of literature on neoliberalism.

Neoliberalism is characterised by the privatisation of state or public holdings in the name of efficiency, and austerity policies materialised through budget cuts to jobs, pensions, benefits and public provision of infrastructure and social services (Demmers, 2017: 71). Neoliberalism is neither static nor unified, rather it transmutes across time and space (Peck in Demmers, 2017: 71). Theories on neoliberalism are often presented as being split between two separate vocabularies. The first approach takes a (neo)Marxian stance, theorising “neoliberalism as a concrete, strategic political project in the service of a transnational capitalist class” (Demmers, 2017: 71). With this, neoliberalism is understood as a hegemonic “coercive and repressive” project, in which power is exerted over citizens by a transnational class (Harvey in Demmers, 2017: 71). The second approach is grounded in a Foucauldian post-structuralism and understands neoliberalism as a form of governing rationality, as governmentality (Demmers, 2017: 71). In this reasoning, neoliberalism is presented as a “logic of practice and a form of normative reasoning through which the principles of the market are extended to every dimension of human life: political, cultural, social, vocational, educational, public and private” (ibid: 72). As such,

neoliberalism is argued to have infiltrated all aspects of our lives, turning us into neoliberal subjects who have lost an appetite for democratic values (Brown 2015). Neoliberalism is thus presented as normative reason, “an internalised rationality of governance and self-discipline” (Greenhouse in Demmers, 2017:72). Those who deviate from this neoliberal norm are increasingly subjected to policies focused on repression and control, enacted through intense surveillance and policing (Wacquant 2009; Graham 2010; Gilroy 2011; Robinson and Barrera 2012).

The relationship between governmentality, control and exclusion is explored by Rose (2000), in which he argues the poor become ‘governed through crime’ (Rose, 2000: 336). Wacquant similarly asserts that one of the effects of neoliberal security discourse is the criminalisation of poverty (Wacquant in Kaulingfreks, 2015: 271). This follows the political economic rationality of neoliberal societies that prescribes accepted social participation through economic participation (ibid). The link between neoliberalism and the criminalisation of the poor is further explored by Peck and Tickell, who argue ‘roll-out neoliberalism’ involves “‘new modes of ‘social’ and penal policymaking, concerned specifically with the aggressive reregulation, disciplining, and containment of those marginalized or dispossessed by the neoliberalization of the 1980s” (Peck and Tickell in de Koning, 2017). In line with this, Robinson and Barrera maintain, “unrest, spontaneous rebellion and organised political mobilisation among the structurally unemployed and marginalised pose a potential threat to the system and must be controlled and contained” (2012: 17). Thus, “the State responds to those expelled from the labour market not with expanded social welfare and protection, but with abandonment and with repressive social control and containment strategies, including racialised criminalisation” (ibid). This criminalisation is experienced most severely by young boys of colour (ibid). With this, criminalisation has become part of the “fabric of everyday life” for young boys of colour, in which their “everyday behaviours and styles were constantly treated as deviant, threatening, risky, and criminal by adults in the various social contexts they navigated” (Rios, 2011: xiv).

In sum, this literature concludes that the criminalisation of boys with migrant backgrounds can best be understood as part of a shift towards neoliberalism and culture of control. In particular, criminalisation can be seen as born out of an attempt to control and contain those that deviate from neoliberalism’s political economic rationale and have been excluded from its labour market. However, as seen by the

continued focus on care in the Netherlands, it would be wrong to argue that the welfare state has been completely replaced by the control state in the Netherlands. Rather, as Dikeç concludes in his analysis of French neoliberalism, the ‘left hand’ of the State is “increasingly accompanied by its ‘right hand’ through intensified use of the police, courts and prison system, and with a form of regulation following a ‘panoptic logic’ that involves the criminalization of the poor and the close surveillance of populations seen to be problematic” (Dikeç, 2007: 32). Further, it is important to note that this criminalisation of Moroccan-Dutch boys in the Netherlands can be seen as a multi-casual phenomenon and while derived from a mix of the above, it can also be seen as the result of identity politics and good old-fashioned racism and discrimination. While undeniably significant, an exploration into identity politics and racism in the Netherlands is beyond the scope of this research⁵.

Taking the above literature as my starting point, this thesis will investigate how the criminalisation of ethnic minority youths plays out on a local level, exploring the interactions between Moroccan-Dutch boys and the police in Kanaleneiland, the Netherlands. With this, I will explore how this abstract body of literature manifests itself in real policies and in real reactions. I will further examine the effect of criminalisation on the way Moroccan-Dutch boys perceive Dutch democracy and how, in turn, they choose to resist the criminalisation they face. To do this, I use the case of Utrecht’s Kanaleneiland, a neighbourhood that became infamous in the 1990s for youth nuisance and ‘problematic’ groups of Moroccan-Dutch boys. The overarching question of this thesis will therefore be:

What (if any) repertoires of resistance are used by Moroccan-Dutch boys to resist criminalisation in Kanaleneiland, the Netherlands, where policies directed at youths are increasingly focused on control, risk, and prevention, during Spring 2018?

⁵ For a discussion on identity politics and racism in the Netherlands, please see the following; Demmers and S. Mehendale 2010; Wekker 2016; Essed and Hoving 2015.

To answer this research question, I will focus upon five central sub-questions:

1. How has the State's move towards control manifested itself in the policies directed at youths in Kanaleneiland?
2. How do Moroccan-Dutch boys living in Kanaleneiland experience criminalisation on a day-to-day basis, and how does this shape their perceptions of the police?
3. How do Moroccan-Dutch boys' experiences and perceptions of Dutch democracy shape their choice of resistance in Kanaleneiland?
4. How (if at all) do Moroccan-Dutch boys living in Kanaleneiland resist criminalisation?
5. How does resistance employed by Moroccan-Dutch boys living in Kanaleneiland affect their experiences of criminalisation?

Analytical Frame and Sensitising Concepts

To help me answer these questions, I will draw on Tilly and Tarrow's contentious politics framework. As this contentious politics examines how "collective claims change over time and differ between regimes" (Demmers, 2017: 93), adopting this framework will enable me to investigate the relationship between neoliberalism and repertoires of resistance.

Tilly and Tarrow's notion of contentious politics fits into a broader body of literature on collective action research and can be linked to social scientific work undertaken on social movements that emerged during the 1960s (Demmers 2017). Today, "collective action research is interested in explaining the how of joint actions – in examining the mechanisms and processes that lead to collective action" (Demmers, 2017: 92). Tilly defined collective action in 1978 as "people acting together in pursuit of common interests. Collective action results from changing combinations of interests, organization, mobilization and opportunity" (ibid). This definition was later built on by Tarrow who inserts the notion of contention: "Collective action becomes contentious when it is used by people who lack regular access to institutions, act in the name of new or unaccepted claims and behave in ways that fundamentally challenge others (ibid). The combining of contention,

collective action and politics is explored in Tilly and Tarrow's latest work, 'Contentious Politics' (2015).

In 'Contentious Politics', Tilly and Tarrow seek to capture "the mechanisms and processes through which contentious politics operate. The ways in which people make collective claims change over time and differ between regimes", and why these changes occur (Demmers, 2017: 93). With this, they identify a set of common mechanisms and processes that appear across a number of contentious politics and bring about change. For Tilly and Tarrow, "contentious politics involves interactions in which actors make claims bearing on other actors' interests, leading to coordinated efforts on behalf of shared interests or programs, in which governments are involved as targets, initiators of claims, or third parties" (Tilly and Tarrow, 2015: 7). They introduce a number of concepts to show how actors make claims, identify different kinds of collective political performances, describe how these performances group into repertoires of contention and analyse how these repertoires change depending on the context. They pay particular attention to how repertoires of contention differ between democratic and undemocratic regimes: "To explain change and variation in repertoires, we must look at the current pace of political change in the regime at hand, identify incremental changes in the regime's social structure, then figure out how the two affect everyday social organization, people's cumulative experience with contention, and current operation of the regime (Tilly and Tarrow, 2015: 13).

This research pays particular attention to Tilly and Tarrow's notion of repertoires. As they depict, repertoires of contention refer to the 'shared scripts' drawn upon by groups when making collective claims. These scripts constitute "a performance that links at least two actors, a claimant, and an object of claims" (Tilly and Tarrow, 2015:16). Repertoires of contention thus refer to "patterns of collective action (that is, carried out in an organized form by larger groups) specifically linking them to certain historical forms of state power" (Johansson and Vinthagen, 2016: 421). While Tilly and Tarrow argue innovation occurs within these performances on a small scale, they recognise that "performances evolve over time" (Tilly and Tarrow, 2015: 15). They identify "two major kinds of process in repertoire change: the effects of periods of rapid political change and the outcome of incrementally changing structural factors" (ibid: 20). Repertoires are learnt through an observation of what interactions lead to political change and evolve with changes in everyday

social interaction, increasing experiences of contention and regime intervention (Tilly and Tarrow 2015).

Tilly and Tarrow argue that contentious repertoires differ significantly from one regime to another (2015). They have identified two differences among regimes that they argue have the biggest impact on contentious politics: a regimes governmental capacity and its extent (or lack of) democracy. By capacity, they mean “the extent to which governmental action affects the character and distribution of population, activity, and resources within the government’s territory” (Tilly and Tarrow, 2015: 57). By democracy, they mean “the extent to which people subject to a given government’s authority have broad, equal political rights, exert significant direct influence [...] as well as receive protection from arbitrary action by governmental agents such as police, judges, and public officials. A regime is undemocratic to the extent that political rights are narrow and/or unequal, consultation of citizens is minimal, and protections are fragile” (Tilly 2007 in Tilly and Tarrow, 2015: 57).

Tilly and Tarrow go on to explain that “while revolutions occur more frequently in authoritarian regimes with relatively high-capacity governments, and civil wars break out more frequently in regimes with governments of low to medium capacity (Fearon and Laitin 2003), social movements occur more frequently in democratic or democratizing regimes in which opportunities for peaceful interaction can be easily seized and where repression is moderate” (McAdam, Tilly, and Tarrow, 2007:19). Thus, in high-capacity democratic regimes, collective claim making and social movements are expected to flourish, in which citizens are able to make claims on authorities through selecting from a range of known repertoires, such as petitions, demonstrations, public meetings, lobbying, and so on (ibid: 5).

However, despite the assertion that in high-capacity democratic regimes collective claim making is expected to flourish, Tilly and Tarrow conclude their book on contentious politics by questioning why we so often see “oceans of apathy” in democratic regimes:

Why do citizens of democratic regimes fail to “bark”?
Why do they so often sit on their hands when they
have the right to resist? And when democracy
depends on their active participation? That might well

be the next stage in the study of contentious politics.
We invite you to take it (Tilly and Tarrow, 2015:
233).

Academic Significance

This research seeks to understand why collective claim making against the police's unjust treatment of ethnic minorities in the Netherlands has been minimal, at least in the Tillyian sense. With this, it adds to Tilly and Tarrow's contentious politics framework by responding to their call for more research to be done on the "oceans of apathy" found in democratic regimes (2015). To do this, it draws on Tilly and Tarrow's assertion that resistance is contingent on a regime's level of democracy and that change and variation in repertoires can be explained by changes to the social structure of a regime. As the above literature on neoliberalism and the criminalisation of ethnic minorities has shown, the Netherlands is increasingly moving towards a culture of control. With this, citizens are subjected to unequal experiences of democracy. This research thus seeks to explore the role of this shift on resistance, questioning if it can be used to understand the apparent lack of resistance in Kanaleneiland and, with this, the "oceans of apathy" found in democratic regimes. It does this by investigating how Moroccan-Dutch boys living in Kanaleneiland experience and perceive the Dutch State, exploring their interactions with the police and their view on the potential to effect political change through democratic repertoires of contention. This research thus not only builds on the contentious politics framework, but also contributes to a growing body of literature of the criminalisation of ethnic minorities, exploring how the move towards a culture of control plays out on a local level. In doing this, it provides a fine-tuned definition of criminalisation, built on a set of indicators derived from the boys' own perceptions.

Methodology

This thesis is epistemologically founded on interpretivism. Rather than attempting to make sense of the social world through 'explanation', interpretivism is centred on the assumption that human behaviour must be studied through 'understanding' (Demmers, 2017: 17). An interpretivist stance thus seeks to understand the meaning of action (ibid). With this, actions are seen to "derive their meaning from shared

ideas and rules of social life” (ibid). Historically and culturally specific, the construction of meaning can only be studied in context and “by integrating the self-conscious perspectives of informants themselves” (ibid). When carrying out this research, I was confronted with the ‘double hermeneutic’. This refers to the aim of obtaining knowledge through (academic) interpretations of how actors’ understand their social world (ibid). As such, the data presented in this thesis consists of my own, albeit informed, interpretations of my respondents’ interpretations. It therefore cannot talk on behalf of all Moroccan-Dutch boys in the Netherlands, or in Kanaleneiland for that matter. It is thus not possible to make generalisations from this research.

This research explores the interplay between neoliberalism and resistance. This thesis is thus ontologically built on interactionism, exploring the interaction that takes place between structure and agency. Ontology refers to “the study of being” and seeks to explore questions such as, “who/ what are we?” and “what moves us?” (Demmers, 2017: 16). There is a fundamental ontological divide in the social sciences disputing whether it is structure that determines action (structuralism), or action that determines structure (individualism). Interactionism is a compromise between these two views, combining theories on structure and agency. With this, it stresses “the salience of group identity and organizational capacity but also looks at state power, models of economic development and international linkages as importantly shaping violent conflict” (ibid: 84).

As stated, this thesis is epistemologically founded on an interpretivist perspective. In accordance with this, I have designed a research methodology that allows me to explore the construction of meaning, derived from the perspectives of the respondents themselves. To do this, I primarily rely on the stories told to me by my respondents, exploring the way in which actors give meaning to their lives. Examining forms of resistance, I further focus on practices and performances. This data was mainly gathered through my respondents' own accounts and interpretations of events. However, where possible, I have supported this data through my own observations. Taking an ontologically interactionist approach, I am interested in the interplay between structure and agency. With this, I explore the impact of structure on my respondents' lives. I further derive data from images and materials, such as street signs and surveillance cameras, investigating how control has manifested itself in Kanaleneiland. I support this data through policy analysis, exploring the role of

neoliberalism in policies directed at youths in Kanaleneiland. In this research, I employ a qualitative research methodology, enabling me to explore my respondents' experiences and perceptions. In this section, I endeavour to provide a transparent overview of how I conducted this research, where my data derived from, and the limitations of my research method.

My research approach is most closely aligned with an anthropologist's ethnographic research technique, focusing on the everyday and the local in an effort to understand social life. When conducting ethnographic research, "the ethnographer is led by his/her observations, by the voices of respondents, by being attentive to what he/ she discovers but not necessarily searched for" (Slooter, 2015: 65). The conclusions made in this thesis are thus drawn from the interpretations of the people I met during my time in the field. As an author, I simultaneously provide my own interpretations of this evidence through an analysis of the data. I entered the field with an informed yet open mind, allowing me to discover and analyse data that I was not necessarily searching for or expecting.

Following the classic ethnographic approach, I utilised a range of qualitative research methods including; semi-structured interviews, participant observation, fieldwork, recording field notes and observations, and document analysis. Before entering the field, I carried out secondary data analysis to better understand relations between Moroccan-Dutch boys and the police in the Netherlands. This allowed me to ask my respondents relevant and informed questions. I further examined policies directed at young people in Kanaleneiland. Informed by literature on neoliberalism, I identified a set of indicators to investigate the manifestation of control in Kanaleneiland. These indicators include the following: control, coercion, repression, risk, and prevention. Using an online translating device, I translated policies focused on youths, security, and safety in Kanaleneiland, searching for the above indicators. To ensure the accuracy of these translations I had them checked by a native Dutch speaker. As I am interested in the move towards control in Kanaleneiland, I examined both past and present policies, investigating the evolution of control in Kanaleneiland.

Focusing on interpretations, my primary research technique was semi-structured interviews. I largely used non-probability sampling to identify suitable respondents. In the Netherlands, Moroccan-Dutch boys are arguably the group that experience the most criminalisation. I thus decided to concentrate my research on

this demographic, interviewing boys with Moroccan-Dutch backgrounds, between their mid teens and early twenties. As my research developed, it became clear that a certain group of around forty boys have a particularly tense relationship with the police⁶. This group of boys is known for hanging around in the ‘tennis park’⁷. The majority of these boys also hang out at the local youth centre, where I conducted the bulk of my interviews. In total, I interviewed ten boys at the youth centre. These interviews were with two interviewees at a time. Generally a hard group to reach, these interviews were made possible through the help of a trusted youth centre employee. The majority of the boys I interviewed at the youth centre had Moroccan-Dutch backgrounds, however one was Turkish-Dutch. Interestingly, this boy experienced similar encounters with the police. This could be due to that fact that he is frequently mistaken as Moroccan, as he explained⁸. However, the difference between the experiences of Moroccan-Dutch and Turkish-Dutch boys is beyond the scope of this thesis. I further conducted one interview with a boy I had met in the tennis park, and interviewed three teens at Kanaleneiland’s local secondary school. At the school, I interviewed one Moroccan-Dutch boy, one Moroccan-Dutch girl, and a boy with Bosnian heritage. Significantly, these respondents expressed having experienced no, or minimal, first-hand interactions with the police. While these interviews were thus less relevant for this thesis, they highlight that it is a particular group of Moroccan-Dutch boys in Kanaleneiland that experience the most problems with the police.

I not only interviewed youngsters in Kanaleneiland, but also the police, community workers, and youth care professionals (see Appendix). As this research is interested in the interactions between Moroccan-Dutch boys and the police in Kanaleneiland, it was important to also include the voices of the Kanaleneiland police department. These interviews provided me with a deeper understanding of the relationship between the boys and the police, allowing me to investigate how the police view the boys and interpret their behaviour. In total, I interviewed three police officers⁹. As this thesis is focused on the experiences, perceptions, and performances

⁶ Author’s interview with Mustafa, community police officer, in Kanaleneiland on 12 May 2018.

⁷ The ‘tennis park’ is a play area situated in the centre of Kanaleneiland Noord, between Peltlaan and Bevinlaan.

⁸ Author’s field note in Kanaleneiland on 6 June 2018.

⁹ I initially set out to interview more, I decided not to pursue these interviews as they were jeopardising my relationship with the boys. This is because one of the boys saw me leaving the police station and thus thought I was working as an undercover police officer.

of Moroccan-Dutch boys, maintaining a relationship with this group was my top priority. By interviewing community workers and youth care professionals working in Kanaleneiland, I was able to develop a better understanding of the problems facing youths in Kanaleneiland, and the approaches taken to tackle these problems. As such, it was possible to explore how the approach to youths detailed in policy documents played out on the ground. I further carried out interviews with experts on ethnic profiling in the Netherlands, as well as academics. These interviews enabled me to reflect on my findings and helped me to contextualise the situation for Moroccan-Dutch boys in the Netherlands.

In total, I conducted thirty-seven interviews. Most of these interviews lasted between thirty minutes, and an-hour-and-a-half, with some lasting slightly longer. The majority of these interviews were conducted in English. As most of the youngsters I interviewed had a limited grasp of English, these interviews were carried out using a mix of English and Dutch. For my interviews in the school, I relied on the help of an English teacher for translation. Similarly, an employee of the youth center translated the interviews conducted at the youth center. A long time employee of the youth centre, this individual acted as both an interpreter and gatekeeper. Having established a certain level of trust with the boys, the presence of this employee enabled me to carry out interviews with a hard to reach group of boys on a sensitive topic. However, I am aware that due to her own relationship with the boys, my interpreter occasionally steered the conversation in a certain direction by asking her own questions and interjecting with her own opinions and thoughts. The majority of my interviews were taped¹⁰.

My interviews were informal and semi-structured and were loosely based on a topic guide. I asked open-ended questions to ensure respondents were able to discuss the narratives they found most relevant. I always ended the interview by asking my respondents if there was anything we had not discussed that they deemed important. My questions were initially based on my chosen analytical frameworks, however were adapted along the way to include relevant and important new

¹⁰ However, on some occasions my respondents preferred not to be recorded. Further, a handful of interviews were carried out in noisy settings, such as the park or a café. In these situations, I decided to take notes rather than record. In other instances, for example when interviewing the police, I strategically decided not to record my interviews in the hope of encouraging my respondents to talk more freely. When not recording, I ensured I took very detailed notes, carefully jotting down quotes. I transcribed these notes at the first opportunity I could.

information encountered in the field. I therefore took an inductive approach, which allows “research findings to emerge from the frequent, dominant, or significant themes inherent in raw data, without the restraints imposed by structured methodologies” (Thomas, 2006: 238). I initially started my research by contacting people I deemed relevant for my research, such as experts and youth care professionals. From there, I used snowball sampling, relying on recommendations and introductions. When at the youth centre, I interviewed boys who were already at the centre and were willing to take part in the research. It is not possible to draw generalisations from my research; rather this research explores the interpretations and experiences of a small group of people, at a particular moment in time.

I spent a total of four and a half months conducting research in Kanaleneiland. For the majority of this time, I lived in the neighbourhood. Living in Kanaleneiland allowed me to carry out participant observation. By participant observation, I refer to “the study of daily life in a broad in a broad sense, including observations of people, their acts and interactions with others, as well as the physical, social, cultural and political setting in which day life unfolds” (Slooter, 2015: 73). I began my research by trying to get an overview of life in Kanaleneiland. During this period I spent as much time as possible walking around the neighbourhood and hanging out in social spaces, such as parks, the local shopping centre and cafés. I also joined a local sports club. As this research is interested in the interaction between the boys and the police, I was particularly focused on carrying out observations in the boys’ hangout spots. I thus spent a considerable amount of time in the tennis park, where the boys often spend their time. As discussed, this research is further interested in the manifestation of control in Kanaleneiland. When on my walks, I thus looked out for evidence of this manifestation, documenting the positioning of surveillance cameras and street signs, such as the one on the front page of this thesis. Midway through my research, I was also granted access to the local youth centre. I not only carried out interviews here, but also took part in the boys’ everyday activities¹¹I was further present during a couple of meetings held between the youth workers and the boys. These meetings often addressed the problems the boys were experiencing with the police. During my time at the youth centre, I had numerous informal conversations with both the boys and the youth centre employees.

¹¹ For example, I watched films and played games with the boys. I also joined an Iftar meal and attended a visit from the mayor.

For an ethnographer, establishing trust with the people you are studying is seen as a fundamental part of gaining ‘accurate’ data as, “only by establishing long-term relationships based on trust can one begin to ask provocative personal questions, and expect thoughtful, serious answers” (Bourgois in Slooter, 2015: 77). Obtaining this trust proved the biggest obstacle in my research process. The group of boys in the study are extremely suspicious of outsiders and are generally wary of researchers. Asking questions about the police, I was automatically assumed a police informant. This suspicion was heightened when one of the boys saw me leaving the police station, following an interview with a police officer. I only managed to gain a certain level of trust when I began to visit the local youth centre, where the youth centre employees were able to vouch for me. However, as explored later on in this thesis, the youth workers in Kanaleneiland also experience a level of distrust, due to their affiliation with the police. Thus, as the majority of my interviews took place in the youth centre with the presence of a youth centre employee, it is possible that some boys felt unable to speak entirely openly about the police. Similarly, my decision to interview the boys in groups of two may also have influenced the outcome of this research. While this approach encouraged the boys to take part in the research, making them feel more comfortable, it is possible that their responses were shaped by the desire to answer in a manner deemed socially acceptable by their peers. Yet, if this was the case, these socially acceptable answers are still telling of the relationship between the boys and the police. Further, the responses given by the boys were often corroborated during my interviews with the police and youth care professionals in Kanaleneiland. Another obstacle when interviewing the boys was their lack of faith in the transformative potential of research. They were often sceptical that research could make a positive difference to their situation. With this, when asking the boys if they would like to take part in my research, some replied, “What is in it for me?”¹² Another boy explained that while researchers often come to the neighbourhood, nothing ever changes¹³. This initially made it difficult to convince the boys to take part in the research.

However, both the boys suspicion and lack of faith in research are extremely telling and are themes that are explored throughout this research. Thus, as argued by

¹² Author’s field note in Kanaleneiland on 3 May 2018.

¹³ Author’s interview with Said in Kanaleneiland on 8 May 2018.

Slooter, “these ‘obstacles’ actually provide crucial insights [...] and should not be seen as a prologue to the ethnographic research but rather as core data” (2015: 81).

Being a female student from the United Kingdom may also have influenced the data collected in this research. As a woman, an outsider, and an adult, it was difficult to gain access to my desired respondents. With this, it was hard for me to observe how the boys talked about the police on an everyday basis. I was further unable to hangout with the boys on the street, where most of their interactions with the police took place. My observations were additionally hampered by my limited grasp of the Dutch language. While I have a basic understanding of Dutch, I was unable to follow all conversations and it was difficult to engage in informal conversations with those that did not speak English. However, as discussed, this research is epistemologically interpretivist. Thus, these limitations were not such a big draw-back, as despite not being able to verify everything the boys told me, I was still able to access their narratives through interviews. Further, being a woman and an outsider may also have facilitated my access. As a woman, it was likely that the boys were more willing to talk to me¹⁴. Further, not being Dutch meant that I was able to distance myself from the prejudices and stereotypes often experienced by the boys in the Netherlands.

During this research process, I took a number of steps to ensure my research was ethical. With this, before starting an interview, I communicated who I was, what my research was about, and what I intended to do with the research. I further informed respondents that they were able to skip past any questions that they were not comfortable answering and that they could end the interview at any point. I have decided to keep the respondents interviewed in Kanaleneiland anonymous, providing them with pseudonyms randomly selected by myself¹⁵. When interviewing respondents under the age of eighteen, I was careful to ensure that a professional entrusted with the youngsters’ care was present, such as a teacher or youth centre employee.

When conducting my research, it became apparent that my presence as a researcher in Kanaleneiland was often perceived negatively. This is based on the assumption that researchers only come to Kanaleneiland to conduct research because

¹⁴ Author’s conversation with Julia in Kanaleneiland on 30 May 2018,

¹⁵ While some respondents were happy for me to use their real names, I have anonymised them to prevent any unforeseeable issues. I have however decided to include the real names of the academic and experts I interviewed. This is because their opinions have already been made public

it is a 'problem area', giving the impression of a human zoo. The presence of researchers can thus be seen to further contribute to a negative image of the neighbourhood, proving to the boys that they are seen as 'the other', and that their lives are viewed as problematic or strange. While unable to completely escape this due to the nature of my own research, I took a number of steps in the hope of lessening this negative impact. For example, I organised for the boys to attend a talk at my university in collaboration with the local youth centre. This worked as a kind of an exchange, allowing the boys to also examine my life.

Chapter Outline

This thesis takes an integrated approach in which theoretical discussions are interwoven between data analysis and is structured as follows:

Chapter one will document the move towards youth and security policies based on control in Kanaleneiland and situate this within wider discussions on neoliberalism. It will then explore how these policies have led to the criminalisation of Moroccan-Dutch boys in Kanaleneiland. Lastly, this chapter will reflect on the contrast between the boys' experiences of the State and the expected experiences of citizens living in 'high-capacity democratic regimes', as depicted in Tilly and Tarrow's contentious politics framework.

Chapter two will investigate why the boys in Kanaleneiland, despite feelings of anger, frustration, and injustice, have not adopted the types of contentious repertoires expected in 'high-capacity democratic regimes'. It will do this by exploring how the boys perceive their potential to effect political change in the Netherlands. It will conclude with a discussion on apathy and contentious politics.

Chapter three will examine the alternative forms of resistance utilized by Moroccan-Dutch boys in Kanaleneiland to resist criminalisation. To analyse this resistance, it adopts Johansson and Vinthagen's everyday resistance framework. This chapter concludes with a discussion of the link between the boys' experiences and perceptions of democracy, and their choice of resistance.

Chapter four will reflect on the effect of the boys' resistance on their experiences of criminalisation. With this, it will examine the importance of the group in both the boys' experiences of the State, and in their resistance strategies. To aid in

an analysis, it will draw on Social Identity Theory and will illustrate that the boys' are trapped in a viscous cycle of collective punishment and collective resistance.

Chapter One:

Criminalisation in Kanaleneiland

This chapter will document how polices directed at youths in Kanaleneiland are increasingly focused on control, risk, and prevention, situating this shift within wider discussions on neoliberalism. The over-arching sub-question for this section is: *How has the State's move towards control manifested itself in the policies directed at youth and security in Kanaleneiland?* The purpose of this approach is to shed light on the boys' experiences of the Dutch state. It will then go on to investigate the impact this has had on the boys growing up in Kanaleneiland. The sub-question for this discussion is: *How do Moroccan-Dutch boys living in Kanaleneiland experience criminalisation on a day-to-day basis, and how does this shape their perceptions of the police?* This chapter will conclude by drawing on Tilly and Tarrow's contentious politics framework. In this section, it explores how the boys' experiences of the Dutch state contrast with Tilly and Tarrow's depiction of 'high-capacity democratic regimes'. It will end with a brief discussion exploring the expected effect of this discrepancy on the repertoires of resistance employed by Moroccan-Dutch boys in Kanaleneiland.

The Rose Island

Constructed at the end of the 1950s, Kanaleneiland was built in response to a severe housing shortage, following the war and the baby boom of the 1950s. The neighbourhood was designed to showcase a new, modern approach to architecture. However, while originally coined the "Rose Island", due to the high density of green areas in the neighbourhood, Kanaleneiland soon lost its rosy reputation. No longer desirable to its middle-class, native Dutch inhabitants, the neighbourhood became increasingly inhabited by low-income, non-native Dutch families (Kaulingfreks, 2013: 206). Today, more than 70% of Kanaleneiland's population has an immigrant background, with the largest percentage descending from Morocco, followed by Turkey (Gemeente Utrecht 2018). The presence of Moroccan and Turkish immigrants in the Netherlands can be traced back to the early 1960s, when, in order to fill the job surplus, 'guest workers' were recruited to the Netherlands from the Mediterranean (van der Leun & van der Woude, 2011: 446). In the 1970s, almost

half of the non-Dutch immigrants in the Netherlands came from Turkey, Morocco, Surinam, Netherlands Antilles and Indonesia (ibid).

In the 1990s and 2000s, Kanaleneiland increasingly became synonymous with poverty, unemployment, crime, and youth nuisance (Kaulingfreks 2015; Eikelenboom & Pas 2009). With this, the area often featured in negative news stories and was dubbed a problem area nationwide, fuelling its increasingly bad reputation. Youth criminality and nuisance, associated with ‘problematic’ youth groups, was perceived so frequent that in 2007 drastic measures were put in place by the municipality and the police to re-establish peace in the neighbourhood (Kaulingfreks 2015).

Nuisance Behaviour

The presence of large groups of boys has long been considered a problem in Kanaleneiland, and the urgency to deal with them has long been on the municipalities’ agenda. These ‘youth groups’, consisting of mainly Moroccan-Dutch boys, tend to hangout in the local park, the ‘tennis park’, around the neighbourhood’s two shopping centres, and in the doorways of apartment blocks. Branded as annoying, a nuisance, and sometimes criminal, these ‘problematic’ youth groups are consistently the focus of safety and security policies. The tackling of 'overlast'¹⁶ is a top priority in Utrecht, particularly in Kanaleneiland. The term 'overlast' is predominantly used in relation to Moroccan-Dutch male youths (de Koning 2016) and encompasses a wide range of behaviours, including loitering, littering, making excessive amounts of noise, destroying public property, and ‘being annoyingly present’ (Politie 2018). Some groups also engage in criminal activity. This behaviour became synonymous with Kanaleneiland in the 2000s, with 42% of Kanaleneiland’s residents reporting experiences of youth nuisance in 2007, a figure twice as high as in the city Utrecht as a whole (Rekenkamer Utrecht 2009). The presence of these groups was thus regarded as a major problem and a number of policies were drawn up to curtail their ‘nuisance’ behaviour in the hopes of directing these groups “towards desirable civil participation” (Kaulingfreks, 2015: 235).

¹⁶ ‘Overlast’ is a Dutch term for nuisance behaviour.

Hard and Social

Labelled by the government as one of the top forty ‘problem neighbourhoods’ in the Netherlands, in the mid-2000s substantial investments were made to increase the safety of Kanaleneiland. In 2007, an action plan termed ‘Kanaleneiland Leert’¹⁷ was drawn up to improve the image of the area. As detailed in this plan, an intensive approach to crime and insecurity was adopted, with the motto “Hard and Social” (Gemeente Utrecht 2007). Particular attention was paid to youth nuisance and youth crime, with a focus on groups of under-15 year olds who were seen as increasingly engaging in ‘annoying and intimidating’ behaviour (ibid: 11). Outreach programs, such as Streetcornerwork, were set up as a way to foster ‘corrective’ and ‘normative’ behaviour. The approach to youths during this time was presented as two-fold, while offering ‘opportunities’, when youths did not engage with the ‘positive measures’ presented to them, the importance of turning to “instruments of repression and enforcement” was stressed: “Groups that do not take these chances and continue to cause nuisance are confronted with extra coercion and pressure” (ibid: 14). These measures included an array of policies, such as the “intensive deployment of police aimed at hard core youth” and the “development of unorthodox measures in the field of repression and enforcement” (ibid: 15). The approach was thus presented as “a social program” that should “go hand in hand with measures in the area of coercion and pressure” (ibid: 13). The action plan also accentuated the importance of ‘preventative’ measures, adopting the motto: “Never too young and never too old to learn” (ibid). This approach called for the need to deter “at risk” young people from crime. With this, it committed itself to expanding preventative measures, including schooling parents on how to raise their children, supporting active leisure activities, and appointing case workers and family coaches.

In this plan, the importance of addressing ‘safety’ in the approach to children growing up in disadvantaged families was highlighted. With this, “safety” ran “like a red thread through the plan” (ibid: 23), and heavy investments in crime reduction were made in regards to youth, to tackle the rise in “inconvenience caused by children and young people” (ibid). During the same year, security also began to

¹⁷ In English, this translates as ‘Kanaleneiland Learns.’

shape the neighbourhood's infrastructure, with the installation of surveillance cameras, Mosquitos¹⁸, and fences aimed at stopping youths from fleeing from the police (Kaulingfreks, 2015: 98). Area bans and prohibitions of assembly were also enacted during this time (de Volkskrant 2009). When discussing the hard nature of this approach with Finn, a former Kanaleneiland police officer, he referred to it as 'repression at its best, or you could say its worst.'¹⁹

The Integral Approach

While the reputation of Kanaleneiland has improved in recent years, youth nuisance is still considered a significant problem (Gemeente Utrecht 2018). This is reflected in local policies, which continue to prioritise crime and insecurity, with an emphasis on youth nuisance and crime (ibid). These policies call for an integral approach, focused on risk and prevention, merging care and coercion, with the goal "to prevent young people from developing nuisance or criminal behaviour" (Gemeente Utrecht, 2015: 13). As with the 'Kanaleneiland Leert' policy, the current approach to youths in Kanaleneiland stipulates the need to invest in the future of young people, as well as acting "repressively", applying "pressure and compulsion where necessary" (ibid). In this model, the police and care institutions work in conjunction, providing both care and control. Working together with the police, youth workers in Kanaleneiland are tasked with getting to know the youngsters on the street in order to keep track of what is happening on the streets:

Our job also is to be the eyes and the ears of society, so to know what is going on and when things arise that are interesting for the police or the city council, we talk about it. On the other side of the spectrum is the police and so while we are focused on helping the youth, the police are focused more on maintaining the law²⁰.

¹⁸ Mosquitos are devices that make a high-pitched sound that only young people can hear. They are aimed as deterring youths from hanging out in particular areas.

¹⁹ Author's interview with Finn, former Kanaleneiland police officer, in Utrecht on 25 April 2018.

²⁰ Author's interview with Julia, youth centre employee, in Kanaleneiland on 11 May 2018.

However, this collaboration is not without its tensions. While in the beginning, the youth centre's role was just about getting to know the youngsters, now more is asked of them. With this, the youth workers in Kanaleneiland express the need to set boundaries with the council and police, drawing a line between what ought to be handled by the youth workers, and what should be left to security bodies such as the police. If these boundaries are not drawn, the youth workers risk losing the trust of the boys²¹.

Risk and Prevention

The police and youth workers in Kanaleneiland continue to work together in an attempt to prevent young people from getting involved in crime. In terms of prevention, they aim to promote “norm awareness, social control and a safe environment” (Gemeente Utrecht, 2015: 13). This involves children as young as eight years old, who are seen as having “the potential to slide down to a problematic youth group” (Rombouts, 2017: 5). As defined by the Dutch government, ‘risicjongeren’, roughly translated as ‘at risk youth’, “are young people at risk of falling into criminal behaviour” (Ministerie van Veiligheid en Justitie, 2015: 5). The government has identified a number of ‘risk factors’ that are seen to contribute to the development of nuisance behaviour (ibid). These risk factors include poverty, small housing, a lack of structure and support, a vulnerable family situation, negative role models, criminal behaviour within the family, negative life experiences, and so on (ibid). In Utrecht, there is now more of a focus on preventing than ever before²². This prevention is a mix of getting the youth into social structures and using repression²³.

A number of different partners, including the municipality, the police, and youth workers, come together twice a year to discuss young groups that have displayed concerning ‘signals’. Having determined that a group is a “potential risk”, a plan of action is devised (Rombouts 2016). This is known as the group approach. In this approach, youngsters are assigned to a set of lists based on whom they are perceived to associate with. There are three possible lists that they can be consigned to depending on the behaviours of the group they are seen to associate with. To identify

²¹ Ibid.

²² Author's interview with Finn, former Kanaleneiland police officer, in Utrecht on 25 April 2018.

²³ Ibid.

each group in the neighbourhood, the police and their network partners come together and assess each group²⁴. Based on this assessment, the group will be labelled as ‘hinderlijke’²⁵ (annoying), ‘overlastgevende’²⁶ (nuisance), or ‘crimineel’²⁷ (criminal) (Ministerie van Veiligheid en Justitie, 2015: 6). This approach was adopted in Kanaleneiland around ten years ago²⁸. While before the introduction of the group approach the boys were anonymous faces, unknown to the police and the municipality, this is no longer the case²⁹.

A number of behaviours can land the youngsters on the ‘annoying’ list, including hanging around on the street, or in the hallways of apartment blocks, associating with ‘negative people’, and failing to communicate with the police, such as running away and shouting³⁰. Once a youngster has been placed on this list, their parents will receive a visit from the police and a youth worker, notifying the parents that their child has been added to the list and offering to help their children get back on the right path³¹. Once placed on the ‘criminal’ list, you are really known to the police, a photo is hung in the police station and the police are “going to give you a lot of fines and they going to control you a lot. The idea is to push the boys to the right side”³².

During this process, the child's data is shared across a number of partners, including the police and other youth care professionals, calling into question the privacy aspect of the approach: “I think in when you are looking at the privacy part of this, I think a good lawyer could shoot it all down”³³.

In 2015, the Top X approach was also introduced, a person-orientated approach operating under the VHRU (Safety House Region Utrecht). In the VHRU, multiple partners work together to provide “perpetrators of serious nuisance and crime the right combination of care, punishment and administrative measures”

²⁴ This assessment is based on the following criteria: the location of the group, the composition of the group (size, ethnicity, age range), the daily activities of the group members, the occurrence of ‘risky’ habits, and criminal behaviour

²⁵ Annoying youth groups are characterised by: hanging out, occasionally being noisy, sometimes being involved in skirmishes and occasional vandalisms (Ministerie van Veiligheid en Justitie, 2015: 6)

²⁶ Nuisance youth groups are characterised by: occasional provocative behaviour, harassment of bystanders (berating or even intimidating), regular vandalism, and violence (ibid).

²⁷ Criminal youth groups are characterised by: the young people (or at least part of them) are pretty on the criminal path hit. They have been in contact with the police before (ibid).

²⁸ Author’s interview with Julia, youth centre employee, in Kanaleneiland on 11 May 2018

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Ibid.

³² Ibid.

³³ Ibid.

(Rombouts, 2016: 4). As police officer Finn explained, the Top X approach works as a form of prevention. If there is the belief that someone is perpetrating violence on the street, or in the home, the VHRU is notified³⁴. Most of the time these notifications come from the police, but can also come from other professionals, such as teachers or doctors. The police are actively involved in the approach, working alongside teachers and youth workers³⁵.

Surveillance Cameras

In order to control and monitor the behaviour of these ‘problematic youth groups’, surveillance cameras dominate the neighbourhood. Camera surveillance became a part of the Utrecht street scene in 2001 and since cameras have continued to “expand to various locations throughout the city” (Gemeente Utrecht 2014). With this, cameras have also been placed in neighbourhoods outside of the city centre, such as in Kanaleneiland. The primary purpose of these cameras is to maintain public order, with a focus on the prevention of youth nuisance and crime (Gemeente Utrecht 2014). Cameras are thus moved around the neighbourhood and positioned in areas “where there is overlast”, as explained to me by Mustafa, Kanaleneiland’s community police officer:

I think the cameras have made a big difference because it is a fact that when there are cameras, people behave differently. We have recently had three cameras on one specific place, at the Rijnbaan shopping centre³⁶, and you can see that has had an effect³⁷.

The significance of these surveillance cameras was a recurrent theme in my interviews in Kanaleneiland and thus the effect of these cameras on the lives of the boys will be explored throughout this thesis.

³⁴ Author’s interview with Finn, former Kanaleneiland police officer, in Utrecht 25 April 2018.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ The Rijnbaan shopping centre is a row of shops situated in Kanaleneiland Noord, known for high levels of ‘overlast’ or, in English, nuisance behaviour.

³⁷ Author’s interview with Mustafa, community police officer, in Kanaleneiland on 12 May 2018.

Control in Kanaleneiland

In sum, it can be seen that while the left hand of the Dutch state is still active, as evidenced by the continued focus on ‘social programmes’ in Kanaleneiland, the approach to youths in Utrecht is increasingly focused on control, risk, and prevention. This is enacted through stepped up policing and intense surveillance, and it is ‘underprivileged’ youths that bare the brunt of this shift:

Some police officers are absolutely fed up with the youth and they go on the repressive side. I do not think pure repression of underprivileged youths is good; do they have a harder time in their experiences of the police? I wish I was lying, but I would say so. You focus more on a particular group, it’s good policing but maybe it is not fair³⁸.

The significance of this shift can be understood by drawing on the rich body of literature exploring the move towards neoliberalism and a ‘culture of control’ in the West, discussed in the introduction of this thesis. For example, as argued by Kaulingfreks, the approach to youths in Kanaleneiland can be seen as a penal panopticon (2015)³⁹. As argued by James Scott, control relies on information to make society ‘legible’ (Broeders 2007: 73). Thus, for the State to be able to govern, its subjects have to become knowable. This knowledge is gathered through surveillance. Examining the use of the panoptic in prison, Foucault argues the constant surveillance of prisoners goes beyond controlling inmates. Rather, its final aim is to “discipline the individual under surveillance” (ibid: 74). With this, the hope is that prisoners will begin to internalise the gaze of surveyor, losing the capacity, desire, and opportunity to deviate (ibid). The State’s desire to make its subjects knowable is reflected in the efforts to make the boys in Kanaleneiland known. While ten years ago the boys were just anonymous faces, today they are well known to the municipality, the police, and youth care professionals. This has been achieved

³⁸ Author’s interview with Finn, former Kanaleneiland police officer, in Utrecht on 25 April 2018.

³⁹ The term ‘panopticon’ originates from Bentham’s design of a circular prison complex that allowed for prisoners to be watched by a guard at all times of the day (Glover 2009). Borrowing this term, Foucault developed the panopticon theory, exploring “the intimate connection between power and knowledge” (Broeders 2007: 74).

through the policies such as the group approach. The increasing use of surveillance cameras in Kanaleneiland can also be seen as part of the attempt to get to know the boys. The desire to “discipline the individual under surveillance” (ibid) can explicitly be seen in the Top X approach. Subjecting the boys to intense forms of surveillance and control, it is hoped that they will be pushed into disciplining themselves.

Criminalisation

Having argued that we are moving towards a culture of control in Kanaleneiland, I will now explore the effect that this has had on the boys growing up in Kanaleneiland. I will primarily do this through the voices of the boys themselves. Speaking to the boys in Kanaleneiland, the impact of the move towards control in the Netherlands soon becomes apparent, with punishment seemingly having become a part of the boys’ everyday reality. Regularly met with threats, fines, and suspicion, the criminalisation of the boys’ everyday behaviour has led to frustration and anger, leaving them feeling attacked and targeted. Whether hanging in the park, chilling on the street corner, or gathering outside the shopping centre, the boys expressed the feeling of being overly watched and constantly stopped⁴⁰.

While the boys were quick to confess that they are sometimes stopped by the police for a legitimate reason, they explained that they are also often stopped by the police very unnecessarily: ‘Sometimes I think it’s justified but a lot of times it is not necessary’⁴¹. While Ayoub told me that they are generally left alone by the police when walking down the street by themselves, once in a group of over three people, hanging on a street corner, they can feel the gaze of the police: ‘When you’re with more than three, they look at you longer, more than necessary, they ask for my ID. You feel like you are being targeted.’⁴² The feeling of being unfairly targeted and stigmatized by the police was shared by Khalid, ‘If someone is engaging in criminal activities I understand it, however, when you are just hanging around in the tennis park or stopped when in your car or on your bike, then I understand it as ethnic profiling’.⁴³ The punishment the boys’ face is seen as so frequent that some have

⁴⁰ For example, Khalid explained that the boys sometimes get in trouble with the police for simply “standing in a dark spot, or in a porch”⁴⁰ (Author’s interview with Khalid and Moad in Kanaleneiland on 13 June 2018).

⁴¹ Authors’ interview with Enes and Hassan in Kanaleneiland on 16 May 2018.

⁴² Authors’ interview with Ayoub and Walid in Kanaleneiland on 30 May 2018.

⁴³ Authors’ interview with Khalid and Moad in Kanaleneiland on 13 June 2018.

come to believe that the police are purposefully looking to give them fines, to ‘make a problem’:

They are looking for everything so they can say something to you, or so they can give you a ticket, they are looking for everything so that they can make a problem. They like to make problems. We stand in our place and they come to us to give us a ticket. We are not doing anything; we are just standing there. They do not want us to stand on that place, but where else can we stand? We do not have a place to chill.⁴⁴

Thus, not only does this criminalisation lead to anger and frustration, it also has very real consequences for the boys who told me they are regularly fined for minor infringements. For example, Ayoub told of being threatened with a fine for taking shelter under a roof in the rain: ‘I was by the tennis park, under the roof where you are not allowed to stand, but when it rains you can stand there. I was standing there for a short while and then walked away with the other boys. A police officer came up to me later and said he can give me a fine, because he caught me on the surveillance cameras.’⁴⁵ Similarly, Tariq had been fined for not having a cap on the valve of his bike tire⁴⁶. The boys even told stories of their friends being fined for walking on the grass in Kanaleneiland, despite there being no areas in Kanaleneiland where walking on grass appears to be prohibited⁴⁷.

Enes further told of a time when he had been threatened with going to jail for standing in the wrong place and the wrong time: ‘On New Year’s Eve, I was doing nothing and the police came over to me and said you have to get away from this place, if I see you here in five minutes you will go to jail’⁴⁸. The experience of being met with threats and fines has become an everyday reality for the boys. As Julia explained, while the fines were initially handed out with the intention to curb bad behaviour, the police seem to have lost sight of their purpose, handing them out left,

⁴⁴ Author’s interview with Karim and Hamza in Kanaleneiland on 30 May 2018.

⁴⁵ Authors’ interview with Ayoub and Walid in Kanaleneiland on 30 May 2018.

⁴⁶ Authors’ interview with Farouk and Tariq in Kanaleneiland on 20 June 2018.

⁴⁷ Authors’ interview with Khalid and Moad in Kanaleneiland on 13 June 2018.

⁴⁸ Authors’ interview with Enes and Hassan in Kanaleneiland on 16 May 2018.

right and centre⁴⁹. Sometimes setting them back hundreds of euros. These fines have a big impact on the boys' lives, with many of them having to spend a whole month's wages to pay them off, and others getting into debt.

However, it is important to note that some of the boys communicated that it is only certain groups in Kanaleneiland that are targeted and criminalised by the police. For example, Tariq and Farouk explained that if you hang out at the tennis park, then you will automatically be seen as a criminal by the police. Yet, if you distance yourself from this group, you will no longer be seen in this light⁵⁰. The significance of whom you associate with in determining your experiences with the police was often brought up during interviews. For example, a couple of the boys complained that the police had told their parents that they were seen hanging out with the 'wrong crowd'. When questioning how often the police stop the boys, it was often stated that it depends on who you are hanging around with, as well as where you are hanging around. The police focus on a particular group of boys was confirmed during my interview with police officer Mustafa:

In Kanaleneiland Noord we have right now a difficult group. What do I mean by difficult? The communication with them is very hard. It's about thirty or forty boys and they are very rough, if I can say it like that. Some of them are criminal, very criminally active. Some of them are only making overlast, being annoying, dropping some rubbish etcetera. We are trying to deal with that group right now⁵¹.

While, as explained, only some of the boys in this group engage in criminal activities, the group as a whole is the focus of police efforts. This group approach can be seen to have a detrimental effect, resulting in the feeling that the boys are penalised for their peer's behaviour.

Not only do the boys experience criminalisation in their dealings with the police, they also expressed being treated as criminals by society as a whole. As Said

⁴⁹ Author's interview with Julia, youth centre employee, in Kanaleneiland on 11 May 2018.

⁵⁰ Author's interview with Farouk and Tariq in Kanaleneiland on 20 June 2018.

⁵¹ Author's interview with Mustafa, community police officer, in Kanaleneiland on 12 May 2018.

explained, all Dutch people think Moroccans are criminals⁵². This perception was highlighted when discussing the intentions of researchers in Kanaleneiland. Many of the boys I spoke to were under the impression that I was there to study them because of the association between Kanaleneiland and crime. For example, Hassan asked if Kanaleneiland was as bad as I expected it to be, as bad as I had read about⁵³. The criminalisation the boys experience by members of the Dutch public was again brought up when Karim explained that, unlike me, he would not be able to go up to people on the street to conduct research, as he would be assumed a thief⁵⁴. Similarly, when working as couriers, the boys often encounter people who are too scared to open their doors to them⁵⁵. Not only are the boys met with suspicion at the work place, they are also depicted as criminals at school, as one teacher made clear when explaining to me that it is in the boys' nature to steal⁵⁶. The boys even experience criminalisation at home. Parents often assume their child will get involved in criminal activities and, with this, continually question their whereabouts. The suspicion the boys face from their own parents is seen to push them to conform to this label⁵⁷.

Always Seen

The criminalisation of the boys' everyday behaviours is exacerbated by the fact that they are always seen. In Kanaleneiland, no transgression goes unnoticed: 'When the boys do something, it's usually seen.'⁵⁸ As soon as entering Kanaleneiland, the high level of surveillance the boys face quickly becomes apparent. Walking around the neighbourhood's shopping centre, you are instantly met with a set of glaring eyes, as signs reading, "you have been seen"⁵⁹ have been strategically placed around the town centre. During my research, these signs became symbolic of the constant surveillance and scrutiny faced by the boys living in Kanaleneiland.

This being "seen" has a significant impact on the boys' lives. The feeling of always being watched, and the frustration and anger this brings, was a recurrent

⁵² Author's interview with Said in Kanaleneiland on 8 May 2018.

⁵³ Author's interview with Enes and Hassan in Kanaleneiland on 16 May 2018.

⁵⁴ Author's interview with Karim and Hamza in Kanaleneiland on 30 May 2018

⁵⁵ Author's interview with Julia, youth centre employee, in Kanaleneiland on 11 May 2018.

⁵⁶ Author's interview with Riaan, high school teacher, in Kanaleneiland on 23 April 2018.

⁵⁷ Author's conversation with Julia in Kanaleneiland on 20 June 2018.

⁵⁸ Author's interview with Julia, in Kanaleneiland on 30 May 2018.

⁵⁹ This sign can be seen on the front page of this thesis. Translated from Dutch – "je bent gezien"

theme during my research. Whether in the form of police officers slowing down when passing the boys, or the surveillance cameras that have been strategically positioned to overlook their hangout spots, the boys often expressed the feeling of being overly watched. As Karim explained, ‘Where we are sitting in the tennis park there are a lot of cameras. They watch with cameras. I know it, everybody knows it’⁶⁰. The awareness of these cameras was shared by Khalid, ‘There are quite a lot more cameras...more cameras have been placed recently’⁶¹. The sense of being excessively watched goes beyond the presence of the surveillance cameras. The police are also seen to play an instrumental role in this surveillance. For example, when I questioned Hamza about the presence of the police during Ramadan⁶², he explained, ‘It causes irritation. They are driving very fast and then when they get to us they slow down to 5km an hour and they are looking around. Of course that will cause irritation, damn it!’⁶³

Not only does the feeling of always being seen lead to frustration and anger, it can also lead to both paranoia and mistrust. This paranoia was expressed to me by Enes, as he recalled a time when a police officer that he had not yet met approached him saying, ‘I know who you are’⁶⁴. As he retold this story, he communicated the unease he felt at having been recognised by a police officer he had never met, questioning where the police officer had got his information from and how he already knew who he was. The discomfort induced by always being seen was reiterated by Karim, who explained the need to partially cover your face when passing the numerous surveillance cameras in the neighbourhood, ‘They have a million pixels!’⁶⁵ During this explanation Hamza added, ‘You feel watched’⁶⁶.

The boys’ desire to hide away from both the eyes of the police and neighbourhood’s many surveillance cameras was further made apparent as I was arranging a place to interview Said, a boy I had met in the tennis park the previous day. Suggesting we meet at one of the local cafes or parks, Said insisted that we instead meet by the canal, one of the quieter spots in the neighbourhood. When I questioned him about this later, he explained that he did not want to meet in the café

⁶⁰ Author’s interview with Karim and Hamza in Kanaleneiland on 30 May 2018.

⁶¹ Authors’ interview with Khalid and Moad in Kanaleneiland on 13 June 2018.

⁶² During Ramadan more police officers are deployed in an attempt to tackle nuisance behaviour.

⁶³ Author’s interview with Karim and Hamza in Kanaleneiland on 30 May 2018

⁶⁴ Author’s interview with Enes and Hassan in Kanaleneiland on 16 May 2018.

⁶⁵ Author’s interview with Karim and Hamza in Kanaleneiland on 30 May 2018.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

or the park as there are too many people around and he does not want to be seen: ‘I cannot just sit somewhere as I am always looking out for the police. I always need to look out for the police, that is why I hate the police⁶⁷’. Said’s fear of being watched was mirrored by the fact that I never saw him without a pair of sunglasses on.

The mistrust and paranoia felt towards the police, and outsiders in general, was further made evident by the lack of trust experienced by researchers in Kanaleneiland, who are automatically assumed to be undercover police officers. For example, recalling having seen a group of students conducting research in the neighbourhood the week prior, Hassan explained that he does not trust any researchers that come to Kanaleneiland⁶⁸. Enes agreed, telling me that the day before a man had attempted to interview him in the park, approaching him with his notebook at the ready. Enes explained that he and the other boys believed the man to be an undercover police officer and feared anything they told him would be relayed back to the police⁶⁹. I experienced this first hand when I first approached the boys in the tennis park to ask if they would like to take part in my research. Convinced that I was working as an undercover police officer, the boys ironically asked to see my ID. The mistrust they felt towards me was later understandably heightened when I was seen leaving Kanaleneiland’s police station. Having interviewed Mustafa, I was led out of police station via the side entrance, which opens out onto Kanaleneiland’s main roads. Just as I was leaving, one of the boys I had spoken to in the park drove past on his moped. Instantly recognising me, he began to shout, ‘You are a fucking cop!’⁷⁰. This information was then passed around the group of boys. I only started to regain the trust of the boys once I began hanging around the local youth centre, where the youth workers were able to vouch for me. This experience highlighted the boys’ shared belief that the police are always trying to spy on them, whether this be through the use of surveillance cameras, or undercover agents.

The reality of being always “seen” not only leads to feelings of frustration and paranoia, it can also be seen to play a significant role in the criminalisation of the boys. With this, any slight transgression made by the boys is both seen and punished. For example, in the past boys as young as fourteen have ended up spending the night in a jail cell for minor infractions, such as damaging the light in the porch of a block

⁶⁷ Author’s interview with Said in Kanaleneiland on 8 May 2018.

⁶⁸ Author’s interview with Enes and Hassan in Kanaleneiland on 16 May 2018.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ Authors’ field note on in Kanaleneiland on 12 May 2018.

of flats, or pushing over a bin⁷¹. These brushes with the law not only leave the boys with a criminal record at a young age, they can also be extremely traumatic. Normally sleeping with their brothers, a night in jail is often the boys' first experience of sleeping on their own⁷².

The contrast between the consequences and punishments meted out for small misdemeanours in Kanaleneiland, and those in other areas of Utrecht, is huge: "The number of fines you are getting, you are watched *so* much when you are here. It is the complete opposite to my neighbourhood. My son is never watched... My son can break something with a broom if he wants to, nobody will know who he was"⁷³. In response to hearing this, Hamza shouts, "That's because he is a white boy!"⁷⁴

Always Guilty

One of the biggest frustrations brought to light during my interviews with the boys was the police's tendency to treat all the boys as the same, as criminals. While some of the boys I interviewed admitted to having taken part in criminal activities in the past, there was a shared sense that even if you are innocent, you will be treated as guilty. The police's inclination to tarnish the boys with the same brush was explained by Enes: 'When you are standing with ten smokers, it does not mean that you will be a smoker too'⁷⁵. When I further inquired if Enes feels unfairly treated by the police, he explained that he sometimes does. This is because when you are with a certain group of people, the police automatically assume that you are the same as them, which is not fair.⁷⁶ This was supported by Tariq who, when discussing the police's perceptions of the boys, told me that he thinks the police view the boys standing in the tennis park as being 'all the same'.⁷⁷ With this, he explained that some of the boys have spoilt things for the others by engaging in criminal activities. As a result, boys often end up being punished for the actions of their peers⁷⁸. These generalisations have led some boys to feel that they are treated differently from others. For example, as Walid explained: 'We are treated differently than you'⁷⁹.

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ Author's interview with Karim and Hamza in Kanaleneiland on 30 May 2018.

⁷⁵ Author's interview with Enes and Hassan in Kanaleneiland on 16 May 2018.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ Author's interview with Farouk and Tariq in Kanaleneiland on 20 June 2018.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ Author's interview with Ayoub and Walid, in Kanaleneiland on 30 May 2018.

Expanding on this, Ayoub said, ‘We are one zero behind than normal people’. When his reference to “normal people” was questioned, he explained that by normal he meant ‘people that don’t live in our neighbourhood’. While he stated that this is not only the fault of the police, he argued, ‘It is not good that the police generalise, that is why there are conflicts happening, because the police think everybody is the same.’⁸⁰

The police’s tendency to view all the boys as being the same was confirmed to me during an interview with Finn, a former Kanaleneiland police officer. Explaining that the boys in Kanaleneiland all look alike, he maintained that it sometimes difficult to know who is who.⁸¹ The police’s predisposition to judge the boys based on the actions of others has led some of the boys to believe the police are just there to put them in prison:

They should not have a stereotype, you could be doing well, have a diploma. What if my dad died and I never had an example and I have not had a chance? Then they should feel bad for me, they should not be there to put me away⁸².

According to the boys, these generalisations not only cause frustration, but can also lead to unjust arrests. For example, Tariq believes that if a Moroccan boy has done something to anger a police officer one day, the next day, if the officer has not managed to catch the boy, he will pick on another Moroccan boy instead⁸³. The police are thus perceived to both see and treat the boys as the same⁸⁴. Karim had a similar understanding of the situation:

The police do not look to see if you are innocent or not, they only think, if he has done it, you have done it. They take you to the police station and during this time you are the baddest guy for them, they can push you, they can do whatever they want

⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁸¹ Author’s interview with Finn, former Kanaleneiland police officer, in Utrecht on 25 April 2018.

⁸² Author’s interview with Ayoub and Walid in Kanaleneiland on 30 May 2018.

⁸³ Author’s interview with Farouk and Tariq in Kanaleneiland on 20 June 2018.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

with you. If you turn out not be the suspect, they do not come to you to say sorry my friend. They come to the cell and say you can go home now. They do not explain why you can go home, they just say go home, bye. You spend the whole day thinking about what has happened. You do not know anything; you are just waiting for a letter.

The risk of automatically being suspected a criminal was brought to life during my research through the story of Youssef, touched on at the beginning of this thesis. As explained earlier, scared and not wanting to get in any trouble, Youssef tried to distance himself from what he expected might be trouble. However, in doing this, he himself became the key suspect in the crime. This story thus highlights the vicious cycle in which the boys and the police are trapped. Assuming that they will automatically be treated as suspect, the boys I spoke to expressed the need to distance themselves from any sign of trouble. For example, by leaving the scene of a crime. In doing this, the police view their behaviour as suspect, using it as evidence to make an arrest.

Not only do the boys face suspicion in their own neighbourhood, this suspicion also follows them around to other parts of the Netherlands:

Karim: There is another problem with the police, but it is not the police from Kanaleneiland, it is the police outside of Utrecht. We go to outside, we have done nothing yet we are immediately a suspect because they see we are from Utrecht and they say oh no it is Kanaleneiland. Kanaleneiland does not have a good name. People in Kanaleneiland they do not have a good name.

Hamza: They say, what do you have in your car? Do you have identification? You need to give it. If you do not give it, it is a problem and you have to go to the police station.

Karim: This happens in the countryside, the city, everywhere. They are thinking, what are you doing here? And I have an answer for them, “I pay road tax”.

Hamza: They even send you away⁸⁵.

When I later questioned Karim and Hamza about why they think the police target them and other boys, explaining that the police never stop me, they tell me it is because I am different, I am a university girl, whereas they are ‘not school’⁸⁶. The police can hear it from the way they talk. While the boys argued, ‘it’s not just a control’, Karim explained that although he never used to understand why he gets stopped, now he does: ‘You need to know, a lot of people in Kanaleneiland are not working, they have money and they are not going to steal here, they go outside and steal. You can read the newspaper and you will see, every time, three people of Utrecht arrested elsewhere, that sort of thing’⁸⁷. The boys can thus be seen to have internalised the criminalisation they face. However, this explanation cannot be used to explain why the boys are stopped in the first place, as it is not possible for the police to know that they are from Kanaleneiland without first stopping the boys. Rather, the ‘controlling’ of ethnic minorities in the Netherlands can be seen to form part of their proactive policing strategies (Çankaya 2012). With this, the police are continually looking out for what does not ‘belong’.

Discussing ethnic profiling, police officer Finn admitted that in some cases the police do ethnically profile. He went on to explain that ethnic profiling would not happen in Kanaleneiland because the majority of people are Moroccan, thus they are not seen as out of place. However, if there were a Moroccan driving around Kanaleneiland in an expensive car, this would seem out of out of place. Similarly, if a Moroccan person is in a predominantly white area, then they will be considered out of place and are more likely to get checked.⁸⁸

⁸⁵ Author’s interview with Karim and Hamza in Kanaleneiland on 30 May 2018.

⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ Author’s interview with Finn, former Kanaleneiland police officer, in Utrecht on 25 April 2018.

Self-fulfilling Prophecy

A recurrent theme when talking to youth care professionals in Kanaleneiland about the high-rate of youth crime in the neighbourhood was the notion of a ‘self-fulfilling prophecy’. While this is not to say that all boys in Kanaleneiland are involved in crime, nor that being treated unfairly by the police will automatically result in you turning to crime, rather that by being treated as a criminal from an early age, the chances of your turning to crime appear to be higher. This was explained to me by Lotte, an employee of one of the Kanaleneiland’s social support organisations: ‘The way people react to being stopped by the police very much depends on the characteristics of the person. Some people except it as part of everyday life and brush it off, others get very afraid, and some end up getting involved in crime’⁸⁹. Gabriel, one of Kanaleneiland’s youth sport coaches, further expressed this sentiment:

If you do not steal anything and they stop you everyday, you are on your bike and they say “ok stop, let me see this, what do you have in your bag?” Then one day you will say, I want to steal because they are going to check me anyway. Maybe if I steal something than at least I have something, it is worth the risk because they are going to stop me anyway and they are already profiling me as a criminal.⁹⁰

Thus, while it is argued that a focus on risk analysis can help to prevent crime in areas like Kanaleneiland, it can be reasoned that this focus actually contributes to pushing the boys into crime in the first place. This was explained to me by Mohammed Anouar: ‘Yeah it’s also like a self-fulfilling prophecy for some people and also the police they really have this holy belief in proactive work being a real good thing but if you really believe in it, prove it’⁹¹. Further, Gabriel questioned, ‘Why don’t you turn it?’ ‘We should embrace the kids, you know tell them no, you

⁸⁹ Author’s interview with Lotte and Amina, community workers, Kanaleneiland on 20 March 2018.

⁹⁰ Author’s interview with Gabriel, youth sports coach, Kanaleneiland on 29 May 2018.

⁹¹ Author’s interview with Mohammed Anouar, Controle Alt Delete employee, Rotterdam on 24 April 2018.

can achieve something.’⁹² Similarly, Ahmed, a youth care professional, explained that a lot of the boys feel disliked by Dutch society. They believe that they have already been labelled as criminals by Dutch society and so getting involved in crime will not make a difference⁹³. This perception was evidenced through my interview with Walid and Ayoub. When asking the boys how they think the police view them, Walid explained that the police see Kanaleneiland as ‘a problem neighbourhood’ and think, ‘every boy is the same’⁹⁴. Adding to this, Ayoub maintained that the police view the boys as not having a future, believing that every boy in Kanaleneiland has problems⁹⁵.

Further, both the adults and youngsters I spoke to in Kanaleneiland expressed the idea that growing up in Kanaleneiland, you are two steps behind the rest of Dutch society. One of the reasons given for this was the lack of job opportunities available for young people with Moroccan backgrounds. The difficulty of getting a job while having an Arabic sounding name was continually brought up during my research. Recalling the numerous times he has been approached by youngsters in Kanaleneiland struggling to find work, Rachid, a youth care professional, explained the potential of turning to crime when all else fails:

The boys think, I have done my best. I cannot get a job so I have to go the other side. Or you hear from a sister, a friend, or a neighbour, do not waste your time at school because look at me. If you want to be like the rest of Dutch society, than you have to work twice as hard. So it is not like if you are blonde and have blue eyes, that is the problem⁹⁶.

This feeling of hopelessness was expressed by Said while talking about being turned down for work: ‘It happened a few times so I thought fuck it, I’m not going to work’⁹⁷. The temptation to turn to crime is further exacerbated by the fact that when growing up, engaging in criminal activities was often seen as the only way to financially do well, as Said explained: ‘You would see people doing fun things and

⁹² Author’s interview with Gabriel, youth sports coach, Kanaleneiland on 29 May 2018.

⁹³ Author’s interview with Ahmed, youth care professional, Kanaleneiland on 09 May 2018.

⁹⁴ Authors’ interview with Ayoub and Walid in Kanaleneiland on 30 May 2018.

⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁶ Author’s interview with Rachid, youth care professional, Kanaleneiland on 07 May 2018.

⁹⁷ Author’s interview with Said Kanaleneiland on 08 May 2018.

you would think, I would like that too. I did not have any money. I liked their designer clothes and I thought I would like that too. So I started robbing houses, you get dragged into crime'⁹⁸.

Of course, this is not to say that everyone in Kanaleneiland is unemployed or has turned to crime, in fact a lot of the boys I spoke to either had jobs, were attending school, or both. However, it does highlight the fact that in Kanaleneiland more determination is needed to stay out of trouble and do well, as explained by Hamza, in Kanaleneiland 'you do not have the same chances and you have to work harder to get there'⁹⁹.

Further, when the boys who had engaged in criminal activity decided that they wanted a more legitimate lifestyle, they faced a number of setbacks, as was the case for Karim. While in the past Karim had been involved in crime, he has spent the last couple of years trying to leave this lifestyle behind. With this, he is attending school to become a social worker, he volunteers at the youth centre, has recently started working in the mental health sector, and has just got engaged. However, while he has not been in trouble with the police for over a year, he is still on the Top X list. While having no contact with the police for over a year should mean being taken off the list, in practice the protocol for taking boys of the list was very lax¹⁰⁰. The effects of being on the Top X list is huge: 'When you are in the Top X it is crazy, for me that is kind of frustrating because, in my opinion, when they leave the house they are fined, they leave the house and maybe they spit a gum or something, it is crazy'¹⁰¹. In an attempt to avoid these excessive fines, Karim has had to sell his car. When on the Top X list, your movements are frequently recorded by the police. I was told that this process is extremely biased, with the boys' everyday behaviours being noted down as suspicious: 'I hate it when I see the role outs from the system, I sometimes get to see it and it is so not objective. For example, it will say he was there and he said this and that, huh? Sounds strange. It really says like that, huh?'¹⁰²

Not only does Karim have the burden of still being on the Top X list hanging over his head, he also faces going to prison for two weeks for not having attended community service a few years ago, for a crime he committed when he was younger.

⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹ Author's interview with Karim and Hamza in Kanaleneiland on 30 May 2018.

¹⁰⁰ Author's field note in Kanaleneiland on 20 June 2018.

¹⁰¹ Author's interview with Julia, youth centre employee, Kanaleneiland on 11 May 2018.

¹⁰² Ibid.

There is no set date for when he will go to prison; instead the police can pick him up at anytime. Not wanting to get in to trouble with school and his new job, Karim and the youth centre employees are fighting for him to be able to do this prison time during the holidays. While the Top X board have agreed that this would be a good idea, one of the police officers in Kanaleneiland is not so sure. And while in theory he has no authority over the decision, he has decided that he would like to meet Karim to discuss a few things first. Karim and the youth centre employees presume that the police officer has a hidden agenda and most likely wants to get some information from Karim, perhaps about the incident with Youssef. Either way, they are frustrated by the fact that some police officers stand in the way of the boys doing better for themselves, with Karim questioning what the police would like him to do instead, end up on the streets as a criminal? ¹⁰³

Feeling Attacked

As I have shown, the boys in Kanaleneiland have an acute awareness of being unfairly targeted by the police. With this, they have developed their own understandings of the police's behaviour. Feeling 'targeted' and 'attacked', in the boys' world, the police have come to represent 'the enemy'¹⁰⁴. While the boys are quick to explain that not all police officers are bad, the vast majority are seen to be unjust and disrespectful: 'There are cops that you get along with, very few, if there were more it would be the perfect neighbourhood'¹⁰⁵. In fact, tensions between the police and the boys are seen to have grown so bad that the boys now view the police with 'grave hate'¹⁰⁶. During my interviews with the boys, the police were described as annoying¹⁰⁷, unfair¹⁰⁸, untrustworthy¹⁰⁹, provocative¹¹⁰, power hungry¹¹¹, attention seeking¹¹², and disrespectful¹¹³. For example, Enes explained that the police always have a hidden agenda when speaking to you, asking questions in a roundabout way

¹⁰³ Authors' field note in Kanaleneiland on 13 June 2018.

¹⁰⁴ Author's interview with Julia, in Kanaleneiland on 30 May 2018.

¹⁰⁵ Author's interview with Ayoub and Walid, in Kanaleneiland on 30 May 2018.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷ Author's interview with Enes and Hassan in Kanaleneiland on 16 May 2018.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹¹ Author's interview with Karim and Hamza in Kanaleneiland on 30 May 2018.

¹¹² Author's interview with Ayoub and Walid in Kanaleneiland, 30 May 2018.

¹¹³ Ibid.

with the intention of gathering information to use against you later¹¹⁴. Similarly, Walid and Ayoub stated that they often feel betrayed by the police. To illustrate this, Ayoub told me that he had built a relationship with a police officer, only for him to turn against the boys later on, beating the boys with his baton¹¹⁵. Not only do the boys perceive the police as untrustworthy, they also see them as provocative and annoying. For example, Enes told me that he had been stopped by the police a couple of days before our interview. Walking down the street with his younger cousin, he was ordered to show his ID. Enes had not been in the mood to talk to the police and the police did not like this. They questioned why he was being so cold and refused to look them in the eye. They would not return his ID¹¹⁶. When I questioned Enes about his experiences with the police growing up, he explained that the police annoy him and the other boys. They look at them as if they are animals and disrupt them in the park, asking to see their IDs¹¹⁷. Ayoub added to this, explaining that he has often heard the police saying provocative things, such as, ‘You are just like your father’. In these instances, ‘it can really escalate’¹¹⁸. Likewise, Karim told me that the police often call the boys rude names: ‘They use their power and call you names [...] We (Dutch citizens) are all the same, but the police think they are higher than us’¹¹⁹. The police’s tendency to abuse their power was a recurrent theme in my interview with the boys. As Ayoub explained, the behaviour of the police can be understood as ‘power being misused’¹²⁰. When I questioned the impact of the police’s behaviour on the boys, Karim answered: ‘We feel attacked. They attack us in our eyes. So we give a reaction’¹²¹. The assertion that the boys’ behaviour towards the police is a direct reaction to the injustice they face was shared by a number of boys I spoke to during my research.

Racism?

While, as the literature suggests, the Netherland’s approach to youths is not racially neutral, with ethnic minorities being the key target of policies aimed at control and

¹¹⁴ Author’s interview with Enes and Hassan in Kanaleneiland on 16 May 2018.

¹¹⁵ Author’s interview with Ayoub and Walid in Kanaleneiland on 30 May 2018.

¹¹⁶ Author’s interview with Enes and Hassan in Kanaleneiland on 16 May 2018.

¹¹⁷ Ibid.

¹¹⁸ Author’s interview with Ayoub and Walid in Kanaleneiland on 30 May 2018.

¹¹⁹ Author’s interview with Karim and Hamza in Kanaleneiland on 30 May 2018.

¹²⁰ Author’s interview with Ayoub and Walid in Kanaleneiland on 30 May 2018.

¹²¹ Author’s interview with Karim and Hamza in Kanaleneiland on 30 May 2018.

prevention (de Koning; Kaulingfreks; van der Leun; Çankaya), the boys in Kanaleneiland do not necessarily see the police's behaviour as racist. Though the boys often described their relationship with the police as being a battle between groups, these groups are not always seen as racially defined. As Karim explained, 'There is not a battle of the races like in America. It's not like America where people are racist'¹²². He further told me that the police team in Kanaleneiland is made up of lots of different races, including Moroccans and Turks. Thus, he does not see the conflict with the police to be based on race. Similarly, Ayoub told me that the police's behaviour is not racist, rather it is an example of power being misused¹²³. Walid added, 'If it was about skin colour I would not go under the sunbed'¹²⁴. However, some boys were less certain. For example, Khalid pointed out that in Kanaleneiland there are more Moroccan and Turkish residents than Dutch, so it is hard to identify if the police's behaviour is racist. As there are no Dutch boys hanging around in areas like the tennis park, it is impossible to compare¹²⁵. Moad chimed in, explaining that he sometimes gets the feeling that the police's actions are racially motivated¹²⁶. This notion was shared by Said. When I asked Said why he thought the police targeted him and the other boys, he said he believes it's because the police have nothing better to do, and also because they dislike Moroccans. With this, he recalled a time when a police officer told him, 'I hate Moroccans. I only handcuff Moroccans'¹²⁷. Similarly, while Tariq and Farouk said that it varies from officer to officer, they often understand their interactions with the police as ethnic profiling. This is because they believe the police will often penalise a Moroccan-Dutch boy for the behaviour of another Moroccan-Dutch boy¹²⁸.

Contentions and Contradictions

Having detailed how the policies directed at young people in Kanaleneiland are increasingly aimed at control, repression, risk and prevention, and exploring the impact of this on the boys' lives, I will now reflect on what this means for Tilly and Tarrow's contentious politics framework. Following this framework, the Netherlands

¹²² Author's interview with Karim and Hamza in Kanaleneiland on 30 May 2018.

¹²³ Author's interview with Ayoub and Walid in Kanaleneiland on 30 May 2018.

¹²⁴ Ibid.

¹²⁵ Authors' interview with Khalid and Moad in Kanaleneiland on 13 June 2018.

¹²⁶ Ibid.

¹²⁷ Author's interview with Said in Kanaleneiland 8 on May 2018.

¹²⁸ Author's interview with Farouk and Tariq in Kanaleneiland on 20 June 2018.

can be defined as a ‘high-capacity democratic regime’ (2015). As such, one would expect the boys’ in Kanaleneiland to experience the benefits of living in a high-capacity democratic regime, such as having broad equal political rights, receiving protection from any arbitrary action enacted by government agents, such as the police, have the ability to exert significant direct influence, and experience moderate repression (Tilly and Tarrow, 2015: 57). However, as this chapter has shown, the boys experience a very different version of Dutch democracy. For them, high levels of repression, control, and surveillance have become the norm. Further, their experiences with the police have led them to believe that they cannot expect protection from arbitrary government action. There thus appears to be a contradiction between the image of democracy and the reality, at least for the group of Moroccan-Dutch boys I interviewed in Kanaleneiland. This contradiction is not lost on the boys, as Karim explained:

We have article one in the Netherlands, the first rule in the book says no one is higher than another. We are all the same. If you are Moroccan, if you are black, we are one. But the police want to show that they are higher.

The gap between the perception of democracy and the empirical reality of inequality is explored in by Dikeç (2017). With this, he argues that, “liberal democracies do not guarantee equality in terms of wealth or social status”. Rather, “it is one of the basic assumptions of such political orders that a democratic political life can be organised despite social and economic inequalities” (2017: 4). Instead of benefitting from “broad equal political rights”, Dikeç contends that neoliberalism has led to high levels of exclusion in urban democratic societies, experienced by those who do not belong to the richest few. This portion of society has been excluded “from enjoying the rights, opportunities and privileges within as much as others do” and often experience “discriminatory and aggressive policing” (ibid: 5). Thus, in democratic societies, citizens are subjected to unequal experiences of the State. This unequal experience can be further understood by looking at the work of Rose (2000), Wacquant (2009), and Robinson and Barrera (2012), discussed in the introduction of this thesis. These scholars argue that those who deviate from neoliberalism’s political and economic rationale are met with “selective” (Robinson and Barrera, 2012: 12)

and “repressive social control and containment strategies, including racialised policing” (ibid: 17).

This is mirrored in the policies directed at youths in Kanaleneiland, and in the boys’ everyday experiences of the Dutch state. As this chapter has shown, the boys in this study are subjected to regular ID checks, receive an excessive amount of fines for minor infractions, and are punished collectively. I define this experience as criminalisation. I therefore argue that the characteristics of ‘high-capacity democratic regimes’ depicted in the contentious politics framework not only fail to resonate with the boys’ experiences, but also run in direct opposition to their experience. Thus, democracy can neither be assumed fixed nor objective. Rather, citizens living in democratic regimes experience democracy differently.

As discussed previously, Tilly and Tarrow argue that contentious repertoires are contingent on the level of democracy found in a regime. They further state that there are two factors that bring about repertoire change, one of these being an incremental change in a regime’s structural factors (2015). It can therefore be expected that neoliberalism and the move towards a culture of control in the Netherlands has had an impact on the types of repertoires of resistance used by Moroccan-Dutch boys living in Kanaleneiland. Thus, the fact that the boys do not experience a democratic rule of law suggests that they will not resist using the repertoires expected in high-capacity democratic regimes. However, this does not necessarily mean that they are ‘apathetic’, as Tilly and Tarrow suggest (2015). Indeed, “the tension created by the discrepancy between the image of equality and the empirical reality of inequality and exclusion fuels the rage that erupts in urban uprisings and other expressions of discontent” (2017: 4). It is these expressions of discontent that will form the basis of chapters three and four. However, first, we will turn to a discussion on the boys’ perceptions of Dutch democracy and, with this, their dismissal of democratic forms of resistance.

Chapter Two: The Paradox of Dutch Democracy

This chapter investigates why the types of contentious repertoires expected in ‘high-capacity democratic regimes’ (Tilly and Tarrow 2015) have failed to flourish in Kanaleneiland, despite feelings of anger, frustration, and injustice. It will do this by exploring the boys’ perceptions of Dutch democracy. With this, it examines how the boys view their potential to effect political change. The overarching sub-question of this chapter is: *How do Moroccan-Dutch boys’ experiences and perceptions of Dutch democracy shape their choice of resistance in Kanaleneiland?* In doing this, it will discuss the contradiction between Tilly and Tarrow’s depiction of democratic states, and the boys’ perceptions of the Dutch regime. I conclude with a discussion on the impact of this contradiction on resistance, questioning if the lack of collective claim making found in Kanaleneiland suggests the boys are indeed ‘apathetic’ (Tilly and Tarrow 2015).

Powerless

When talking to the boys in Kanaleneiland, it quickly became apparent that perceived police injustices have led to a shared sense of anger and frustration amongst the boys. With this, the boys feel attacked, disrespected, and unfairly criminalised. However, when questioning the boys about whether they would be interested in protesting these injustices through organised forms of resistance, such as participating in a demonstration, the answer was a unanimous no. When asking the boys to expand on this, they often discussed the futility of protesting: ‘I would not demonstrate against the State. It is just like if you work and do not get a salary, it does not have any effect’¹²⁹. Their lack of faith in organised forms of resistance was largely put down to the unassailable power of the police. With this comes the belief that even when the police are acting outside of the law, they will be protected, rather than penalised, by the Dutch state. As Enes explained, even when you are right, the police will always win¹³⁰. Farouk and Tariq agreed, stating that there is no point in protesting against the police, as they are too powerful¹³¹. Similarly, Khalid told me

¹²⁹ Author’s interview with Ayoub and Walid in Kanaleneiland on 30 May 2018.

¹³⁰ Author’s interview with Enes and Hassan in Kanaleneiland on 16 May 2018.

¹³¹ Author’s interview with Farouk and Tariq in Kanaleneiland on 20 June 2018.

that demonstrating is useless, as the police will always come equipped with their own explanations and interpretations of an event. In such instances, it is assumed that the police will always be believed over the boys. This assumption is brought to light through the case of Youssef, detailed at the beginning of this thesis. While a police officer is claiming that Youssef grabbed him by the throat, Youssef denies this, stating that it was in fact the police officer that grabbed him by the throat. Although the boys and the employees of the youth centre doubt that Youssef is the kind of boy to react so aggressively towards a police officer, they suspect that in court the police will automatically be believed over Youssef.

However, while the boys expressed a lack of faith in organised resistance's ability to positively transform their own circumstances, a few of the boys explained that organised resistance might be more influential when enacted by other people in the Netherlands. For example, when I asked Hamza and Karim if they believed demonstrating could lead to change, Karim answered, 'In the Netherlands yes, in Kanaleneiland no'¹³². Hamza added, 'If we were to protest in Kanaleneiland it would only get worse. They would hate us more'¹³³. Similarly, Ayoub explained that in order for demonstrating to have an impact, the boys would need to receive the support of somebody influential. He went on to explain that protesting can only make a difference if you have a group standing with you, and if you have access to advertising, promotion, and the media. If a group of boys were to simply gather in the tennis park to protest there would be no effect. When I questioned Ayoub if he believed the Dutch community would be interested in supporting the boys, he told me, 'sometimes we are wrong too. Some people spoil it for the rest. If our group never did anything wrong, than we would receive help'¹³⁴. With this, it can be seen that the boys have developed an acute awareness of the difference between their potential to exert political influence, and that of other Dutch citizens. This thus links back to the idea that citizens in the Netherlands have unequal experiences of the State, with Moroccan-Dutch boys in Kanaleneiland having less rights and influence than other Dutch citizens. It further aids in an understanding of why the boys are not interested in using the contentious repertoires expected in democratic regimes, as outlined in the contentious politics framework. Believing that they have no political

¹³² Author's interview with Karim and Hamza in Kanaleneiland on 30 May 2018.

¹³³ Ibid.

¹³⁴ Author's interview with Ayoub and Walid in Kanaleneiland on 30 May 2018.

influence, for the boys in Kanaleneiland, demonstrations and other forms of organised resistance are not realistic options and fail to resonate with their everyday experiences of the Dutch state.

Protesting Leads to Prison

Not only do the boys in Kanaleneiland feel powerless to effect political change, some have come to believe that protesting will land them in jail. When I asked the boys if they would be interested in joining a demonstration to protest the unjust behaviour of the police, Hassan replied with a no. He went onto explain that he would not trust taking part in a protest, as he believes he will end up in prison¹³⁵. Similarly, Walid told me that it is not possible to demonstrate against the police because if you were to demonstrate, you would end up being arrested¹³⁶. Farouk and Tariq shared the same fear. They explained that if the boys were to demonstrate, they would get in a lot of trouble with the police. The police would take them away and it would be chaos. They went on to explain that the police would react in the same way, whether the boys were engaging in violent riots or peaceful protests¹³⁷.

The boys' automatic assumption that protesting will lead to jail time highlights the level of criminalisation they face. As detailed in chapter one, punishment has become a part of the boys' everyday reality, especially when functioning as part of group. With this comes the expectation that any activity engaged in by the boys, particularly when enacted as a group, will lead to penalisation. Thus, the boys feel unable to exercise their democratic rights. The contrast between the image of high-capacity democratic regimes, and with this expected repertoires of resistance, and the reality of democracy for the boys in Kanaleneiland is thus brought to light. While Tilly and Tarrow expect that citizens living in high-capacity democratic regimes will view repertoires such as petitions and demonstrations as a realistic option that can be seized with relative ease (McAdam, Tarrow and Tilly 2007), for the boys in Kanaleneiland this is not the case. Instead, they perceive engaging in such resistance as an extremely risky endeavour, with arrest and jail time a likely consequence.

¹³⁵ Author's interview with Enes and Hassan in Kanaleneiland on 16 May 2018.

¹³⁶ Author's interview with Ayoub and Walid in Kanaleneiland on 30 May 2018.

¹³⁷ Author's interview with Farouk and Tariq in Kanaleneiland on 20 June 2018.

Protesting is not for Kanaleneilanders

There is a general feeling amongst the boys that protesting is not for Kanaleneilanders. This is founded on the assumption that peaceful protest is not something that comes naturally for boys in Kanaleneiland. With this, it is believed that having a demonstration in Kanaleneiland would be a bad idea as it would lead to ‘chaos’¹³⁸, as Karim and Hamza explained:

Karim: It would be a great problem if everyone came together to protest.

Hamza: The whole of Kanaleneiland would be on fire.

Karim: Have you seen what happened in The Hague? There was a revolt. A demonstration in Kanaleneiland would end like that.

Hamza: We do not know what demonstrating means.

The line between peaceful protests and riots was often blurred when talking to the boys. When discussing demonstrations, they would often either begin with, or end up with, talking about riots. For example, some of the boys assumed I was talking about rioting when I asked if they would be interested in demonstrating¹³⁹, automatically associating rioting with protest. As such, when I asked Walid if he would join a demonstration, he replied saying, ‘We do that every year, it is called Ramadan’¹⁴⁰¹⁴¹. Others explained that a demonstration in Kanaleneiland would automatically lead to a riot. This is built on the idea that when a big group of boys come together in Kanaleneiland, chaos will ensue. Thus, not only do the police criminalise the boys in Kanaleneiland, the boys also engage in the self-criminalisation of their group.

Further, some of the boys expressed that organised resistance, such as joining a protest, is not their kind of thing. For example, Said explained that we would not be

¹³⁸ Author’s interview with Karim and Hamza in Kanaleneiland on 30 May 2018.

¹³⁹ Author’s interview with Farouk and Tariq in Kanaleneiland on 20 June 2018.

¹⁴⁰ The significance of Ramadan in the boys’ resistance will be explored in chapter three.

¹⁴¹ Author’s interview with Ayoub and Walid in Kanaleneiland on 30 May 2018.

interested in taking part in a demonstration because he has better things to do: “I am not interested in yelling and stuff, no”. He went on to explain that protesting is something for academics, not for boys like him¹⁴². Enes similarly stated that demonstrating does not interest him; it is not his kind of thing¹⁴³.

There is thus a clear disconnect between how the boys in Kanaleneiland perceive and relate to repertoires of resistance, and how Tilly and Tarrow expect citizens living in democratic societies to relate to resistance. Tilly and Tarrow present repertoires of contention as being familiar and standardized ‘shared scripts’ (2015). However, as this chapter has shown, not everyone shares these scripts. Rather, the boys in Kanaleneiland perceive the repertoires of contention assigned to democratic regimes as being something that belongs to someone else, as something that is not suitable for Kanaleneilanders. Further, they do not perceive the Dutch state as democratic. They have little faith in their potential to effect political change and feel unable to exercise their democratic rights, fearing protesting will lead to imprisonment. This again shows that democracy cannot be taken as a given, rather actors experience and perceive ‘democratic regimes’ differently.

Apathy?

As this chapter has shown, the repertoires of contention ascribed to democratic regimes are unlikely to be used by the boys in Kanaleneiland. Not only do the boys not identify with these repertoires, they are sceptical about their potential to create change in Kanaleneiland and feel powerless to take up the challenge. This feeling of powerlessness is so severe that the boys assume that protesting will land them in prison. This demonstrates the gap between Tilly and Tarrow’s expectations of contentious politics, in which it is assumed that “opportunities for peaceful interaction can be easily seized” by citizens living in democratic regimes (McAdam, Tarrow and Tilly, 2007: 19), and the boys’ perceptions of Dutch democracy. With this, I argue that democracy is subjective and not guaranteed. Perceptions of democracy vary, especially when citizens are subjected to asymmetrical experiences of the State, as in today’s democratic societies. As a result, despite feeling angry and frustrated about the injustices they face, the boys in Kanaleneiland have not articulated these frustrations publicly through organised and formal repertoires of

¹⁴² Author’s interview with Said in Kanaleneiland on 8 May 2018.

¹⁴³ Author’s interview with Enes and Hassan in Kanaleneiland on 16 May 2018.

contention. Kanaleneiland has seen neither demonstrations nor social movements against the criminalisation of Moroccan-Dutch boys. These findings could arguably be used to understand the “oceans of apathy” often found in democratic regimes (Tilly and Tarrow 2015).

However, while the boys in this study do not adopt the contentious repertoires expected in Tilly and Tarrow’s contentious politics, it would be both unfair and inaccurate to label them apathetic. Instead, the outcome of contradiction between the image of liberal democratic societies and the reality is not apathy, but rage:

These are mature democracies, some of the most mature the world has known. They operate under conditions of formal equality, with their elections regularly and properly held, parliaments in session and government institutions working according to the rules (apart from the occasional corruption scandal). Yet there is a tension between the image – or illusion – of equality that these democracies formally uphold and the empirical inequalities that lead to urban rage and erupt in uprisings (Dikeç, 2017: 218).

This rage is mirrored in the boys’ strained interactions with the police in Kanaleneiland. Yet, as the boys do not perceive and experience the State as democratic, this rage has not manifested in the way Tilly and Tarrow (2015) expect. Rather, as the following chapter will show, the boys engage in alternative forms of resistance.

Chapter Three:

Everyday Resistance in Kanaleneiland

The previous chapter concluded that although not engaging in the kinds of repertoires of contention expected in high-capacity democratic regimes, the boys in Kanaleneiland are not apathetic. Rather, they engage in alternative resistance. This chapter will explore how this alternative resistance manifests itself in Kanaleneiland. It will thus address the following sub-question: *How (if at all) do Moroccan-Dutch boys living in Kanaleneiland resist criminalisation?* To analyse this resistance, it will draw upon Johansson and Vinthagen's everyday resistance framework (2016). The final section of this chapter will reflect on why the boys' engage in this form of resistance and the implications of these findings on the contentious politics framework.

Alternative Resistance in Kanaleneiland

In contrast to the kinds of organised and formal repertoires of contention Tilly and Tarrow would expect to find in 'high-capacity democratic regimes', such as "petitions, public meetings, press statements, demonstrations, (and) lobbying" (McAdam, Tarrow and Tilly, 2007: 5), the boys in Kanaleneiland have developed their own resistance strategies to deal with the criminalisation they face. The majority of the resistance I found in Kanaleneiland was not organised, publicly articulated, nor depicted as political. During our conversations, the boys rarely articulated their behaviour as a form of resistance¹⁴⁴; rather it was described as a reaction to the everyday encounters they face. This behaviour is not organised, but rather appears to happen unsystematically, as Karim and Hamza explained: 'It happens itself when a group is together'¹⁴⁵. However, while the boys' resistance is not planned, everyone has the same mind-set thus end up partaking in the same resistance¹⁴⁶. Due to the resistance's lack of formal organisation and public articulation, the repertoires used by the boys can best be understood as 'everyday resistance': "Everyday resistance is understood as a specific kind of resistance that is

¹⁴⁴ The only exception being when Walid referred to Ramadan as a demonstration.

¹⁴⁵ Author's interview with Karim and Hamza in Kanaleneiland on 30 May 2018.

¹⁴⁶ Author's interview with Enes and Hassan in Kanaleneiland on 16 May 2018.

done routinely yet is not publicly articulated with political claims or formally organized” (Johansson and Vinthagen, 2016: 417).

Everyday Forms of Resistance

James C. Scott first introduced the term ‘everyday forms of resistance’ in 1985. For Scott, everyday resistance refers to the ‘ordinary weapons’ employed by peasants to resist their oppressor (1985). These ‘weapons’ include actions such as “foot dragging, dissimulation, desertion, false compliance, pilfering, feigned ignorance, slander, arson, sabotage, and so on” (Scott, 1985: xvi). These acts of resistance require “little or no coordination or planning” (ibid). Since its theoretical conception in 1985, everyday resistance has been applied to numerous research projects. However, these studies rely on very different understandings of everyday resistance, employing a range of definitions and methodologies. In turn, it has been difficult to develop a systematic approach to everyday resistance (Johansson and Vinthagen, 2016: 417). To overcome this, Johansson and Vinthagen propose their own analytical framework to aid in the analysis of everyday resistance. With this, they argue that four different dimensions of everyday resistance must be taken into account: repertoires of everyday resistance, together with the relations between actors, and the spatialization and temporalization of resistance (ibid).

Inspired by Tilly and Tarrow’s use of ‘repertoires of contention’, Johansson and Vinthagen’s concept of ‘repertoires of everyday resistance’ captures the variety of actions employed during resistance. While Tilly defines repertoires of contention “as a set of culturally learned routines in which larger groups interact in conflict with each other” (ibid: 421) and focuses on patterns of actions carried out in an organised form by large groups (collective action), in their use of repertoires of everyday resistance, Johansson and Vinthagen explore “individual as well as collective actions that are not organized, formal or necessarily public or intentionally political, and link them to configurations of power in everyday life” (ibid). Adopting Tilly’s notion of repertoires allows for an analysis of the configurations of power involved in everyday resistance, connecting “historical configurations of power and their related culturally learned repertoires” (ibid). Having identified the need to explore acts of resistance, clustered together as repertoires, and linking these repertoires to configuration of power, Johansson and Vinthagen next discuss the importance of

identifying who is carrying out actions of everyday resistance. They term this dimension of everyday resistance, the ‘relationship of agents’. Taking a post-modernist approach, they argue, “an agent is a social identity constructed in relationships that are not singular or fixed [...] but perceived as plural, complex, contextual and situational” (ibid: 422). Thus, resistance is not only defined by those carrying out the act, but also by the targets of the resistance and various other observers. Johansson and Vinthagen argue for the need to also include both the spatial and temporal dimensions in an analysis of everyday resistance. With this, it is important to examine how the activities, social relations, and identities involved in resistance are spatially organised. This is because space is inextricably linked to power (Sheilds 1991; Harvey 1990; Soja 1989; Foucault 1991)¹⁴⁷. Similarly, everyday resistance can be analysed by looking at its temporal dimensions, examining how resistance is temporally organised. The controlling of time can also be linked to power¹⁴⁸. When applied to actual social life, the four dimensions mentioned are “intertwined and in no way mutually exclusive” (Johansson and Vinthagen, 2016: 419). By drawing on these four dimensions, it is possible to investigate “who is carrying out the practice, in relation to whom, where and when, and how?” (Ibid: 419). I will adopt this systematic framework to interpret the repertoires of resistance I encountered in Kanaleneiland.

Before turning to an analysis on the repertoires of resistance I found in Kanaleneiland, and linking these to power, time, and space, I will first address the relationship of the agents involved in the resistance. With this, I will examine who is carrying out the resistance and, similarly, who the target of the resistance is. I will further look at how the acts of resistance are interpreted by different parties and explore the fluidity of this resistance. While the repertoires I will go on to discuss were widely recognised by all of the boys I spoke to in my research, as well as the police and youth care professionals, it is important to note that not all boys claimed to partake in these repertoires. Rather, while some boys were able to identify the repertoires engaged in by their peers, they told me that they themselves did not respond to the police in such a way. Rather, they explained that they are able to give

¹⁴⁷ For example, in Foucault’s concept of the Panopticism, the link between spatial orderings and discipline is highlighted: “Discipline begins with division in space, which creates closed territories of order and control” (Foucault in Johansson and Vinthagen, 2016: 425).

¹⁴⁸ For example, Foucault explored how time control is practiced in the work place through time schedules (Johansson and Vinthagen 2016). Further, time theft, such as dragging ones feet in an effort to waste time, has been identified as an important repertoire of everyday resistance (Scott 1985).

a “good” reaction¹⁴⁹ Similarly, not all police officers are the target of the boys’ resistance. During interviews, the boys were quick to explain that while a majority of police are bad, there are also some good police officers. When encountering these ‘good’ officers, the boys are less likely to resist, as Said explained: ‘There are also good police, the ones that have known you from a young age. When you see these police, you do not run’¹⁵⁰. With this, the relationship between the boys and the police, and thus the level of resistance, depends on a number of factors, such as the composition of the police force and the police officer’s behaviour¹⁵¹. For example, Kanaleneiland has recently seen a change in the composition of the police force, with police officers leaving the neighbourhood to pursue new positions and, with this, an influx of new officers coming in. Prior to this change, the relationship between the boys and the police was seen to be going well¹⁵². However, in the last year this relationship has taken a turn for the worse¹⁵³. The friction caused by the new police team was explained to me during numerous interviews and is said to be down to the new police officers’ lack of familiarity with the neighbourhood, as well as their lack of tact when dealing with the boys, and their lack of personality¹⁵⁴. Further, the police’s perceived unjust behaviour, such as the handing out of fines, also plays a role in the amount of resistance enacted by the boys¹⁵⁵. Thus, in line with Johansson and Vinthagen’s argument, the identities and relationships of the agents and targets in Kanaleneiland are “plural, complex, contextual and situational” (2016: 422).

Similarly, the way the boys’ resistance is perceived depends on the agent. For example, the boys often described their resistance as a reaction to police injustices. While they did not necessarily view their behavior in a positive light, it was frequently explained as necessary. The police on the other hand dismissed the boys’ behavior as an inevitable part of street culture, making no connection between their own behavior and the boys’ behavior. This was explained to me by community police officer Mustafa, ‘You have street culture and it is a very closed culture. This culture naturally conflicts with the police. While the police do not do anything

¹⁴⁹ Authors’ interview with Karim and Hamza in Kanaleneiland on 30 May 2018.

¹⁵⁰ Authors’ interview with Said in Kanaleneiland on 8 May 2018.

¹⁵¹ Authors’ interview with Julia in Kanaleneiland on 11 May 2018.

¹⁵² Ibid.

¹⁵³ Ibid.

¹⁵⁴ Author’s interview with Lotte and Amina, community workers, in Kanaleneiland on 20 March 2018.

¹⁵⁵ Authors’ interview with Julia, youth care professional, in Kanaleneiland on 11 May 2018.

wrong, for those guys (the boys) you do not talk to the police'¹⁵⁶. This view was shared by police officer Finn, who expressed seeing no connection between the police's unfair treatment of "underprivileged" youths and their relationship with the police¹⁵⁷. The relationship between the boys and the police will be further explored through an analysis into repertoires of resistance employed by the boys.

Anonymous Voices

One of the most commonly used repertoires of resistance engaged in by the boys is name-calling. When questioning the boys about how they react to being stopped by the police, almost all of the boys explained that it is commonplace to shout "homos", or another insult, at the police. This repertoire is particularly used in a group context. When the boys are in a big group, they are able to call out to the police anonymously¹⁵⁸. This way, the police have no way of finding out who the offender is. Thus, the risk in carrying out this repertoire is relatively low.

This tactic can be interpreted as a way of regaining power over the police. While the boys expressed that the police are too powerful to resist through organised forms of resistance, such as protesting, name-calling can be viewed as a readily available way to get one up on the police without facing punishment. Berating the police in public, the boys can be seen to humiliate and degrade the police. Name-calling can thus be seen as a reaction to the humiliation the boys experience at the hands of the police. By publicly condemning the police, calling them the "baddest thing"¹⁵⁹ possible, the boys are able to reassert their control, playing the police at their own game.

Not only do the boys shout insults at the police, they also make animal noises as the police drive by¹⁶⁰. The boys' use of animal noises can be interpreted as a reaction to their belief that the police see them as animals¹⁶¹. Thus, the boys can be seen to play up to this role, adopting the label and inverting it as a way to resist the criminalisation they face.

¹⁵⁶ Author's interview with Mustafa, community police officer, in Kanaleneiland on 12 May 2018.

¹⁵⁷ Author's interview with Finn, former Kanaleneiland police officer, in Utrecht on 25 April

¹⁵⁸ Authors' interview with Julia, youth care professional, in Kanaleneiland on 11 May 2018.

¹⁵⁹ Author's interview with Karim and Hamza in Kanaleneiland on 30 May 2018.

¹⁶⁰ Author's interview with Mustafa, community police officer, in Kanaleneiland 12 May 2018.

¹⁶¹ Author's interview with Enes and Hassan in Kanaleneiland on 16 May 2018.

This repertoire of resistance can also be analysed using Johansson and Vinthagen's notion of spatialization. By taunting the police as they approach onto what the boys' view as their patch, the boys can be seen to reassert their dominance over the street. By warding off the police with insults and profanities, the boys attempt to mark their territory and prevent the police from encroaching onto their space. The desire to take back the streets can be seen as a reaction to the numerous surveillance cameras that have been placed around the neighbourhood, the presence of police officers in the boys' hang out spots, and the fines that are handed out for standing in certain areas.

Running Away

Running away from the police is another tactic commonly used by the boys. Running away from the police is a practical way for the boys to escape criminalisation. While the boys explained that running from the police is often done when they, or someone from the group, have committed a crime, they also expressed the need to run when you are innocent. This was supported by a police officer Mustafa, who explained that sometimes the boys run away when he approaches, even if they have not done anything wrong¹⁶². The boys' explained that if someone from the group has done something to get in trouble with the police, it is likely that they will also get penalised for their peer's actions. Thus, in these circumstances, it is best to run. This assertion can be linked to boys' experiences of collective punishment and, with this, their belief that they are always treated the same by the police, whether they are guilty or not. This was explained by Khalid: 'Maybe you did not have anything to do with a police call out but you are seen as complicit and put in the logbook, and then there is something against you for no reason. You can avoid these problems by running away'¹⁶³. Similarly, Karim and Hamza told of the need to run even when innocent, explaining that they 'do not want to go to jail'¹⁶⁴. The fear of being put in jail is founded on the boys' belief that they will be treated as a criminal even when they are innocent. For example, Hamza explained that the police often take you to the police station without having decided if you are the suspect or not. It is only at

¹⁶² Author's interview with Mustafa, community police officer, in Kanaleneiland 12 May 2018.

¹⁶³ Author's interview with Khalid and Moad in Kanaleneiland on 13 June 2018.

¹⁶⁴ Author's interview with Karim and Hamza in Kanaleneiland on 30 May 2018.

the police station that they decide if you are indeed guilty¹⁶⁵. Whether determined guilty or not, the fact that the boys were taken to the police station is enough to get them in serious trouble with their parents: ‘My parents will kill me’¹⁶⁶. By running away, the boys are literally able to resist being criminalised by the police and their parents. However, this tactic is not risk free. In fact, the act of running away can land the boys in a lot of trouble, making them an automatic suspect: ‘Police always say, why are they running? They should not be running, if you are innocent, you do not have to run. They always say there is something suspicious when you run’¹⁶⁷. Thus, in an attempt to avoid suspicion, the boys ironically legitimise the police’s suspicions. This irony is demonstrated through the story of Youssef, explained at the beginning of this thesis. While Youssef initially decided to run to avoid getting in any kind of trouble, in the end running arguably got him in more trouble. The risk of being caught by the police was further emphasised by Karim, in which he explained that if the police manage to catch you, you will receive a punch to the face.¹⁶⁸

Not only is running expressed as a precaution, it is also seen as a legal, or “free”, way for the boys to exercise their democratic rights:

Karim: It’s not forbidden to run, it is allowed, it is your right. You are allowed to escape, but you are not allowed to break anything, you are not allowed to break a door, but you are allowed to climb over a fence, you are not allowed to break anything.

Laurel: Why do most people run?

Karim: Why not, it is possible. It is for free. You can do it with no problem.

As the boys believe their rights are so often taken away from them by the police, the act of running can be interpreted as a way for the boys to reinstate themselves as

¹⁶⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶⁶ Ibid.

¹⁶⁷ Author’s interview with Julia, youth care professional, in Kanaleneiland on 11 May 2018.

¹⁶⁸ Author’s interview with Karim and Hamza in Kanaleneiland on 30 May 2018.

rights bearing citizens. As Karim's long list of what you are not allowed to do shows, running away is seen as one of the only legal ways to escape criminalisation.

Using Johansson and Vinthagen's concept of temporalization, the act of running can also be analysed as a resistance strategy aimed at wasting police time. During interviews, the boys recounted often being stopped by the police when going about their everyday lives, whether this be while hanging out in the park, walking down the road with their younger cousin, or driving to a nearby town. By interrupting the boys' everyday activities, police stops can be interpreted as a way to control and monitor the boys' time. The importance of studying the relationship between surveillance and time is highlighted by scholars exploring the dynamics of resistance in Palestine.¹⁶⁹ The boys' tendency to run away from the police can also be interpreted as a reaction to the amount of the boys' time wasted by the police. By running away from the police, and in turn encouraging a police chase, the boys can be seen to waste the police's time. In doing this, the power to control time is put back in the hands of the boys.

Rwina

Rwina, a term for an enthusiastic form of rioting most commonly used by the Moroccan-Dutch youths, can also be interpreted as a form of resistance¹⁷⁰. Often directed at adults, rwina can be seen as an institutionalised way for Moroccan-Dutch youngsters to establish their own community, in turn shutting out those around them¹⁷¹. Acts of rwina can range from making silly noises or creating havoc on a playground ride, to throwing computers out of school windows or throwing stones at the police¹⁷². These acts are often filmed by youngsters and uploaded onto social media channels. While rwina can at times be perceived as an innocent way for children to have a bit of fun at the expense of adults¹⁷³, it can also be seen to refer to chaos, destruction and conflict (Gazzah 2008). When performing rwina, youngsters operate in groups. With this, their actions often remain anonymous. For example, one

¹⁶⁹ For example, Peteet argues Palestinians time and space is "defined by walls, check-points, by-pass roads and permit systems" (Peteet in Johansson and Vinthagen, 2015: 129). With this, Palestinians are forced to wait hours on a daily basis. She concludes, "hierarchy is thus written in both time and space" (ibid). The use of time as a way to exert power can similarly be seen in Kanaleneiland.

¹⁷⁰ For a definition of Rwina visit: <https://www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=Rwina>

¹⁷¹ Authors' interview with Julia in Kanaleneiland on 11 May 2018.

¹⁷² Ibid.

¹⁷³ Ibid.

person from the group will call out an adults name while they are not looking, thus making it impossible to identify whom it was. In turn, the whole group gets punished: ‘What happens all the time is that the whole group gets punished because nobody will ever say who performed the rwina, so they end up often getting punished for things they have not done.’¹⁷⁴ The use of collective punishment sparks anger and frustration, with youngsters arguing it both unfair and racist¹⁷⁵. Thus, just as with their interactions with the police, the youngsters are again left with the perception that they will always be treated as guilty and penalised for the actions of their peers.

While not exclusively reserved for interactions with the police, rwina is often directed at police officers, as Khalid explained to me:

Laurel: Is rwina ever directed at the police?

Khalid: Yes, in the past there was a big rwina in Kanaleneiland. It was filmed by some of the boys. The children threw stones at the police, one police officer came up to them and then everyone would run away.

Laurel: Is it ever a reaction to things the police have done?

Khalid: Sometimes, say for example, if 15 minutes before you have had a fine for something like riding on the pavement with your bike or that nonsense, recently someone got a fine for being on the grass, and so things happen that make you feel angry and then you want to do something back¹⁷⁶.

In this instance, the use of rwina can be seen as a direct response to perceived injustices. Angry about the meting out of “nonsense” fines, the boys express the desire to punish the police. They do this through their own justice system, rwina. The boys believe that they are powerless to challenge the police through formal ways, such as going to court, thus they can be seen to take matters into their own hands,

¹⁷⁴ Ibid.

¹⁷⁵ Ibid.

¹⁷⁶ Author’s interview with Khalid and Moad in Kanaleneiland on 13 June 2018.

using the power of the group to reprimand the police for their injustices. The use of *rwina* as a payback for unfair criminalisation is expressed in the lyrics of Moroccan-Dutch rapper Appa:

It is going to be *rwina* if you point your finger at me too long /
so keep your fucking finger down and do not just randomly
accuse me of shit / don't look at me when I walk around in the
shop / yeah, you / I know you hear me (Appa in Gazzah, 2008:
221)¹⁷⁷.

Rwina can further be interpreted as a 'resistance identity' (Castells in Rios, 2011: 102). This is an identity created by a repressed, subordinate group in an attempt to exclude the excluder: "In feeling excluded from a network of positive credentials, education, and employment opportunities, young people develop creative responses that provide them with the necessary tools to survive in an environment where they have been left behind and where they are consistently criminalized" (Rios, 2011: 102). With this, *rwina* can be analysed as a practice that embraces criminality in an attempt to contest a system that criminalises (ibid).

Gathering

Gathering can be interpreted as another form of resistance. By gathering, I refer to the assemblage of a large group of boys who often gather when there is a standoff between one of the boys and the police. When there is an altercation between one of the boys and a police officer, within minutes a large group of boys is likely to appear on the scene. Once the group has gathered, things are likely to get heated. Such was the case when Youssef was arrested. As explained at the beginning of this thesis, following a motorbike chase between Youssef and the police, a large group of boys gathered. In return, more police cars arrived at the scene. Watching on, some of the boys got out their mobile phones to film the incident, while others hurled insults at the police. One boy even tried to get in between Youssef and the police, resulting in his own arrest. When I asked Karim about the event, he explained that when there is a standoff with the police, there is a "reaction from all the guys, they all come

together and if they get together, it is possible that it is going to be a bad day. It can escalate”¹⁷⁸. Questioning how long it takes for a group of boys to gather, Hamza and Karim told me that it only takes one minute for the boys to know that there has been an incident with the police. Reflecting on Youssef’s arrest, Karim recalled having driven after Youssef, during which time he saw boys begin to gather “from all sides”¹⁷⁹.

While the phenomenon of gathering during such confrontations can be interpreted as simply a means for the boys to enjoy a bit of action and drama¹⁸⁰, it can also be seen as a resistance strategy. By gathering in large groups, the boys are able to protect their peers: ‘If one of the boys has a problem, everyone will go outside to help him, because he is one of us’¹⁸¹. While on their own the boys believe they are vulnerable to being mistreated or “attacked” by the police. Once they have the power of the group behind them, they are able to fight back: ‘If we are in a big group and the police wants to attack one of us, do you think he will live? If we are in a big group, then we will not walk away’¹⁸². By observing the police’s behaviour, and intervening when they deem injustices are taking place, the boys provide their own form of surveillance and justice. While they believe that the police will always receive impunity when taken to court, on the street the boys can dish out their own form of punishment, in the means of insults, threats, and violence. Through the use of mobile phones, the boys are also able to capture the events on camera. Thus, while the police are in control of the neighbourhood’s surveillance cameras, the boys can be seen to adopt their own form of surveillance in an attempt to control police actions by deterring violence, as well as by naming and shaming unjust police officers on social media¹⁸³.

The gathering of large groups of boys can further be seen as an attempt to reassert control over space. As explained in the Youssef case, the boys and the police often become engaged in a fight over who can have more people on the streets. When the boys begin to arrive on the scene, the police call in reinforcements. In return, more boys begin to gather on the street, and so on. As explained by Karim, this is when things can really escalate. The gathering of boys can thus be interpreted

¹⁷⁸ Author’s interview with Karim and Hamza in Kanaleneiland on 30 May 2018.

¹⁷⁹ Ibid.

¹⁸⁰ Author’s interview with Rachid, youth care professional, in Kanaleneiland 7 May 2018.

¹⁸¹ Author’s interview with Karim and Hamza in Kanaleneiland on 30 May 2018.

¹⁸² Author’s interview with Ayoub and Walid in Kanaleneiland on 30 May 2018.

¹⁸³ For example: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GR-BGXJJYO0&t=4s>

as a way for the boys to chase the police out of town by outnumbering them. With this, they are able to reassert control over their neighbourhood and reoccupy the streets.

Ramadan and New Year's Eve

While conflicts between the boys and the police often occur sporadically, there are two periods of the year that have become notorious for altercations between the boys and the police: Ramadan and New Year's Eve. Traditionally, during this time, cars are set alight, public property is vandalised and clashes between the boys and the police become the norm (RTV Utrecht 2017). I witnessed this first hand during my research. Having heard about the infamous clashes from various respondents, on the first evening of Ramadan I hit the streets to witness the action for myself. While at first nothing seemed out of the ordinary, when I reached the tennis park I came across a group of about forty boys. Making strange noises, which could have perhaps been animal noises, the boys gathered around a lamppost and began to violently shake it. After a few attempts, the lamppost crippled under the boys' weight, falling to the floor. Further, I was told that in the run up to Ramadan, the boys had excitably been discussing their plans to get back at the police for the number of fines they had recently received and a number of police officers' names were placed on a death list¹⁸⁴.

In an attempt to counter this behaviour, the police have often resorted to deploying more officers on the street (Debbenhof 2017). However, this approach is seen to have backfired. Rather than curtailing tensions, the presence of more police is often seen to fuel frictions. As Ahmed, a youth care professional, explained to me; the boys will only go home once the police have gone home¹⁸⁵. Thus, the boys' actions can be seen as a direct response to the police's behaviour. In an attempt to avoid this from happening, this year the police decided to keep their distance, instead relying on the use of surveillance cameras and network partners¹⁸⁶ to monitor the boys' behaviour. These network partners are made up of youth and community workers, whose job it is to patrol the streets. These partners are instructed to notify the police when necessary. This approach is thus aimed at monitoring the boys'

¹⁸⁴ Authors' interview with Julia, youth care professional, in Kanaleneiland on 11 May 2018.

¹⁸⁵ Author's interview with Ahmed, youth care professional, in Kanaleneiland on 9 May 2018.

¹⁸⁶ Authors' interview with Mustafa, community police officer, in Kanaleneiland on 12 May 2018.

actions without aggravating the situation. The need to call in network partners highlights the severity of the tensions between the boys' and the police and suggests that the boys' behaviour on Ramadan is directly aimed at the police.

When asking Walid if he would be interested in joining a demonstration to protest police misconduct, he replied, 'We do that every year. It's called Ramadan'¹⁸⁷. With this, Ramadan can be seen as a chance for the boys to get justice and revenge for the injustices they have faced throughout the year. For example, the use of death lists can be seen as a response to the endless lists the boys are placed on as a result of the group approach. Ramadan can thus be interpreted as a form of resistance aimed at countering perceived inequalities. It can further be understood as a once in a year chance for the boys to exert their power. While the boys often express a sense of powerlessness when it comes to their day-to-day interactions with the police, Ramadan can be seen as a time when the traditional power structures are turned on their head and the boys take charge. As Enes explained, Ramadan is 'our own day'¹⁸⁸. While the boys do not necessarily co-ordinate their actions, everyone has the same mind-set and thus ends up performing the same actions¹⁸⁹. The boys' use of vandalism, for example the destruction of the lamppost, can also be analysed using the notion of spatialization. By destroying their own neighbourhood, the boys can be seen to re-establish their influence and control over space. The demolition of the communities' infrastructure, in which the council is required to spend money to fix the damages, can also be interpreted as payback for the amount of money the boys are required to spend on fines every year.

It is however important to note that this year, there were very few clashes between the boys and the police during Ramadan. In fact, the lamppost incident was reportedly the only significant event to have taken place. A few of the boys I spoke to put the lack of clashes this year down to the fact that the group has got older and matured. It is likely that the change of approach, in which the police have refrained from heading out onto the streets, also played a major role in the shift. As previously explained, the boys actions can be seen as a direct response to the behaviour of the police, hence the change of tactic.

¹⁸⁷ Author's interview with Ayoub and Walid in Kanaleneiland on 30 May 2018.

¹⁸⁸ Ibid.

¹⁸⁹ Ibid.

Cat and Mouse

During my research, interactions between the boys and the police were often described as a game of cat and mouse, or “Tom and Jerry”¹⁹⁰. With this, both the boys and the police are seen to engage in provocative behaviour, purposefully irritating one another in the hope of igniting a reaction. For example, Said told me that he purposefully rides a motorcycle without a number plate in the hope of starting a chase with the police¹⁹¹. When I asked him what the purpose of this was, he explained that he likes to play with the police, to fool them. While he was quick to tell me that he understands that this behaviour is not good, he explains that if the police provoke him, he will do it back¹⁹². During my interviews with the boys, other provocative behaviour was discussed. For example, one boy was said to always drive past the police station, doing a wheelie on his moped while swearing¹⁹³. Fatima told me that she had heard of boys calling the police on themselves in the hope of provoking a reaction¹⁹⁴. Further, Farouk showed me photos of his brother and his friends standing on top of a police car. These kinds of photos were a popular trend, with boys using the photos as their social media display pictures¹⁹⁵.

It is not only the boys that take part in this cat and mouse game, the police are also said to engage in provocative behaviour. As police officer Finn explained to me, some officers enjoy a bit of action while on the job. If there is no action at hand, they will go about creating their own¹⁹⁶. ‘Action’ is created by making non-tactical decisions, such as approaching a big group of boys on your own, driving up to a group of boys with flashing lights and blaring headlights, or driving past the same group five times¹⁹⁷. Finn tells me that he believes these tactics are aimed at showing the boys who is boss¹⁹⁸. The desire to create a bit of action was further supported by community police officer Mustafa. Discussing how community police officers react

¹⁹⁰ Author’s interview with Ahmed, youth care professional, in Kanaleneiland 09 May 2018.

¹⁹¹ Author’s interview with Said in Kanaleneiland on 08 May 2018.

¹⁹² Ibid.

¹⁹³ Author’s interview with Farouk and Tariq in Kanaleneiland on 30 June 2018.

¹⁹⁴ Author’s interview with Fatima in Kanaleneiland on 22 May 2018.

¹⁹⁵ Author’s interview with Farouk and Tariq in Kanaleneiland on 30 June 2018.

¹⁹⁶ Author’s interview with Finn, former Kanaleneiland police officer, in Utrecht on 25 April.

¹⁹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁹⁸ Ibid.

to the boys' provocations, he explained that while some officers choose to ignore provocative behaviour, others like the action and thus initiate police chases¹⁹⁹.

The boys and the police can thus be seen to engage in a continual power struggle. The provocative behaviour engaged in by the boys can be seen as a chance for the boys to fool the police, as Said described. As such, it can be interpreted as an opportunity for the boys to take charge of their interactions with the police. By calling the shots, the boys are able to shake up the traditional power structure, putting them in the position of power while simultaneously demoting the police to the position of 'fool'. With this, provocative behaviour can be seen as a way for the boys to get revenge on the police officers. As Said told me, he engages in this kind of behaviour because the police do it first. Thus, the desire to make the police look like a fool can be seen as a direct reaction to the police making the boys look like fools. The struggle for prestige and power is not only directed at the police, but is also an opportunity for the boys to show off to their peers, proving their bravery and strength²⁰⁰. Similarly, the police's behaviour can be seen understood as a demonstration of power. Provoking the boys can be seen as a way for the police to demonstrate that they have the power to get away with whatever they want. In turn, showing the boys that they are in charge and that they are the 'boss'²⁰¹. It can also be seen as a direct response to the boys' attempts to fool and humiliate the police. By reacting to this, the police arguably attempt to demonstrate to the boys that they will not be taken for a fool. They do this by exerting their power, re-establishing the traditional power structure.

This 'cat and mouse' game can also be seen to take on temporal elements. The belief that the police have nothing to do was brought up by a number of boys I spoke to, for example Walid explained, 'The police have nothing to do, all they do is ride around'²⁰². With this, some boys have come to believe that the police only bother them because they have nothing better to do. As such, the boys' provocation of the police, for example purposefully starting police chases and calling the police on themselves, can be interpreted as a response to the idea that the police have nothing to do. By wasting the police's time and creating things for the police to do, the boys can be seen to play on the idea that the police's job is worthless. It can

¹⁹⁹ Author's interview with Mustafa, community police officer, in Kanaleneiland on 12 May 2018.

²⁰⁰ Author's interview with Tariq and Farouk in Kanaleneiland on 20 June 2018.

²⁰¹ Author's interview with Finn, former Kanaleneiland police officer, in Utrecht on 25 April.

²⁰² Author's interview with Ayoub and Walid in Kanaleneiland on 30 May 2018.

further be interpreted as revenge for the amount of time the boys have lost to police stops.

Trapped, Navigating, Surviving

As this chapter has shown, while the boys in Kanaleneiland do not adopt the repertoires of resistance expected to be found in democratic regimes, this does not mean that they do not resist criminalisation. Rather, they have devised their own strategies to cope with the criminalisation they face. Trapped in a highly controlled penal system, with limited options, the boys attempt to navigate and survive by utilizing a number of resistance strategies. Although these repertoires deviate from Tilly and Tarrow's framework, they make sense when taking into account the boys' experiences and perceptions of the Dutch state. Denied the democratic rule of law, the boys resort to repertoires that bare more resemblance to resistance found in non-democratic regimes.

Chapter Four: Collective Punishment

This final chapter will further reflect on the connection between boys' experiences of criminalisation, and their adopted resistance strategies. The over-arching sub-question for this chapter is: *How does resistance employed by Moroccan-Dutch boys living in Kanaleneiland affect their experiences of criminalisation?* In answering this, it will highlight the significance of the group in both the boys' dealings with the police, and also in their repertoires of resistance. To help analyse this phenomenon, it draws on the work of Social Identity Theory, exploring the importance of belonging. It concludes with a discussion on the role of collective punishment and collective resistance, arguing that the boys have become trapped in a vicious cycle in which their coping strategies further entrench them in a system that criminalises them.

Collective Criminalisation

As chapter one demonstrated, the boys in Kanaleneiland are both addressed and approached as a group. This is seen in the numerous policies directed at curtailing the presence of problematic youth groups in Kanaleneiland. This can be seen most explicitly in the group approach. As discussed, this approach is focussed on groups that are seen to display risky signals. With this, there is currently a 'difficult' group, around forty boys in Kanaleneiland Noord who the police are 'trying to deal with'²⁰³. This group is perceived to be made up of a small number of boys who initiate problems with the police, and a large number of boys who are their 'followers'²⁰⁴. While the 'followers' may not instigate the problems, they are regarded as part of the problem as they do not 'correct' the other boys.²⁰⁵

The significance of the group in the police's approach does not go unnoticed by the boys. As was explained by Ayoub, once in a group of three or four, you are targeted more by the police²⁰⁶. This is especially true when the boys are hanging out in the tennis park, a space that has come to represent the group, both in the eyes of the boys and the police. As Tariq and Farouk explained, the police only target the

²⁰³ Author's interview with Mustafa, community police officer, Kanaleneiland on 12 May 2018.

²⁰⁴ Ibid.

²⁰⁵ Ibid.

²⁰⁶ Author's interview with Ayoub and Walid in Kanaleneiland on 30 May 2018.

boys hanging out in the tennis park²⁰⁷. If you distance yourself from this group, the police will no longer view you as a criminal²⁰⁸.

The police's focus on the group has led the boys to believe that they will be treated as criminals even when they are innocent. With this, the boys maintain that when you associate in a group, the police automatically assume that you are the same²⁰⁹. The boys can thus be seen to experience collective punishment. Collective punishment refers to an entire group receiving criminal sanctions for the actions of individuals in the group (Human Rights Watch 2008). With this, the boys feel unfairly penalised for the actions of others. For the boys, the police tendency to generalise lies at the heart of their tensions with the police. As this thesis has shown, these generalisations have very real consequences for the boys, leading to unjust arrests. This had led to a shared sense of anger and frustration and has resulted in the boys developing their own strategies and tactics to counteract and overcome the criminalisation they face.

Collective Coping

A large part of the boys' resistance manifests itself in a group context. As seen in chapter three, the boys often resort to collective repertoires of resistance, utilising the power of the group to resist the police. As Walid explained, 'If we are in a big group, then we will not walk away'²¹⁰. With the power of the group behind them, the boys are able to resist in a way that would be extremely risky if they were on their own. For example, the boys can insult the police anonymously when part of a large group. Similarly, when partaking in *rwina*, the boys operate in groups, allowing them to act out without being singled out. This is also the case during Ramadan and New Year's Eve. During this time, the boys traditionally vandalise the neighbourhood in groups, as seen in the incident with the lamppost. Running away from the police can be seen as an attempt to escape the collective punishment that is often meted out in these circumstances.

The boys also receive the protection of the group when they are involved in an altercation with the police. In these instances, a large group of boys will gather, outnumbering the police. As Karim told me, 'If one of the boys has a problem,

²⁰⁷ Author's interview with Farouk and Tariq in Kanaleneiland on 20 June 2018.

²⁰⁸ Ibid.

²⁰⁹ Author's interview with Enes and Hassan in Kanaleneiland on 16 May 2018.

²¹⁰ Author's interview with Ayoub and Walid in Kanaleneiland on 30 May 2018.

everyone will go outside to help him, because he is one of us'²¹¹. The boys thus rely on each other for support. This reliance can be seen as a response to the boys' belief that they lack the support of adults. As Walid explained, the boys do not feel that they have a large support system, and while the youth workers sometimes help the boys with their problems, they cannot completely trust their help because of their close association with the police²¹². Thus, feeling unsupported by the rest of society, the boys can be seen to turn to each other for support. The importance of the group in the boys' lives was made consistently evident during my research. When talking about growing up in Kanaleneiland, the boys often expressed their attachments to the other boys in the neighbourhood. For them, one of Kanaleneiland's greatest assets is its community feel, everyone has grown up together in the neighbourhood and everyone knows each other. When discussing their experiences with the police, the boys would always refer to themselves as 'we'. The problems faced by the boys are seen as collective problems, as something they all experience and can relate to.

However, a couple of the boys I spoke to expressed the desire to break away from the group, in an attempt to stay out of trouble and better their lives. For example, Farouk and Tariq told me that they have decided to try and distance themselves from the group of boys at the tennis park in an attempt to avoid criminalisation. They are doing this with each other's support, as Tariq explained, you only need one good friend²¹³. While Farouk and Tariq told me that their conscious separation from the group has been relatively easy for them, for others it is much harder, if not impossible. For a lot of boys, such as Karim, distancing themselves from the group is out of the question. They have a strong attachment to their group and leaving this behind is not an option²¹⁴. However, as the boys grow-up, get jobs and have families, these group naturally start to fragment²¹⁵.

The boys' strong group attachments can be seen as a response to the fact that they feel alienated from the rest of society. Thus, while the boys feel targeted and discriminated against when they are part of a group, when they are not part of a group, they feel as though they do not belong and that society does not want them²¹⁶.

²¹¹ Author's interview with Karim and Hamza in Kanaleneiland on 30 May 2018.

²¹² Author's interview with Ayoub and Walid in Kanaleneiland on 30 May 2018

²¹³ Author's interview with Tariq and Farouk in Kanaleneiland on 20 June 2018

²¹⁴ Author's conversation with Julia on 30 June 2018.

²¹⁵ Ibid.

²¹⁶ Author's interview with Julia in Kanaleneiland on 11 May 2018

With this, the boys often express feeling unwanted in certain social settings²¹⁷. Further, some of the boys explained that if you come from Kanaleneiland, you are automatically given a negative label. For example, Khalid told me that he thinks the boys from Kanaleneiland are seen as ‘chaos kids’ by the rest of Dutch society²¹⁸. Similarly, Walid and Ayoub explained that the rest of society views them as just ‘hangjongeren’, as boys that hang around with no purpose: ‘Everybody sees us as followers, with everybody doing what the other one does’²¹⁹. To deal with being excluded and discriminated against, the boys can be seen to resort to collective coping strategies, leaning on the group for support.

The boys’ tendency to turn to collective coping strategies can be understood by drawing on Social Identity Theory (SIT). Based on socio-psychological theories, SIT argues that when faced with uncertainty, individuals participate in groups to achieve a secure and positive sense of self (Demmers, 2017: 43). This idea is based on “the assumption that humans have a natural and universal need for identity and belonging” (ibid). This desire is seen to express itself in group attachments. With this, humans classify their social world through in-group-out-group categories. Having established their in-group, individuals value this group positively, preserving positive and supportive relationships with other members of the group (Sumner in Demmers, 2017: 43). This can thus be used to understand why, when excluded from the rest of society, the boys in Kanaleneiland appear to cling to groups for support.

Vicious Cycle

However, while the boys turn to the group for support, developing collective repertoires of resistance, this strategy appears to lead to further criminalisation. Indeed, rather than lessening the criminalisation they face, this resistance ironically further entrenches them in a system where they are always assumed guilty and where they are punished for the actions of others. Resorting to collective resistance, the boys are subjected to collective punishment, blurring the distinction between guilty and innocent and, in turn, denying the boys the democratic rule of law. The boys thus become imbedded in a vicious cycle of collective criminalisation and collective coping.

²¹⁷ Ibid.

²¹⁸ Author’s interview with Khalid and Moad in Kanaleneiland on 13 June 2018

²¹⁹ Author’s interview with Ayoub and Walid in Kanaleneiland on 30 May 2018.

Conclusion

Throughout this thesis, I have explored the repertoires of resistance employed by Moroccan-Dutch boys to resist criminalisation in Kanaleneiland. In analysing this, I have indicated that the boys in this study do not opt for kind of repertoires of Tilly and Tarrow would expect to find in ‘high-capacity democratic regimes’. To illustrate this, I first turn to the sub-questions addressed throughout this paper. I will use the answers derived from these sub-questions to form my central argument and conclusion. I will end by reflecting on the significance of this research, evidencing the contribution of my findings to the advancement of theory and suggest areas for further research.

The first sub-question asked how the State’s move towards control has manifested itself in the policies directed at youths in Kanaleneiland. Through document analysis, this research has shown that youth policies in Kanaleneiland are increasingly founded on a desire to control and repress ‘nuisance’ youths. While highlighting the importance of social measures, they emphasise the need to apply repression and coercion where necessary. They further stress the significance of risk and prevention, with the aim of curtailing nuisance and criminal behaviour from a young age. A particular emphasis is placed on ‘problematic’ youth groups. This approach is enacted through stepped up policing and intense surveillance. Turning to the literature on neoliberalism, this focus can be understood as part of the move towards a culture of control, in which, deemed a threat to the neoliberal order, the boys’ behaviour is rendered risky and is thus criminalised.

Sub-question two asks how Moroccan-Dutch boys living in Kanaleneiland experience criminalisation on a day-to-day basis, and how this shapes their perceptions of the police. As this research indicates, the boys are regularly met with threats, fines, and suspicion. With this, the boys express being subjected to increased surveillance, regular ID checks, and receiving excessive fines and penalties for minor infractions, such as walking on the grass. All of which is heightened when associating with a group that has been deemed ‘problematic’. I define this experience as criminalisation. As a result of this criminalisation, the boys argue that they are frequently penalised for the actions of their peers and are automatically assumed a criminal, whether guilty or not. For some, this assumption acts as a self-fulfilling

prophecy. The boys' everyday experiences of criminalisation have led them to feel attacked by the police. While this attack is not necessarily perceived as racist, it is nevertheless seen as an unjust and causes both anger and frustration.

The third sub-question asked how the boys' experiences and perceptions of Dutch democracy shape their choice of resistance. This question sought to understand why the kinds of contentious repertoires expected in democratic regimes have failed to flourish in Kanaleneiland, despite feelings of anger, frustration, and injustice. As this research indicates, the boys in this study are sceptical about their potential to effect political change. Not only do they believe the police are too powerful to challenge, they fear protesting will further criminalise them. Further, the boys can be seen to have internalised this criminalisation, arguing that a demonstration in Kanaleneiland will inevitably end in chaos. Thus, protesting is rendered unsuitable for Kanaleneilanders.

The fourth sub-question asked: How (if at all) do Moroccan-Dutch boys living in Kanaleneiland resist criminalisation? My findings show that rather than being apathetic, the boys engage in alternative forms of resistance. This resistance bears resemblance to everyday forms of resistance and can be interpreted as an attempt for the boys to turn traditional power structures on their head, reasserting their control over time and space. While these repertoires deviate from the contentious politics framework, they make sense when taking into account the boys' experiences with, and perceptions of, the Dutch state. Thus, it concludes that if a group of citizens does not perceive nor experience the State as democratic, they will not utilise democratic performances of resistance.

The final sub-question probed the effect of the boys' resistance on their experiences of criminalisation. My findings indicate that the boys' criminalisation is experienced collectively. They are addressed and targeted as a group, both in the policy domain and in their everyday interactions with the police. In turn, the boys resist as a group, resorting to collective coping strategies. Ironically, this tactic leads to collective punishment, denying the boys the democratic rule of law by blurring the distinction between guilty and innocent. In turn, the boys become further entrenched in a cycle of criminalisation.

Thus, this research concludes that the boys in Kanaleneiland do not perceive the Dutch state as democratic due to their experiences; they have little faith in political change and feel powerless to take up the challenge. They therefore do not

make use of the democratic repertoires of contention outlined in Tilly and Tarrow's contentious politics framework. Kanaleneiland has seen no demonstrations or social movements protesting the unjust criminalisation of Moroccan-Dutch boys. These repertoires bare no resemblance to the boys' lived reality and therefore are not even considered. Does the absence of the kinds of resistance laid out in contentious politics framework indicate that the boys in Kanaleneiland are apathetic, as Tilly and Tarrow suggest? I argue no. As this thesis has shown, the boys in Kanaleneiland recognise the injustices they face and this recognition sparks anger, not apathy. They express this anger through repertoires of resistance that bare more resemblance to those witnessed in non-democratic regimes. While this phenomenon deviates from the contentious politics framework as proposed by Tilly and Tarrow, when taking into account the boys' unequal experience of the State, and with this their perception of Dutch democracy, it makes perfect sense.

The significance of this research is thus twofold, furthering our understanding of contentious politics, as well as contributing to a body of literature on the criminalisation of ethnic minorities. In regards to contentious politics, this research has shown that in order to investigate the "oceans of apathy" found in democratic regimes, it is first necessary to question what democracy is, or has become. As this research demonstrates, democracy can be neither assumed fixed nor given. Rather, it is vulnerable to structural changes such as neoliberalism. In today's society, citizens are exposed to unequal experiences of the State. It is thus unrealistic to assume that all citizens living in countries 'democratic' societies perceive the State to be democratic. Indeed, to understand resistance, it is necessary to take into account the different experiences and perceptions of citizens. With this, I argue the contentious politics framework ought to be reassessed and updated to both account for recent shifts to the structure of 'high-capacity democratic regimes' (the move towards a culture of control), and further should explore how actors perceive democratic regimes. This is because, as evidenced through this research, if citizens neither experience nor perceive a regime to be democratic, they will not resist using democratic repertoires of resistance.

This research thus not only builds on the contentious politics framework, but also contributes to a growing body of literature on the criminalisation of ethnic minorities, exploring how interactions between Moroccan-Dutch boys and the police play out on a local level. In doing this, it provides a fine-tuned definition of

criminalisation, built on a set of indicators derived from the boys' own perceptions. While context specific, it is the hope that these indicators can be drawn upon by future researchers examining the criminalisation of boys with migrant backgrounds. It further highlights the significance of the group in both criminalisation and resistance and sheds light on the negative consequences of policies designed to target youths as a group, enacted through collective punishment. In doing this, it adds to a growing body of literature on the criminalisation of Moroccan-Dutch boys in the Netherlands, suggesting that it is not only race that determines the boys' interactions with the police, but also the group they are seen to associate with. It further gives voice to a group of boys who, while often discussed in the public domain, are rarely provided the opportunity to publicly discuss their own experiences and perceptions. As the unjust treatment of ethnic minorities by the police is considered one of the gravest human rights abuses to occur in the Netherlands, I believe this contribution to be of great significance.

Of course, that is not to say that this research is without its limitations. As discussed, this study cannot be used to make generalisations; rather it captures the experience of a small group of individuals at a certain period of time. Thus, more research needs to be undertaken to establish the influence of perceptions on the adoption of repertoires of resistance. It would perhaps be interesting to explore how white middle-class children in the Netherlands perceive their potential to effect political change. This would allow for a further understanding of how the boys in Kanaleneiland's interactions with the police impact their perceptions of Dutch democracy. Further, it is not only the police that play a role in the criminalisation of Moroccan-Dutch boys in Kanaleneiland. Indeed, as argued by de Koning, in the Netherlands a broad "institutional landscape tasked with security [...] made up of penal and welfare actors" (2017: 535). This was further evidenced by the close collaboration between the police and youth care professionals demonstrated in the research. As such, while beyond the scope of this research, to develop a complete understanding of how Moroccan-Dutch boys experience criminalisation in the Netherlands, further research is needed to explore the interaction between these boys and welfare actors.

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Appendix

List of respondents interviewed:

Interviews with Kanaleneiland Youth				
	Name	Male/ Female	Location of Interview	Date of Interview
1	Said	Male	Kanaleneiland	08/05/2018
2	Enes	Male	Kanaleneiland	16/05/2018
3	Hassan	Male	Kanaleneiland	16/05/2018
4	Hamid	Male	Kanaleneiland	22/05/2018
5	Amar	Male	Kanaleneiland	22/05/2018
6	Fatima	Female	Kanaleneiland	22/05/2018
7	Karim	Male	Kanaleneiland	30/05/2018
8	Hamza	Male	Kanaleneiland	30/05/2018
9	Ayoub	Male	Kanaleneiland	30/05/2018
10	Walid	Male	Kanaleneiland	30/05/2018
11	Khalid	Male	Kanaleneiland	13/06/2018
12	Moad	Male	Kanaleneiland	13/06/2018
13	Farouk	Male	Kanaleneiland	20/06/2018
14	Tariq	Male	Kanaleneiland	20/06/2018

Interviews with Academics and Experts					
	Name	Male/ Female	Location of Interview	Date of Interview	Description of Respondent
15	Gerbrig Klos	Female	Amsterdam	23/02/18	Amnesty International employee, ethnic profiling expert
16	Jair Schalkwijk	Male	Amsterdam	08/03/18	Controle Alt Delete employee, an initiative to combat ethnic profiling in the Netherlands.
17	Femke Kaulingfreks	Female	Amsterdam	14/03/18	Academic who has done research on youths in Kanaleneiland
18	Merijn Oudenampsen	Male	Amsterdam	08/04/18	Academic researching neoliberalism in the Netherlands
19	Mohammed Anouar	Male	Rotterdam	24/04/18	Controle Alt Delete employee, an initiative to combat ethnic profiling in the Netherlands.
20	Sinan Çankaya	Male	Amsterdam	08/05/18	Academic researching ethnic profiling in the

					Netherlands
21	Mohammed Ghay	Male	The Hague	10/05/18	Former chairman of the Hague Citizens' Initiative and ethnic profiling activist

Interviews with Professionals in Kanaleneiland					
22	Name	Male/ Female	Location of Interview	Date of Interview	Description of Respondent
23	Lotte	Female	Kanaleneiland	20/03/18	Community worker
24	Amina	Female	Kanaleneiland	20/03/18	Community worker
25	Thijs	Male	Kanaleneiland	21/03/18	Employee of Kanaleneiland police department, operations expert
26	Tess	Female	Kanaleneiland	03/04.18	Youth care professional
27	Ava	Female	Kanaleneiland	03/04/18	Youth care professional
28	Ali	Male	Kanaleneiland	09/04/18	Youth sports coach, community worker and resident
29	Stijn	Male	Kanaleneiland	11/04/18	Community worker and resident
30	Riaan	Male	Kanaleneiland	23/04/18	Youth care professional
31	Finn	Male	Utrecht Central	25/04/18	Employee of Overvecht police department, former police officer in Kanaleneiland
32	Max	Male	Kanaleneiland	13/05/18	Youth care professional
33	Rachid	Male	Kanaleneiland	07/05/18	Youth care professional and resident
34	Ahmed	Male	Kanaleneiland	09/05/18	Youth care professional
35	Julia	Female	Kanaleneiland	11/05/18	Youth care professional
36	Mustafa	Male	Kanaleneiland	12/05/18	Employee of Kanaleneiland police department, community police officer
37	Gabriel	Male	Kanaleneiland	29/05/18	Youth sports coach, community worker and Kanaleneiland resident